

# SEASON OUTLOOK • 2008 Preview

2008 SEASON

PLAYERS

COACHES

2007 REVIEW

OPPONENTS

NCAA TOURNAMENT

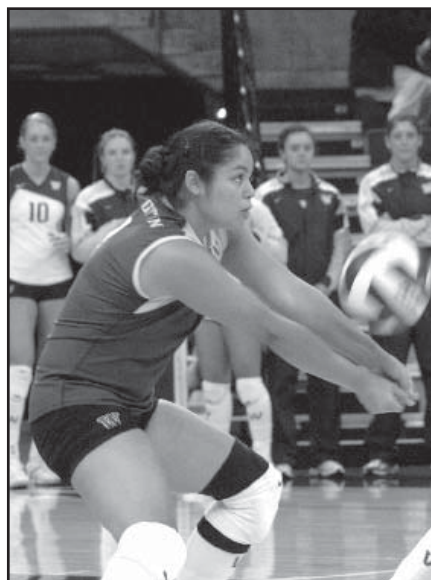
HISTORY

THE WASHINGTON WAY

The University of Washington volleyball team will have a new look this season, with the Huskies welcoming five new freshmen to the team and a junior transfer from Utah. Washington has been to six straight NCAA tournaments, finishing with a ranking no lower than 10th nationally in the last five years. With the loss of five seniors to graduation, the Huskies will have to mature quickly to once again find themselves in the hunt for a national title.

"We have five new players this season, so this team will have a different identity," said head coach Jim McLaughlin. "But looking at the progress we made last spring, in 32 days of training, I'm very encouraged. The returning players know how to train and continue to become more and more deliberate in their processes. As the younger girls figure out how to learn, and as each individual makes progress, this team will have a chance. Time will tell. We will have some good fire power and we are a good team, but we have a ways to go to become a great team. We have a chance."

The 2008 squad features only one senior in middle blocker Jessica Swarbrick. Last season, Swarbrick led the team in hitting percentage, racking up 281 kills on 506 swings for a .413 average on the year. Her hitting was good for second in the Pac-10 and 10th in the nation. In addition, Swarbrick led the Huskies in blocking, amassing 156 total blocks on the season (1.42 bpg). The Huskies also return three more starters this season, including the 2007 National Defensive Player of the Year, junior libero Tamari Miyashiro. Last season, Miyashiro ranked second in the conference and 32nd nationally in digs, averaging 5.65 per game.



Tamari Miyashiro was named 2007 National Defensive Player of the Year and earned her second All-America honors.

Also returning for the Huskies will be sophomore setter Jenna Hagglund and sophomore outside hitter Becky Perry. Each girl played in over 100 games last season and will draw on that experience to help propel the Huskies into the post-season. Hagglund snuck into the all-time top-10 in assists, putting up 1,422 in her rookie season, while Perry managed the third-highest number of kills on the team, totaling 326 on the year (3.13 kpg). Both were named to the Pac-10 All-Freshman team for their efforts.

Washington loses three starters, however, including a pair of outside hitters in Christal Morrison and Stevie Mussie, and a blocker in Alesha Deesing. Morrison and Mussie accounted for 47 percent of the Huskies' kills last season and combined for just over 54 percent of the team's total offense.

Despite the heavy personnel losses, McLaughlin is hesitant to call 2008 a rebuilding season.

"We will follow the same process we follow every year, and that is to make as much improvement as possible, individually and then as a group," said McLaughlin. "We are going to build this team step by step, becoming a good team, and then, at some point, with a lot of good work, a great team. That's the way it has been at the UW and the way it will always be at the UW."

Here's a breakdown of the 2008 Huskies by position:

## OUTSIDE HITTERS

Anchoring the offense this season at outside hitter will be sophomore Becky Perry and redshirt junior Jill Collymore.

Perry had a very solid freshman campaign, starting 24 matches last season and hitting .360 for the year with 326 kills (3.13 kpg). Perry's hitting percentage was second on the team last year, sixth in the conference and 37th nationally. In addition, she ranked third on the team in total blocks (106) and in blocks per game (1.02). For her efforts, she was named to the Pac-10 All-Freshman team and was an honorable mention All-Pac-10 selection.

"Every day Becky goes in the gym, she gets a little better," said McLaughlin. "She has become a very mindful player and her thoughts are beginning to serve her well. Beck has all the things the great ones have and she will be a special player if she stays on the path we always talk about. There is nothing she can't do. She can become great in everything she does by working hard every day, every play. If she makes the right choices in life, she will take this thing as far as she wants to take it. I admire her drive."

Collymore redshirted the 2007 season, but returns to the floor this year to bolster the Huskies'

offense. Her sophomore season, Collymore averaged 3.16 kills per game and notched seven double-figure kill performances. As a freshman, Collymore played in 19 games, posting an average of 1.89 kills per game. Prior to joining the Huskies, she was the 2004 Washington Player of the Year and a two-time league MVP.

"Jill had the best spring of her career thus far and, as a result, made the most progress," said McLaughlin. "Learning to make changes in your game is hard for any athlete and Jill has done a very good job of learning how to learn. The next step for her now is to transfer what she has learned to game day, which is very hard, but Jill can do it. When she does, the sky will be the limit. She has all the necessary tools to become great. Jill is developing her composure and when she is on her game, she is unstoppable."



Becky Perry hit .360 last season, which ranked her second on the team, sixth in the Pac-10 and 37th nationally.

Competing for playing time at outside hitter will be junior transfer Aerial Salvo. Salvo joined the squad last year from the University of Utah, but sat out the season per NCAA transfer rules. Her sophomore season at Utah, Salvo was named second-team All-America and was the Mountain West Conference Player of the Year. She started all 32 matches at Utah, averaging 4.13 kills per game, 3.35 digs per game and 4.98 points per game with a .298 hitting percentage. Salvo has also been involved with the US National Team system, playing on the 2006 US A2 team and the 2005 Junior National Team.

"Aerial has a very complete game," said McLaughlin. "She has no weaknesses. The objective for her is to take her game to the highest level. She loves to train, she works hard, and if



Jessica Swarbrick hit a team-best .413 in 2007, coming in second in the Pac-10 and 10th nationally.

she can maintain her focus and continue to improve -- which is hard, the better you get, but the great ones find a way -- she will play at the highest level. It's a tall order, but she is up to the task and understands the demands. She needs to stay healthy so her mechanics are critical each play. Every great team needs a player like her."

Sophomore Kindra Carlson also enters the mix. Carlson played in 43 games last season, racking up 85 kills and hitting .294, good for fourth on the team. She ranked sixth on the team in both kills per game (2.00) and blocks per game (0.78). In addition, Carlson showed tremendous accuracy at times, hitting over .500 three times in her rookie season, including twice over .600.

"Kindra has the arm speed, the foot speed, the jump and the feel for game, but most importantly, she's got the drive," said McLaughlin. "She has that GREAT intensity the elite must have every play, every day. I love coaching this kid. If she stays connected to the process in all the areas, she will play at the highest level. She must develop her field of vision and hit with more range and continue her progress as a passer. She understands what she has to do and she just has to make the necessary changes."

#### MIDDLE BLOCKERS

Leading the blocking corps will be senior veteran Jessica Swarbrick, a two-time All-America pick and 2007 first-team All-Pac-10 honoree. Last year, Swarbrick led the team and was second in the conference and 10th in the nation in hitting percentage (.413). She also led the Huskies in blocking with 156 total blocks and an average of 1.42 blocks per game. Her blocking average was fourth-best in the Pac-10 and 32nd in the country.

"Jessica had a very good spring and continues to improve," said McLaughlin. "Her identity is her arm, because she hits the ball so hard. But what impresses me most is that she has developed a complete skill level, specifically her abil-

ity to pass and jump serve. She needs to continue to improve her defensive ball control. She is a wonderful person and has had a great influence on her teammates. She is easy to respect and easy to listen to because she always does the right things the right way. She is very consistent in her approach day-to-day. She will have her best year as a senior."

Joining Swarbrick will be three freshmen eager to make their marks in Lauren Barfield, Kelcey Dunaway and Bianca Rowland.

Barfield, a Bellevue, Wash. native, joins the Huskies from Newport High School, where she was a two-year letterwinner and 2007 team captain. She was honored as King County Player of the Year last season and was named *Rise Magazine's* Greater Seattle Player of the Year. Barfield also earned first-team All-State honors after leading her team to a 14-5 record her senior season.

"Being around Lauren always gives you a good vibe," said McLaughlin. "She is so positive, works so hard and will do what it takes. She has a lot going for her, not to mention great physical ability. Maybe more ability than any player I've ever coached. She just needs to learn the movements, the responsibilities of the system, the eye-work and most importantly, learn how to learn. I am really looking forward to working with her."

Dunaway comes to Washington from Bainbridge High School in Bainbridge, Wash. where she was a three-year letterwinner and a two-time first-team All-Metro Conference honoree. Last season, Dunaway was named to the *Seattle Times* All-Area team and the *Seattle Post-Intelligencer* All-Area team. She was also named in *Volleyball Magazine's* Fab 50. A veteran of the US National Team system, Dunaway helped her Junior Olympic U-15 teams to 10th and fifth-place finishes in 2005 and 2006, respectively.

"Kelcey is a lot like [former Washington blocker] Darla Myhre, who was one of the best blockers in the country," remarked McLaughlin. "She is fast, she jumps well, can get over the net, she's very smart and she is a committed person who will do what it takes to become great. Her teammates love her because she is a good kid. She will become a complete player in time, but her first order of business will be her attack. Once we get her to torque more and not pike, she will become a lot more powerful. She wants to make these changes and she will."

Rowland, who hails from Lynnwood, Wash., was a three-year letterwinner at Kings High School and captain of her team in 2007. A two-time All-State selection, Rowland was twice named team MVP. She is also a veteran of the US National Team system, having competed in the Junior Olympics in Dallas earlier this year.

"Bianca has all the ability in the world -- speed, good arm speed, jumps well," said McLaughlin. "As she learns the movements and can repeat them and use them in our systems, and as she learns her responsibility in the system, she will compete and play at a high level. She will, in time, learn all aspects of this game and she will develop a complete skill level. However, initially we will put an emphasis on her attack, block and serve."

#### SETTERS

Washington returns Pac-10 All-Freshman pick Jenna Hagglund to the setter's slot. Last season, Hagglund put up 1,422 assists, giving her the sixth-best single-season mark in UW history and putting her at number 10 on the all-time assists career list. She averaged 13.54 assists per game her rookie season, which was second in the Pac-10 and 10th nationally. Before coming to Washington, Hagglund was the 2006 Cincinnati Player of the Year and was ranked 29th nationally among the prep class of 2007 by *PrepVolleyball*.

"I love working with Jenna," said McLaughlin. "She can do a lot of things well, but the best thing about her is that she continues to improve. I would like to see her even extend herself a little more and she is beginning to do this day-to-day. She is locating the ball much better with more tempo to the pins and she can set the quick with more range. Distribution choices will become the next emphasis as well as her ability to block. She understands what she needs to do and is very mindful in the process. As a result, her confidence is growing."

Competing for the starting job will be freshman Ryann Carter, who comes to Washington from Fife High School in Edgewood, Wash. Carter was a three-year letterwinner at Fife, where she captained her squad in 2006 and 2007. Her senior year, she was named Nisqually League



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Player of the Year and Fife High School Career Athlete of the Year. In addition, Carter holds the league and school records in aces (season) and career aces.

"What a presence, what a personality," said McLaughlin. "Ryann has the hands to do this. She just needs to learn the movements, the eye-work, the choices and the priorities. We will work closely with her to get her up to speed. She will get there and contribute to this team if she works her tail off every play, every day. I look forward to working with her."

## LIBERO/DEFENSIVE SPECIALISTS

2007 National Defensive Player of the Year Tamari Miyashiro will anchor the defense again this season. The junior and 2007 All-American amassed 622 digs last season and averaged 5.65 digs per game, good for second in the Pac-10 and 32nd nationally. After two seasons, her career 1,279 digs already ranks second all-time in Husky history. Miyashiro is on pace to shatter the current career digs record of 2,038 by the time she graduates.

"Tama is a special player," said McLaughlin. "I said last year that she was the best all-around player I have ever coached and she's better this year. She is also the most intelligent player I've coached and has a feel for the game that few ever obtain. She's a tremendous kid who's a joy to coach. When Tama talks, people listen, because the things she says are very meaningful."

Challenging Miyashiro for playing time will be junior Megan McAfee, sophomore Bizzy Williams and Kandiss Anderson. McAfee played in all 110 games of all 31 matches last season, racking up 187 digs and 23 service aces. Her 0.21 aces per game ranked fourth on the team and her 1.70 digs per game was good for fifth on the team.

"Megan's confidence is growing and she has improved her mechanics, which has made a huge difference in her ability to pass," said McLaughlin. "She is really becoming a very good passer and defender. Her serve, which is very good when she's on, is the next order of business. Her presence is getting stronger and stronger, but I would like her to talk a lot more during plays."

Williams joined the squad last season, playing in five games over three matches. She was a three-year letterwinner at Skyline High School in Sammamish, Wash., where she was also a two-time team MVP. Williams was named 2006 King County MVP and earned first-team All-State accolades her senior season.

"Bizzy is a great person in so many ways," said McLaughlin. "She has developed her ability to serve and pass and must continue to make progress. Her defensive skills will also be an empha-

sis. She has closed the gap and must now beat someone out to get on the floor."

Anderson, a Phoenix, Ariz. native, earned high school All-American honors last season and was named Small School Player of the Year, Phoenix Player of the Year and Metro Region Player of the Year. At Northwest Christian, Anderson was a three-year captain and three-time first-team All-State pick. She is also a four-time Junior Olympian.

"Kandiss will come in ahead of most freshmen," said McLaughlin. "She knows angles, she has very good eye-work, she works extremely hard and she wants to be great. And someday she will be great. I have very high expectations for her and she will compete for playing time in her first year, which is tough to do in a good program. She came to camp a few years ago and she made a very strong impression on the staff here."

## SCHEDULE

The Huskies will warm up with a four-tournament preseason before gearing up for Pac-10 play. The preseason will be highlighted by matches at Montana State and the three-day Rainbow Wahine Invitational in Honolulu, Hawai'i. McLaughlin hopes the tournaments will prepare his team for an always rigorous Pac-10 schedule, which includes three matches televised on FSN.

"We will look for improvement and we will try to continue to get things in place," said McLaughlin. "There is a process here from learning specific movement and eye-work in drills to doing those same things on game day. Developing the composure to do those same things under some different circumstances and different environments is a process. Each match, we hope to be a little bit better as we get ready for the Pac-10."

Washington will open conference play at Arizona State on Sept. 26 and Arizona on Sept. 27 before returning to the friendly confines of the Bank of America Arena to face California Oct. 3. October 5, the Huskies host Stanford in their first televised match of the season. Just under two weeks later, Oregon heads north to take on the Dawgs on Oct. 17. Washington heads south to face Stanford and Cal on the road Oct. 31 and Nov. 2, respectively. November 9 marks the Huskies' second televised match as the Huskies welcome UCLA to town. A week later, the third and final regular-season televised match will be played at Oregon on Nov. 16. The Huskies wrap up the regular season with a two-match home stand against Arizona and Arizona State Nov. 28 and 29.

"Each year, the Pac-10 is a great challenge and we have had pretty good success in the [NCAA] tournament because of the opponents we face each week," remarked McLaughlin. "Our task is to get this team ready for Pac-10 play because there are no nights off in this conference. If we are not prepared, we risk the chance of someone that is prepared sending us home very disappointed. This year, the Pac-10, again, will be very tough."

Seattle has been chosen as a host site for the NCAA Regionals, to be held at the Bank of America Arena on Dec. 12-13. Washington has twice before hosted the NCAA Regional round, in 2004 and 2006. Both times the Huskies have hosted the Regional tournament, they advanced to the Final Four. The 2008 NCAA Championships will be held in Omaha, Neb., Dec. 18-20.



Washington will host the 2008 NCAA Regionals Dec. 12-13