

# GREAT NORTHWEST ATHLETIC CONFERENCE

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## Alaska Anchorage Favored To Win First GNAC Title

### 2007-08 GNAC Coaches Poll

1. Alaska Anchorage (7)	19-9, 10-6	104
2. Seattle Pacific (1)	18-10, 11-5	87
3. Seattle (2)	20-9, 11-5	84
4. Western Washington	11-15, 5-11	62
Central Washington	15-12, 10-6	62
6. Saint Martin's	10-17, 7-9	52
7. Northwest Nazarene	10-17, 5-11	40
8. Western Oregon	10-17, 5-11	35
9. Montana State Billings	6-21, 4-8*	18
10. Alaska Fairbanks	17-13, 8-8	16

(Note: First-place votes in parenthesis. Points awarded on 11-9-8-7-6-5-4-3-2-1 basis. MSUB record in Heartland Conference).

Though it has qualified for the playoffs in three of the past four years, Alaska Anchorage has never finished higher than third in the six-year history of the Great Northwest Athletic Conference.

The Seawolves, however, appear to have the horses this winter to end an 11-year drought since its last conference title in 1996-97 when it was a member of the PacWest Conference.

In the GNAC Coaches annual pre-season poll, UAA, which finished in a tie for third a year ago with Central Washington, received seven of 10 first-place votes to outpoint co-defending champion Seattle Pacific 104-87 in the balloting.

Seattle University, which shared the title with the Falcons in 2006-07, was a close third with 84 ballot points. The Redhawks received two first-place votes and SPU earned one. Ancient rivals Central and Western Washington finished in a tie for fourth with 62 ballot points.

UAA coach Rusty Osborne, who guided his team to an 19-9 record a year ago, returns two all-stars and arguably may have had the best recruiting class in the conference.

Seawolf guard Luke Cooper is one of only two returning first team all-stars and forward Carl Arts is one of only two returning second team all-star selections in the GNAC.

Cooper, who will be gunning for his fourth consecutive conference assist title, averaged 7.3 points, 8.2 assists and 1.5 steals and needs just 31 more assists to become the GNAC's all-time leader. He also ranked sixth in the GNAC in steals in addition to winning the assist title.

Arts is the GNAC's second-highest returning scorer (15.5) and rebounder (6.9) from last season when he ranked eighth and fifth in the conference, respectively. He also finished

eighth in field goal percentage (54.6) and sixth in free throw percentage (88.7).

The two are UAA's only returning starters, but the Seawolves did add Division 1 veterans Chris Bryant from Drake and Doug Hardy from Idaho State along with center Jeremiah Trueman from NAIA San Diego Christian.

Bryant played in 78 games at Drake and averaged seven points, drilling 120 three-pointers.

In 37 games, Hardy averaged 2.2 points for the Big Sky Bengals. Trueman, meanwhile, netted 7.6 points and 5.7 rebounds last season for San Diego Christian, which competed in the NAIA national tournament.

Seattle Pacific, which won the GNAC title outright in 2006 before sharing it last year, and Seattle University each return a GNAC-high nine lettermen, but both teams only have two starters off their championship teams.

Back for the Falcons is 6-10 center Rob Will, who averaged 13 points and 6.3 rebounds to join Arts on the second-team all-star squad and forward JoJay Jackson, who contributed 9.4 points and 4.8 rebounds.

Sixth-year coach Jeff Hironaka will have to replace *co-GNAC Player-of-the-Year* Dustin Bremerman, who ended his career as the No. 7 all-time scorer in conference history with 1,797 points.

Seattle University coach Joe Callero, likewise, has only two starters back – honorable mention all-star junior forward Leigh Swanson, who averaged 12.4 points and 5.4 rebounds in his sophomore season and forward Mike Boxley, who played 23 minutes per game and averaged 3.5 points.

Callero, however, reloaded adding NWAACC West Region Co-MVP Michael Wright (16.5 ppg, 11.7 rebounds) from Pierce and former McDonald's All-American nominee Michael Knight, who played 19 games at the University at Albany.

Central and Western Washington, on paper at least, may have recruiting classes to match UAA. The Wildcats lost GNAC scoring champion Lance Den Boer (20.5), but added two former starters at Division I Eastern Washington – 6-5 junior guard Matt Penoncello and 6-8 junior forward Jake Beitingier.

CWU coach Greg Sparling also added NWAACC North Region MVP Brandon Foote and two East Region all-stars – Ellensburg product Riley Sivak from Columbia Basin and

Nate Sadewasser from Wenatchee Valley. Sivak was a first team selection and Sadewasser earned second team honors.

Western Washington, which returns a league-best four starters including Ira Graham who ranked ninth in scoring (15.3), added four JC all-stars including a pair of guards – Steve Alford and Andrew Ready – off a 30-3 Bakersfield (Calif.) team, NWAACC West Region Co-MVP Derrick Webb from Highline CC and 6-8 center Zach Bruce, who was a second-team NWAACC all-star at Highline.

Saint Martin's, which led the GNAC race at the midway point a year ago, Northwest Nazarene, Western Oregon, Montana State Billings and Alaska Fairbanks finished sixth through 10<sup>th</sup> in the coaches' poll and all have aspirations to break into the upper division.

SMU, along with Alaska Anchorage, is the only team to return two all-stars and may perhaps have a trio of players as good as any group in the conference.

Guard Jake Linton, a first-team GNAC all-star a year ago and a pre-season All-American selection by the publication *Division II Bulletin*, finished second in the conference in scoring (20.2) behind Den Boer and also was third in assists (5.15) and fifth in steals (1.59).

Likewise, forward Brendan Campbell is the top returning rebounder in the GNAC after finishing third last season (7.3).

Completing the trio of standouts is Bill Richardson, a former NWAACC first-team all-star at Grays Harbor, who returns after missing the 2006-07 season with a broken wrist.

Northwest Nazarene and Western Oregon each return three starters and are the only teams in addition to Western Washington with more than two returning starters.

The Crusader returnees include guard Justin Parnell, who averaged 14.9 points and earned honorable mention honors along with *GNAC Freshman-of-the-Year* accolades.

Back for the Wolves are double-figure scorers Ryan Schmidt (12.1) and Travis Kuhns (10.3), the *2005-06 GNAC Freshman-of-the-Year*, along with Stanley Ratcliff, who averaged 11.5 points and six rebounds two years ago before taking the 2006-07 season off.

Montana State Billings and Alaska Fairbanks are both on "youth movements". Coach Craig Carse, who has compiled a 210-119 record in 12 seasons in Billings, doesn't have an upperclassmen on his roster, which will feature four sophomores and seven freshmen.

UAF first-year coach Clemon Johnson will go to war with a club that includes six freshmen, though he does have two returning starters - guard Mike Titus and forward Colin Matteson - off a team that placed fifth and was in the playoff hunt up to the final week of the season.

## TEAM CAPSULES

### ALASKA ANCHORAGE SEAWOLVES

**Head Coach:** Rusty Osborne, Texas '88 (49-37, 3 years)

**Associate Head Coach:** Shane Rinner

**Assistant:** Bryan Weakley

**2006-07 Record:** 19-9

**Conference:** 10-6, 3<sup>rd</sup> -T

**Returning Letter Winners:** 5

**Returning Starters:** Luke Cooper (G, 6-0, Sr., 7.3 ppg, 2.1 rpg, 8.2 apg, 1.5 spg, 1<sup>st</sup> team GNAC); Carl Arts (F, 6-6, Sr., 15.5 ppg, 6.9 rpg, 2.3 apg, 2<sup>nd</sup> team GNAC)

**Other Returnees:** McCade Olsen (F, 6-8, Sr. 11.1 ppg, 4.3 rpg), Cameron Burney (F, 6-7, Jr., 4.1 ppg, 3.0 rpg), Jarred Kettler (C, 6-6, Sr., 0.0 ppg, 0.3 rpg).

### OUTLOOK

The Seawolves finished just a game back of the co-champions a year ago and then gave top-seed Humboldt State all it wanted in the regional opening round before falling 68-61.

With Luke Cooper, a pre-season *Division II Bulletin* honorable mention All-American, Carl Arts and three other lettermen, including McCade Olsen, bolstered by a strong recruiting class, UAA figures to make its fourth post-season appearance in the past five years.

Cooper (6-0, Sr., Eltham, Australia – Parade) has 570 career assists and is just 30 short of the GNAC record of 600 set by Western Oregon's Kevin Tyson (2003-06). He also ranks 19<sup>th</sup> in GNAC history in career steals with 119 and is the active leader.

Meanwhile, Arts (6-6, Sr., Valdez, AK) needs just 102 points to join the 1,000-point club and just 16 rebounds to reach the 500 level.

Olsen (6-8, Sr., Riverton, UT – Eastern Wyoming) averaged 11.1 points and 4.3 rebounds and led the GNAC in field goal percentage (59.8) while coming off the bench, a year ago.

Also back is forward Cameron Burney (6-7, Jr., Steamboat Springs, CO – Otero), who averaged 4.1 points and 3.0 rebounds. Center Jarred Kettler (6-6, Sr., Dana Point, CA – St. Margaret's), who saw limited action, also is back.

Chris Bryant (6-4, Sr., Metlakatla, AK) will be a strong contender for GNAC Newcomer-of-the-Year honors.

Bryant averaged seven points and two rebounds in 78 career games with Drake, knocking down 120 three-pointers. He scored in double figures 25 times, including a career-high 26 against Texas A&M-Corpus Christi.

"With the loss of Eric Draper and Buddy Bailey, we needed an experienced shooting guard and Chris fits in that role," UAA coach Rusty Osborne (49-37, 3 years) said.

Bartlett High grad Doug Hardy (5-11, Jr., Anchorage, AK) joins the Seawolves after two years at Idaho State where he averaged 2.2 points in 37 games and a redshirt year at UAA.

“Doug is very athletic and strong and will give us a different dimension in the back court,” Osborne said.

Two transfers from San Diego Christian will also contribute.

Center Jeremiah Trueman (6-9, Jr., Stratford, New Zealand) was a two-year starter averaging 6.8 points and five rebounds helping the Hawks to back-to-back NAIA national appearances. Australian Kevin White (6-4, Fr., Manly, Australia) redshirted at the NAIA school.

Jeremiah is a true post player who is used to winning,” Osborne said. “He will be an upgrade for us defensively and rebounding.”

Four other freshman – Lonnie Ridgeway (6-3, Anchorage, AK – Heritage Christian), Philip Hearn (6-6, Fr., Anchorage, AK – West), Kyle Doerr (6-7, Fr., Rapid City, SD – St. Thomas More) and Colin Voreis (6-7, Fr., Vermilion, Ohio) – complete the recruiting class.

## SEATTLE PACIFIC FALCONS

**Head Coach:** Jeff Hironaka, Eastern Oregon '80 (94-49, 5 years)  
**Assistants:** Brock Veltri, Scott Reid, George Parker, Adam Swinyard

**2006-07 Record:** 18-10

**Conference:** 11-5, 1<sup>st</sup>-T

**Returning Letter Winners:** 9

**Returning Starter:** Rob Will (C, 6-10, Sr., 13.0 ppg, 6.3 rpg, 2.0 bpg, 2<sup>nd</sup> team GNAC), JoJay Jackson (F, 6-5, Sr., 9.4 ppg, 4.8 rpg, 2.4 apg, 1.3 spg)

**Other Returnees:** Rob Diederichs (F, 6-8, So., 8.8 ppg, 3.2 rpg, 2.3 apg), Marques Echols (G, 6-2, Sr., 8.4 ppg, 3.1 rpg, 1. apg); Jared Moultrie (G, 6-2, Sr., 4.6 ppg, 3.2 rpg, 2.7 apg in 2005-06); Casey Reed (F, 6-5, Jr., 4.5 ppg, 1.6 rpg, 0.6 bpg); Brandon Larrieu (G, 5-10, So., 2.1 ppg, 0.2 rpg); Filip Popovic (C, 6-7, Sr., 1.4 ppg, 1.5 rpg); Adam Wardell (G, 6-2, So., 1.0 ppg, 0.7 apg)

## OUTLOOK

Seattle Pacific graduated Dustin Bremerman, who averaged 18.9 points per game, but four of its top six scorers and a GNAC-best nine lettermen return for head coach Jeff Hironaka (94-49, 5 years).

Among the nine is Jared Moultrie (6-2, Sr., West Point, UT – Clearfield & Salt Lake CC), who was a key reserve on SPU's 2006 Elite Eight team before missing all but one game last season.

Center Rob Will (6-10, Sr., Seattle, WA – O'Dea) was the West Region tournament MVP two years ago and averaged 13 points and 6.3 rebounds last year. He led the GNAC in blocked shots with 56, finished eighth in the conference in

rebounding and ranked fourth in field goal percentage, making 56.7 percent.

Forward JoJay Jackson (6-5, Sr., Fairfield, CA – Vallejo & Solano JC) is the only other returning starter. He contributed 9.4 points, 4.8 rebounds, 2.4 assists and 1.3 steals.

Moultrie, who averaged 4.6 points, 3.2 rebounds and 2.7 assists two years ago, started the first game and scored four points before suffering a season-ending injury.

Rob Diederichs (6-8, So., Shoreline, WA – Shorewood) and Marques Echols (6-2, Sr., Seattle, WA – Garfield & Peninsula CC) made significant contributions off the bench.

Diederichs ranked fourth on the team in scoring (8.8) and was among SPU's top shooters, converting on 55.4 percent (sixth best in the GNAC).

Echols averaged 8.4 points and was the GNAC's best three-pointer shooter, making 50.6 percent (42 of 83). He was also among the team leaders with 71 assists.

Also back are guards Adam Wardell (6-2, So., Sedro Woolley, WA) and Brandon Larrieu (5-10, So., Puyallup, WA – Franklin Pierce), forward Casey Reed (6-5, Jr., Canby, OR – Navy) and center Filip Popovic (6-7, Sr., Montenegro, Serbia – Skyline CC) Reed made the biggest contribution, netting 4.5 points per game.

Among the new players are six freshmen and one JC transfers, guard Stephen Jones (6-1, Jr., Toronto, Ontario) who played at Minot State-Bottineau.

## SEATTLE UNIVERSITY REDHAWKS

**Head Coach:** Joe Callero, Central Washington '86 (78-88, 6 years; Overall, 100-113, 8 years)

**Assistants:** Keith Brown, Dan Emerson, Mitch Freeman

**2006-07 Record:** 20-9

**Conference:** 11-5, 1<sup>st</sup>-T

**Returning Letter Winners:** 9

**Returning Starters:** Leigh Swanson (F, 6-7, Jr., 12.4 ppg, 5.4 rpg, HM GNAC); Mike Boxley (F, 6-5, So., 3.5 ppg, 3.8 rpg, 1.9 apg)

**Other Returnees:** Ryan Coldren (F, 6-8, Sr., 7.1 ppg, 3.9 rpg); Ricky Berry (G, 6-3, So., 6.4 ppg, 1.7 rpg); Chris Gweth (G, 6-1, So., 6.0 ppg, 1.8 rpg, 1.1 spg); Travis Welt (C, 6-9, Sr., 2.2 ppg, 2.1 rpg, 0.7 bpg); Taylor Olson (G, 5-10, So., 1.0 ppg, 0.3 rpg); John Vincent (F, 6-4, So., 0.5 ppg, 0.2 rpg); Noah Blakney (G, 6-3, So., 0.0 ppg, 0.4 rpg); Shaun Burl (G, 6-1, Jr., 2.7 ppg, 0.7 rpg in 2005-06)

## OUTLOOK

Seattle University finished with a flurry last year, winning its final seven regular-season games to claim a share of its first GNAC title, then defeating Cal Poly Pomona before losing to eventual champion Cal State San Bernardino in the regional semifinals.

The Redhawks, whose previous best GNAC finish had been seventh, will try to make it two titles in a row before moving next year to Division I.

Nine lettermen are back but only two are starters – forward Leigh Swanson (6-7, Jr., Mountlake Terrace, WA), who ranked second on the team in scoring, averaging 12.4 points per game and was also second in rebounding (5.4) and forward Mike Boxley (6-5, So., Mountlake Terrace, WA), who contributed 3.5 points and 3.8 rebounds per contest.

Among the other seven letter winners, only three contributed more than three points per game – forward Ryan Coldren (6-8, Sr., Fall Creek, OR – Marist) and guards Ricky Berry (6-3, So., Phoenix, AZ – Paradise Valley) and Chris Gweth (6-1, So., Beaverton, OR – Hillsboro).

Coldren was the team's fifth leading scorer averaging 7.1 points and also hauling in nearly four rebounds (3.9) per game.

Berry and Gweth both made significant contributions during the Redhawks' closing run. Berry was the team's No. 2 three-pointer shooter, making 32 of 89, and averaged 6.4 points. He was in double figures in three of SU's final eight games, including 16 in their quarterfinal playoff win against Cal Poly Pomona.

Gweth, meanwhile, averaged 11.6 in his final five games to raising his final average to six points.

Head coach Joe Callero (78-88, 6 years) will look to several talented newcomers to fill in the gaps left by the graduation losses of Sam Kirby (13.4 ppg, 66-165 three-pointers), Ryan White (10.1 ppg, 183 assists, 49 steals) and David White (9.7 points, 6.8 rebounds).

Among the additions is NWAACC West Region Co-MVP Michael Wright (F, 6-5, Jr., Lakewood, WA, 16.5 ppg, 11.7 rebounds) from Pierce and former McDonald's All-American nominee Michael Knight (G, 6-3, Sr., Seattle, WA), who played 19 games at the University of Albany, though he only scored a total of 13 points for the Division I school.

Other additions are Austen Powers (Glendale, AZ), a 6-8 junior from Cal State Northridge, guard Shaun Burl (6-1, Jr., Berkeley, CA) and freshman Drew Harris (6-0, Fr., Yakima, WA – Eisenhower).

Powers played two seasons for Northridge, playing in 45 games and contributing 64 points and 70 rebounds.

Burl returns after sitting out last season. In two previous seasons, he played in 43 games for the Redhawks and scored 80 points.

Harris is a true freshman and is the nephew of Joe Harris who played with Callero at Central Washington in the mid

1980s and is still the Wildcats' all-time single-season (242) and career assist leader (404).

## CENTRAL WASHINGTON WILDCATS

**Head Coach:** Greg Sparling, Central Washington '93 (199-142, 12 years)

**Assistants:** G.E. Coleman, Karl Albrecht, Chris Bannish, Jason Buffum

**2006-07 Record:** 15-12

**Conference:** 10-6, 3<sup>rd</sup>-T

**Returning Letter Winners:** 5

**Returning Starters:** Nate Jackson (G, 6-0, Sr., 6.5 ppg, 1.9 rpg, 1.7 apg, 1.0 spg); Johnny Spevak (G, 6-3, Jr., 2.7 ppg, 2.5 rpg, 3.2 apg, 0.9 spg)

**Other Returnees:** Tyler Monk (G, 6-0, Sr., 8.6 ppg, 2.0 rpg); Colton Monti (G, 6-0, Jr., 5.4 ppg, 2.2 rpg, 1.8 apg); Bryce Daub (F, 6-6, Sr., 5.6 ppg, 3.9 rpg)

## OUTLOOK

No one on Central Washington's roster started even half the Wildcats' games last year, but that doesn't mean Greg Sparling (199-142, 12 years) doesn't have a bunch of experience available.

Four returning players made nine or more starts and two Eastern Washington transfers - guard Matt Penoncello (6-5, Jr., Moscow, ID) and forward Jake Beitinger (6-8, Jr., Port Orchard, WA – South Kitsap) – made a total of 52 starts the past two seasons for former CWU assistant Mike Burns at Division I Eastern Washington.

The 'Cats also gained more experience with the addition of three junior college all-stars to the roster – NWAACC North MVP Brandon Foote (6-3, Jr., Bellingham, WA) from Whatcom CC, first team NWAACC East Region all-star Riley Sivak (6-5, Jr., Ellensburg, WA) from Columbia Basin and second team East Region all-star Nate Sadewasser (6-6, Jr., Rock Island, WA – Eastmont) from Wenatchee Valley.

Johnny Spevak (6-3, Jr., Edgewood, WA – Puyallup) made the most starts (12) and led the team in assists with 87 and was also among the team leaders in steals with 25.

He, however, might not be available at the beginning of the season as he is one of the top receivers in the nation in Division II for the Wildcat football team that might be playoff-bound.

Also back from last year's team are guards Nate Jackson (6-0, Sr., Seattle, WA – Cleveland & HCC) who ended up as the Wildcats' fifth leading scorer (6.5) and No. 2 playmaker (47 assists); Tyler Monk (6-0, Sr., Portland, OR – Benson & Bakersfield), who was the team's No. 3 scorer (8.6) and Colton Monti (6-0, Jr., Lacey, WA – North Thurston), who averaged 5.4 points and had 46 assists. All three players started nine games.

The only other returnee is Bryce Daub (6-6, Sr., Bellevue, WA – Newport & Bellevue CC), who contributed 5.6

points and 3.9 rebounds. Daub shot 51.3 percent from the floor, making 61 of 119.

Penoncello played in 58 games for Eastern Washington, averaging 6.4 points and connecting on 77.1 percent of his foul shots. He was also a defensive standout for the Eagles, earning the team's Top Defensive Player award in each of his two seasons.

Beitinger also played in 58 games, averaging 7.3 points and 3.3 rebounds. He blocked 44 shots, which ranks seventh in school history for EWU. His top offensive performance came in his freshman season when he scored 18 against Boise State.

"Jake is a great addition," Sparling said, "especially considering what we lost on the front line. He can score both inside and out and is an unbelievable shot blocker."

Footte, who prepped at Bellingham High School, averaged 17.5 points, 5.2 rebounds and 3.2 assists for Whatcom CC, shooting 85.9 percent from the foul line and 52.2 from the floor.

Sivak, who played his prep ball at Ellensburg, averaged 16.3 points and 7.4 rebounds for CBC. He led the NWAACC with a 64.7 percent field goal average and also shot 81.1 percent from the foul line.

Sadewasser led Wenatchee Valley in scoring, averaging 16.1 points and also pulled in 6.8 rebounds, ranking 25<sup>th</sup> in the NWAACC in that category.

Two 2006-07 redshirts will also be available to the Wildcats – Giovonne Woods (6-3, Jr., Lacey, WA – River Ridge), who played at Evergreen State and San Jose City before enrolling at CWU and Zach Cooper (5-9, So., Renton, WA – Kennedy & North Seattle), who transferred from South Carolina State, though he did not play at that university.

## **WESTERN WASHINGTON VIKINGS**

**Head Coach:** Brad Jackson, Washington State '75 (409-238, 22 years)

**Assistants:** Tony Dominguez, Rob Visser, Brian Dennis

**2006-07 Record:** 11-15

**Conference:** 5-11, 7<sup>th</sup>-T

**Returning Letter Winners:** 6

**Returning Starters:** Ira Graham (G, 6-2, Jr., 15.3 ppg, 3.2 rpg, 3.3 apg); Harold McAllister (G, 6-0, So., 8.0 ppg, 2.4 rpg, 2.3 apg, 1.2 spg); Steve Severin (C, 6-10, Fr., 6.2 ppg, 4.8 rpg, 1.7 bpg); Calin Schell (F, 6-7, Jr., 7.4 ppg, 6.4 rpg, 0.8 bpg)

**Other Returnees:** Brandon Williams (G, 6-3, So., 5.6 ppg, 2.0 rpg); David Brittinen (C, 6-7, Jr., 2.4 ppg, 1.8 rpg)

## **OUTLOOK**

The Vikings lost nine of their final 11 games a year ago in suffering through their first losing season in nine years.

But, Brad Jackson, the dean of GNAC coaches (409-238, 22 years) returns a league-best four starters among six letter winners.

Guard Ira Graham (6-1, Jr., Fontana, CA) ranked second on the team and ninth in the GNAC in scoring averaging 15.3 points and also was seventh in the GNAC with a team-best 3.3 assists.

"Ira had a solid year and now he's a year older with a full season under his belt," Jackson said.

Also returning in the backcourt is guard Harold McAllister (6-0, So., Vancouver, WA – Mountain View), who averaged eight points and 2.3 assists, shot 45.9 percent on three-pointers (34-74) and 90.4 percent from the foul line (47-52). That ranked third in the conference.

Two starters return in the frontcourt – center Steve Severin (6-10, So., Richland, WA – Hanford), who averaged 6.2 points, 5.8 rebounds and a team-high 1.6 blocks while shooting 52.2 percent (71-236) and forward Calin Schell (6-7, Jr., Chelan, WA). Schell contributed 7.4 points and was the GNAC's No. 7 rebounder (5.8).

Center David Brittinen (6-7, Jr., Hoquiam, WA), who averaged 2.4 points and 1.8 rebounds in 17 games also returns, but sophomore guard Brandon Williams (6-4, So., Chicago, IL), who averaged 5.6 points, will probably redshirt.

Taking off his redshirt from last season is Jason Pegues (6-2, Jr., Seattle, WA – Cleveland), who averaged 14.7 points two years ago at Edmonds CC and will likely see significant playing time.

Four JC transfers will give a substantial boost to the Viking lineup.

Steve Alford (6-5, Jr., Bakersfield, CA – South) and Andrew Ready (6-1, Jr., Chicago, IL – Westinghouse) were both first team all-Western State Conference picks on a Bakersfield CC team that went 30-3.

Alford averaged 12.8 points, 4.4 rebounds and 1.8 steals. Ready contributed 9.9 points, 4.7 rebounds and 5.5 assists.

From Highline CC the Vikings added Derrick Webb (6-3, Jr., Port Orchard, WA – South Kitsap), the Co-MVP of the NWAACC's Western Region and second team all-region pick Zach Bruce (6-8, Jr., Oceanside, CA – Highline CC).

Webb averaged 16.4 points, 6.4 rebounds and 3.5 assists for Highline, while Bruce also had impressive numbers – 14.1 points, 7.2 rebounds and 1.3 blocks.

Also on the active roster are guard Greg Meier (6-2, Sr., Chelan, WA – Whatcom CC & SVCC), who played in 13 games last year, and freshman redshirt guard Anthony Wiederkehr (5-11, Fr., Arlington, WA – Lakewood)

## SAINT MARTIN'S SAINTS

**Head Coach:** Keith Cooper, Seattle Pacific '88 (33-75, 4 years)

**Assistants:** Dan Barfoot

**2006-07 Record:** 10-17

**Conference:** 7-9, 6<sup>th</sup>

**Returning Letter Winners:** 6

**Returning Starters:** Jake Linton (G, 5-10, Jr., 20.2 ppg, 3.1 rpg, 5.1 apg, 1.6 spg, 1<sup>st</sup> team GNAC); Brendan Campbell (F, 6-5, Sr., 14.7 ppg, 7.3 rpg, 1.0 spg, HM GNAC)

**Other Returnees:** Tyler Nixon (F, 6-5, Jr., 5.6 ppg, 3.8 rpg); Justin Alexander (G, 6-2, Jr., 4.4 ppg, 0.9 rpg); Michael McIver (C, 6-10, So., 3.7 ppg, 2.1 rpg); Charlie Severs (G, 6-2, So., 0.7 ppg, 0.5 rpg)

## OUTLOOK

With forward Bill Richardson (6-7, Jr., Shelton, WA), coming off an injury redshirt season joining guards Jake Linton (5-10, Jr., Lynwood, WA – Meadowdale) and Justin Alexander (6-2, Jr., Morrison, CO – Bear Creek) and forwards Tyler Nixon (6-5, Jr., Sumner, WA – White River) and Brendan Campbell (6-5, Sr., Bremerton, WA – Olympic), coach Keith Cooper has the makings of a solid starting lineup.

Cooper was expecting Richardson to be one of the top newcomers in the GNAC last season after averaging 20 points and 6 ½ rebounds the year before at Grays Harbor, but a broken wrist sidelined him for the season.

Instead, Linton and Campbell had to carry most of the load, which they did as the Saints got off to a 6-1 start and led the conference race at the midway point before losing eight of their final nine games.

Linton finished the year second in the conference in scoring (20.2), first in three-pointers made (2.89), third in assists (5.15), fourth in steals (1.59) and three-point percentage (44.1) and eighth in free throw percentage (88.2) to earn first-team all-conference honors.

Campbell also put up some impressive numbers, averaging 14.7 points per game and 7.3 rebounds, finishing third in the latter category and was named an honorable mention all-star. Meanwhile Nixon and Alexander averaged 5.6 and 4.4, respectively.

With a healthy Campbell and two-deep depth at every position, Cooper believes his team can avoid the second-half swoon that has afflicted his team the past two seasons.

Four freshmen and JC transfer Mike Ognoskie will join last year's group that also includes center Michael McIver (6-10, So., Olympia, WA – Capital) and guard Charlie Severs (6-2, So., Oakville, WA). McIver averaged 3.7 points per game and 2.1 rebounds and should improve his numbers this season.

Ognoskie (6-5, Jr., Orting, WA ) was a second team NWAACC all-region all-star last year at Centralia CC.

Among the incoming freshman that will contribute are Blake Poole (6-5, Fr., Eugene, OR – Sheldon), Kyle Smith (6-7, Fr., Salem, OR – Blanchet), Nick Smith (5-10, Fr., Olympia, WA – Tumwater) and Galen Squiers (6-2, Fr., Redmond, WA).

## NORTHWEST NAZARENE CRUSADERS

**Head Coach:** Tim Hills, Western Baptist '68 (22-32, 2 years; Overall, 463-426, 28 years)

**Assistants:** Brandon Rinta

**2006-07 Record:** 10-17

**Conference:** 5-11, 7<sup>th</sup>-T

**Returning Letter Winners:** 4

**Returning Starter:** Justin Parnell (G, 6-4, So., 14.9 ppg, 3.3 rpg, 3.3 apg, HM GNAC, GNAC Freshman of the Year); Jason Simmons (P, 6-8, Sr., 9.8 ppg, 5.1 rpg, 0.6 bpg); Kendall Gielow (F, 6-7, So., 12.3 ppg, 5.3 rpg)

**Other Returnees:** Louie Beech (G, 6-2, So., 7.6 ppg, 2.4 rpg)

## OUTLOOK

Defense has been the emphasis in practice so far this fall for Northwest Nazarene.

"We are going to be much improved and our season is going to depend on two things...how fast we get together and the commitment that our kids make to really wanting to get stops on every possession," Tim Hills, who begins his 35<sup>th</sup> year on the bench with a combined coaching record of 589-471 said.

Scoring points shouldn't be an issue for the Crusaders. Among four returning players is guard Justin Parnell (6-4, So., Sutherlin, OR), who averaged 14.9 points in earning honorable mention honors and *GNAC Freshman-of-the-Year* accolades. His average ranked 10<sup>th</sup> in the GNAC.

Also back is forward Kendall Gielow (6-7, So., Medford, OR – South Medford), who had an equally impressive freshman campaign, scoring 12.3 points and pulling down a team-best 5.3 rebounds.

Also up front off of last year's starting lineup is Jason Simmons (6-8, Sr., Oakland, OR – Olympic CC), who averaged 9.8 points and ranked second on the squad in rebounds (5.1) and first in blocked shots (16).

Two other returning players are guard Louie Beech (6-2, So., Nampa, ID – Skyview), who averaged 7.6 points in a sixth-man role, and post Scott Helpenstell (6-6, Jr., Port Angeles, WA).

Beech, however, enters the season as a question mark, dealing with a pre-season hand injury. Helpenstell is back after redshirting a year ago due to an abdominal injury. In his only appearance, he scored 12 points and had nine rebounds in 11 minutes in an exhibition against Albertson.

Key additions that should greatly improve NNU's depth include Tyler Roberts (6-5, So., Albany, OR – West Albany), Adam Shildmyer (6-5, Jr., Bremerton, WA – King's West & Olympic CC), Joel Ryman (6-0, Fr.,

Spokane, WA – Northwest Christian & SCC), Tippy Burk (G, 5-11, Fr., Port Orchard, WA – South Kitsap) and Joe Grewe (5-11, Fr., Colbert, WA – Northwest Christian).

Roberts is a transfer from Corban, where he averaged 8.1 points and 4.0 rebounds. “Tyler is a really talented point guard, but has the ability to play multiple positions,” Hill said. “He is a great passer and will help us get some easy baskets.”

Shildmyer was a first team NWAACC Northern Region all-star at Olympic where he averaged 18 points and six rebounds and shot 40 percent from the three-point line. “I don’t think there is any question that he can shoot it as well as anyone in the league,” Hills said.

Ryman comes to Nampa have two years of collegiate experience at Spokane CC, where he averaged 8.0 points in 2005-06. Burk and Grewe are freshman.

Adding depth to the front line will be transfer Matt Mgebrouff (6-7, Jr., Kent, WA – Kentwood), who averaged eight points and five rebounds at Highline and 6-10 freshman Brian Barkdoll from Central Catholic in Portland. Another newcomer is Morgan McGovert (6-4, So., Boise, ID – Capital), who averaged two points per game at Vanguard in California.

## **WESTERN OREGON WOLVES**

**Head Coach:** Craig Stanger, BYU '92 (9-18, 1 year)

**Assistants:** Everett Hartman, Jerod Gibson

**2006-07 Record:** 10-17

**Conference:** 5-11, 7<sup>th</sup>

**Returning Letter Winners:** 8

**Returning Starters:** Ryan Schmidt (F, 6-7, Sr., 12.1 ppg, 4.5 rpg, 2.1 apg). Stanley Ratcliff Jr. (F, 6-3, Jr., 11.5 ppg, 6.0 rpg in 2005-06), Travis Kuhns (F, 6-8, Jr., 10.3 ppg, 5.3 rpg, 1.3 spg, 1.2 bpg). **Note:** Ratcliff redshirted last year, but was a starter in 2005-06.

**Other Returnees:** Brad Krichevsky (G, 5-10, Sr., 6.6 ppg, 1.5 rpg, 2.1 apg, 1.6 spg); Adonal Arrington (C, 6-11, Sr., 4.8 ppg, 3.0 rpg); Mike McLaughlin (F-C, 6-7, So., 3.8 ppg, 4.8 rpg); Tyler Blok (F, 6-6, Jr., 0.9 ppg, 0.5 rpg); Keith Hoffman (W, 6-4, Sr., 0.8 ppg, 0.5 rpg)

## **OUTLOOK**

No one in the GNAC will be able to match the size of Western Oregon. Down low, the Wolves can go with 6-11 Adonal Arrington (6-11, Sr., Clackamas, OR – Mt. Hood CC), who averaged 4.8 points and three rebounds last season, or 7-3 Oregon State transfer Liam Hughes (Sr., Hullbridge, England – Modesto Christian), who played in 21 games for the Beavers over the past three seasons.

On the wings, opposing teams will have to contend with 6-8 Travis Kuhns (Jr., Salem, OR – Sprague), who averaged 10.3 points and 5.3 rebounds a year ago and also blocked 32 shots, while ranking second in the team with 35 steals. Two years ago, Kuhns was the *GNAC Freshman-of-the-Year*.

Kuhns is one of eight returning lettermen back off last year’s team that finished 10-17. Also back is 6-7 forward Ryan Schmidt (Sr., Keizer, OR – McNary & Linn-Benton), who ranked second on the team in scoring (12.1) and third in rebounding (4.6), Arrington, 6-7 forward Mike McLaughlin (So., Lake Oswego, OR) and 5-10 guard Brad Krichevsky (Sr., Beaverton, OR – Pacific).

McLaughlin played in only six games, but averaged 3.8 points and 4.8 rebounds, while Krichevsky contributed 6.6 points and 57 assists. Two other players saw limited action – forward Tyler Blok (6-6, Jr., Banks, OR) and wing Keith Hoffman (6-4, Sr., Corvallis, OR – Crescent Valley). Isaiah Adams (6-5, So., Medford, OR – South Medford), who redshirted two years ago before sitting out last season, also returns.

Stanley Ratcliff, Jr. (6-3, Jr., Palmer, AK) returns after missing the 2006-07 season. Two years ago he was a starter and averaged 11.5 points and 6.0 rebounds. Though at 6-4 he doesn’t have the size of some of his teammates, he plays much bigger than 6-4 and can be effective inside.

In addition to the 7-3 Hughes, other additions to the Wolves include Salt Lake CC transfer Sam Kelly (6-5, Jr., Salem, OR – South Salem, 4.4 ppg), who is the son of former WOU coach Tim Kelly, Matt Schmidt (6-6, So., Keizer, OR – McNary) who redshirted last season after transferring from Feather River CC and freshman Dane Johnson (6-1, Columbus, OH – St. Francis DeSales), who averaged 10.3 points and 8.2 assists in leading his high school team to the Ohio State Final Four.

## **MONTANA STATE BILLINGS YELLOWJACKETS**

**Head Coach:** Craig Carse, Bethany '78 (210-119, 12 years; Overall, 289-162, 16 years)

**Assistants:** Mike McShane

**2006-07 Record:** 6-21

**Conference:** 4-8 (Heartland)

**Returning Letter Winners:** 3

**Returning Starters:** Jeff Miner (G, 6-3, So., 16.0 ppg, 2.9 rpg, 2.7 apg, Heartland Co-Freshman of the Year)

**Other Returnees:** Troy Ruff (F, 6-5, So., 5.6 ppg, 2.6 rpg); Mike Barton (F, 6-8, So., 0.7 ppg, 1.2 rpg)

## **OUTLOOK**

Craig Carse’s Yellowjackets are the youngest team in GNAC history.

No a single upperclassmen dots the roster. Of the 11 players listed on the roster, seven are freshmen and four are sophomores.

Even the veterans are young.

The only returning starter is Jeff Miner (6-3, So., Gresham, OR – Sam Barlow), who averaged 16 points, 2.9 rebounds and 2.7 assists in earning Heartland Conference *Co-Freshman-of-the-Year* honors last season. Also back are two other sophomores – Troy Ruff (6-5, So., Custer, MT),

who averaged 5.6 points and 2.6 rebounds and Mike Barton (6-8, So., Havre, MT), who saw limited action.

The only other sophomore is transfer Tyler Hentzen (6-6, So., Brea, CA) from Orange Coast where he averaged 6.3 points and 4.5 rebounds.

Among the incoming freshmen two are from Wyoming – Brean Tenant (6-6, Gillette, WY – Campbell County) and Kirk Blaine (6-6, Gillette, WY – Campbell County); three are from California – Cameron Khoury (6-8, Alta Loma, CA – Los Osos), John Brooks (6-1, Perris, CA – Rancho Verde) and Aaron Terry (6-3, Moreno Valley, CA – Valley View); one is from Louisiana – Kyle Palmer (5-9, Baton Rouge, LA – Scotlandville) and one is from Montana, Brett Taylor (5-8, Billings, MT – West).

Palmer might be the best of the bunch. He graduated in 2003 and has attended classes part-time at Baton Rouge CC but has not played since high school when he averaged 13.1 points and five assists to earn All-Metro honors.

“Jeff Miner and Kyle Palmer will someday be key players in the GNAC,” Carse said.

#### **ALASKA FAIRBANKS NANOOKS**

**Head Coach:** Clemon Johnson, Florida A&M '78 (First Year)

**Assistants:** Adrian Wakefield, Jocquis Sconiers, Ted DeLeon

**2006-07 Record:** 17-13

**Conference:** 8-8, 5<sup>th</sup>

**Returning Letter Winners:** 3

**Returning Starters:** Mike Titus (G, 6-2, Sr., 10.4 ppg, 3.3 rpg);

Colin Matteson (F, 6-8, Jr., 6.9 ppg, 3.3 rpg)

**Other Returnees:** Kevin Atkins (F, 6-6, So., 3.3 ppg, 4.3 rpg)

#### **OUTLOOK**

Mike Titus, Colin Matteson and Kevin Atkins are the only returning players back for first-year coach Clemon Johnson.

Titus (6-2, Sr., Fairbanks, AK – Lathrop) was Alaska Fairbanks' third leading scorer last season, averaging 10.4 points and 3.3 rebounds, while Matteson (6-8, Jr., Lynnwood, WA – Edmonds CC) started 18 games and averaged 6.9 points and 3.3 rebounds.

Atkins (6-6, So., Long Beach, CA – Long Beach Polytechnic) played in just 11 games and contributed 3.3 points per contest.

Three JC transfers and eight freshmen will complete the roster. Among the transfers is guard Philippe Jourdain (6-2, Jr., Cambridge, MA), who averaged 10.3 points and had 159 career assists and 61 career steals in 59 games at North Platte Community College in Nebraska.

A two-time JC all-star, Jourdain is a very athletic point guard, according to Johnson.

Other transfers are Roger Munoz (Jr., Managua, Nicaragua), a 6-9 center who played in 17 games at Trinity Valley, Tex., and Mladen Begojevic (6-5, Jr., Ruma, Serbia), who played two seasons at New Mexico Junior College and averaged 8.1 points.

Among the freshmen are forwards Jason Simmons (6-7, Cliftwood, NJ); Michael Anderson (6-7, Anchorage, AK – Dimond), Bo Edwards (6-2, Fairbanks, AK – Haskell Indian Nations) and David Cannamore (6-4, Eagle River, AK) and guards Kevin Campbell (6-0, Stockton, CA – Edison), Travis Pew (6-2, Fairbanks, AK – Ben Eielson), Bobby Pico (6-1, Fr., Barrow, AK) and DeRay Carger (6-2, Baytown, TX – Channelview).

Simmons redshirted last season at Voorhees College, while Pico is a transfer from Western State, Colo.