

SPORTS

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State of Oregon sees women's teams rise to elite status

By ANNE M. PETERSON
 Associated Press

CORVALLIS — Two ranked teams, two intense rivalry games and two raucous sellouts: Women's college basketball is enjoying a renaissance in the Pacific Northwest where Oregon and Oregon State are among the nation's elite teams again this season.

Oregon (24-2, 13-1 Pac-12) is ranked No. 2 in this week's AP Top 25, for its highest ranking ever. Oregon State (21-5, 11-3) is ranked No. 12.

Both teams, located just 50 miles apart, moved in the latest rankings following Oregon's 77-68 victory over the Beavers on Friday in Eugene, with the Ducks jumping a spot and Oregon State falling from No. 9.

The teams are likely to shift around again in next week's poll following the Beavers' 67-62 revenge victory over Oregon in Corvallis on Monday night.

Both games were sell-outs, and there was even a report of scalpers hawking general admission seats at Gill Coliseum for \$25, up from the usual \$12.

"Here's the thing, it's not just the full houses, that's an amazing thing, but the quality of basketball that's being played on these two teams is unbelievable. The level that

these two teams compete at, execute at, it's special, I mean it's just magnificent," Oregon State coach Scott Rueck said. "The fact that we are both in communities that will support the programs like we have, makes it what it is."

Oregon coach Kelly Graves was so amped by the crowd for the game at home that he grabbed the public address microphone afterward to offer his thanks.

"This doesn't happen all the time. In women's basketball, unfortunately, there are pockets that just don't draw regardless of how good the teams are. Just because you have a good team doesn't mean you're going to have fans," he said. "And I think these fans have really bought into our program and our players, they love these guys. And I just wanted to thank them for that."

Oregon State has been considered one of the top programs in the country since Rueck's fourth season at his alma mater in 2013-14, when the Beavers finished second in the league standings and returned to the NCAA Tournament for the first time since 1996.

The Beavers' best finish under Rueck's watch came in 2016 when they went to the Final Four. Oregon State has been to the tournament in each of the last five seasons, and last year reached the Elite Eight.



Krissy Barendse-Goodman

Madelynn Weaver was one of three Knappa juniors who earned all-league honors for the 2018-19 season.



Jodi Carlson

Two of Knappa's all-league players — Sophia Carlson, left, and Aiko Miller.

Three Loggers earn all-league honors

The Daily Astorian

THE 2018-19 NORTHWEST ALL-LEAGUE GIRLS BASKETBALL TEAM

Player of the year: Jaela McKinney, Portland Christian

Defensive player of the year: Nezhiah Castillo, City Christian

Coach of the year: Charles McKinney, Portland Christian

First team

Jaela McKinney, Sr., Portland Christian

Journie Conard, Jr., Portland Christian

Olivia Leslie, Jr., Nestucca

Emilee Owen, Jr., City Christian

Izzy Steerman, So., Faith Bible

Jordan Walters, Jr., Vernonia

Second team

Kenya Bolton, So., Faith Bible

Sophia Carlson, Jr., Knappa

Alicia Cruz-Lilly, Sr., Neah-Kah-Nie

Madeline DeLucia, Jr., Portland Christian

Holly Ishibashi, Jr., City Christian

Brooklynn Walters, Fr., Vernonia

Third team

Carly Brunner, So., Portland Christian

Nezhiah Castillo, Sr., City Christian

Shamilee Chatelain, So., Nestucca

Lauren Ely, Jr., Vernonia

Joyce Everett, Sr., Vernonia

Lilly Johnson, Jr., Gaston

Honorable mention

Maranda Brumley, So., Columbia

Brooklyn Davis, Sr., Columbia

Anna Goodloe, So., Faith Bible

Aubry Howard, Sr., Portland Christian

Kyla Huntley, So., Neah-Kah-Nie

Marlei Knox, So., City Christian

Ashley Lohman, Fr., Faith Bible

Yatzari Ozuna, Sr., Nestucca

Avery Smith, Sr., Neah-Kah-Nie

Madelynn Weaver, Jr., Knappa

Sportsmanship: Columbia/Neah-Kah-Nie

All-league defense

Nezhiah Castillo, Sr., City Christian

Madeline DeLucia, Jr., Portland Christian

Joyce Everett, Sr., Vernonia

Aiko Miller, Jr., Knappa

Avery Smith, Sr., Neah-Kah-Nie

Izzy Steerman, So., Faith Bible

The Knappa girls basketball program has reason to be optimistic for next season, as three Lady Loggers — all juniors — were named to the Northwest all-league team, announced Saturday at the league tournament.

League champion Portland Christian swept the Player of the Year and Coach of the Year awards, which went to Royals' senior Jaela McKinney and coach Charles McKinney.

Portland Christian ultimately had all five starters earn all-league recognition.

Knappa had three players gain all-league honors, as voted on by the league's coaches.

Junior Sophia Carlson earned second-team honors, junior Madelynn Weaver was named honorable mention, and junior Aiko Miller was one of six players selected to the league's all-defensive unit.

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