



Sports

March 31, 2007 Laramie, Wyoming
 University of Wyoming vs.
 University of Wisconsin
 Women's National Invitational
 Tournament Championship game
Wyoming 72 - Wisconsin 56



W
Y
O
M
B
I
N
G
S
C
O
W
G
I
R
L
S

W
Y
O
M
B
I
N
G
S



Men's Basketball

With an unbelievable 14 of their first 17 games being played in Wyoming (13 in Laramie), the men's team could go into the conference schedule with a 14-3 or 15-2 record. The mercenaries recruited from prep schools can play the game.

I have written about the number of prep school (post high school basketball factories) products but I missed one. I knew there were five - four from Stoneridge Prep in California and one from Genesis One - but Thomas Manzano played at TWO prep schools. **July 7, 2006:** "Manzano, who will play with the New York Panthers program this summer ..."
October 20, 2006: "Thomas Manzano left New York a year ago and landed at Genesis One down in Mississippi. One year down south was enough and now the athletic guard has re-classified and at a new prep school in the northeast."
October 23, 2006: "Now reclassified to a junior and playing at Notre Dame Prep in Massachusetts ..."
January 24, 2007: "Manzano will play at Notre Dame Prep in Fitchburg, Massachusetts. Manzano first started his high school career at Canarsie High School in Brooklyn, N.Y. After he finished up at Canarsie, he transferred to Genesis One in Mississippi."

March 10, 2009: "Thomas Manzano will leave Garden City Community College after redshirting, then playing just one season." Just how old is this kid? UW has kept his age guarded.

Anyone who now tells you that they were confident at the beginning of the baseball season that the Colorado Rockies would advance to the playoffs - even as a Wild Card team - is lying to you.

But they did and after ownership replaced the underachieving Clint Hurdle with the manager-in-waiting they hired in the off-season, things got much better. Not that Jim Tracy has had a smooth road to Denver. He had quit the Dodgers after the 2005 season and was fired by the Pirates after the 2007 season.

Tracy's record as manager of the Rockies was astounding. Taking over a team at 18-28, the Rockies went 74-42 the rest of the way. As the Wild Card entry into the playoffs, with the team having the best overall record being in the same division, the Rockies did not start with the Dodgers but with the Phillies. After splitting the two games in Philadelphia, the Rockies blew golden opportunities to win the next two in Denver. Instead, they lost both as their closer, Huston Street, and their best hitter late in the season, Troy Tulowitzki, wore the goat horns.

The incredible thing was that they were in the playoffs to begin with. It appeared that the 2009 season would be even worse than the 2008 season for the Rockies. Their best player, Matt Holliday, was traded to Oakland. Their best starting pitcher, Jeff Francis, sat out the year. Their best set-up men, Taylor Buchholz and Manuel Corpas, were lost for the season. And, their All-Star closer went to Anaheim and is now playing in the ALCS.

In so many ways, the team should have continued on the aimless ways of Clint Hurdle but, somehow and most often, Tracy pushed the right buttons and the Rockies played at a .638 clip under him.

Starting pitching took them a long way this past season but it faltered at the end. Dependable Jason Marquis (with a \$9.75 million salary) became unreliable at the end of the season and during the playoffs. The Rockies best starting pitcher for most of the season, Jorge De La Rosa, was injured and did not pitch in the playoffs. Huston Street wore out and lost the final two games - and the NLDS.

Late in the season, only Todd Helton, Troy Tulowitzki, Yorbit Torrealba and pinch hitter Seth Smith were dependable, with rookie outfielders Carlos Gonzales and Dexter Fowler often surprising. Clint Barmes, Brad Hawpe and Ian Stewart disappeared at the end. Late arriving Jason Giambi provided more panache than power. It was an amazing run. Key players should be back except Barmes, Marquis, Torrealba and Garrett Atkins.



Following shortly after the Cowgirls WNIT championship in 2007, the Cowboys team has gone mercenary in an effort to duplicate the 'Girls accomplishment. Yet, even with 22 year-old sophomores, the UW men's team had to "buy into" a post season game after the 2008-2009 season - in a tournament no one had heard of before or since.

While the men's team took one route to try to rebuild, Joe Legerski and his women's team just reloaded. Only two seasons after the WNIT championship, the UW women's team appears to be back.

A roster filled with almost all high school graduates, and returning '07 SuperSub Aubrey Vandiver, and without stacking a home game schedule to pile up hollow victories, Legerski's squad will be in the thick of the Mountain West Conference chase for an NCAA tournament berth.

There are no seniors on this year's Cowgirls team and only four juniors, including Vandiver, now a redshirt Junior after sitting out last season with health issues.

One of those juniors is the only transfer from a another program - Randi Richardson, who came from the University of San Francisco and sat out a year before joining the UW team last season. On the 12 person roster are three Wyoming high school grads and they are

not taken in-state members to the team who ride the bench and watch the others play. Hillary Carlson is a 6'3" returning junior from Cheyenne who has proven to be talented on both ends of the court. Kristen Scheffler (Lovell) and Aubrey Vandiver (Laramie) are the other two players from Wyoming. Two years ago, Vandiver (with apologies to Megan McGuffey, Justyna Podzemska, Dominique Sisk and Jodie Bolerjack) was the second best player on that championship squad (behind only the incomparable Aussie, Hanna Zaveck). When Aubrey was on the floor, things happened. Quickly. She is a player. A microwave.

There will again be three players with Australian roots. After Zavecz, expectations will be high for these players from Down Under and Emma Langford and Jade Kennedy are both very good players. Freshman Bec Campigli is an unknown. Other girls are from Iowa, Colorado (2), Nebraska, Washington and New Mexico.

Equally important as the skill level of the players Legerski and his staff recruit to UW (following the lead of Cindy Fisher before him), these girls are truly student-athletes. And they are not just average students from U.S. high schools, they are exceptional students. (See box, Aussies down)

Carlson, Hillary	6'3"	Junior	Cheyenne, Wyo	20	April 10, 1989
<i>National Honor Society, Honor Roll, 4.0 GPA</i>					
Fitzgerald, Leah	6'2"	Sophomore	Colorado Springs	19	May 1, 1990
<i>Student Council President as Sophomore and Junior, VP as Senior</i>					
Freeze, Brenna	5'11"	Sophomore	Albuquerque, NM	19	July 24, 1990
<i>Academic All-District in both basketball and volleyball, Honor Roll</i>					
Richardson, Randi	5'7"	Junior	Arlington, Washington	22	October 5, 1987
Scheffler, Kristen	5'11"	Sophomore	Lovell, Wyoming	20	July 29, 1989
<i>Honor Roll, named to Wyo Coaches Association Academic Team</i>					
Sewell, Chaundra	6'1"	Freshman	Broomfield, Colorado	18	April 30, 1991
<i>National Honor Society, Honor Roll</i>					
Sickles, Ashley	6'1"	Sophomore	Cresco, Iowa	19	May 11, 1990
<i>National Honor Society, Honor Roll</i>					
Vandiver, Aubrey	5'11"	R-Junior	Laramie, Wyoming	21	June 5, 1988
<i>National Honor Society, Honor Roll, Academic All-MWC, Scholar Athlete</i>					
Wilson, Sara	5'9"	Freshman	Grant, Nebraska	18	May 7, 1991
<i>National Honor Society, Honor Roll</i>					
Campigli, Bec	5'10"	Freshman	Melbourne, Australia	19	July 6, 1990
Kennedy, Jade	6'1"	Junior	Cairns, Australia	20	December 3, 1989
Langford, Emma	6'2"	Sophomore	Arthurton, Australia	20	January 29, 1989