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## WWU's Lauren Lee voted GNAC Player of the Year

**PORTLAND, Ore.** – On her way to breaking the Great Northwest Athletic Conference women's golf single-season scoring average record for the second consecutive season, Western Washington's **Lauren Lee** was voted by the league's coaches as the 2025-26 GNAC Player of the Year.

The senior from Pleasanton, Calif., leads the GNAC with a scoring average of 74.0 strokes per round this year – an improvement of 0.4 strokes per round upon her GNAC record of 74.4 set during her historic 2024-25 campaign. Lee's teammate **Carly Ikei** was voted as the GNAC Freshman of the Year, while the GNAC Newcomer of the Year honor went to **Kyleigh McGowen** of Montana State University Billings. After leading Simon Fraser to its fourth consecutive GNAC Championships women's team title, **Krysta Schaus** was voted by her peers as the GNAC Coach of the Year.

- Player of the Year:** [Lauren Lee, Western Washington](#)
- Coach of the Year:** [Krysta Schaus, Simon Fraser](#) (2nd of career)
- Newcomer of the Year:** [Kyleigh McGowen, Montana State Billings](#)
- Freshman of the Year:** [Carly Ikei, Western Washington](#)

### First-Team All-Conference

Name	School	Yr.	Hometown (Previous School)
<a href="#">Lauren Lee</a>	Seattle Pacific	So.	Bellevue, Wash. (Western Washington)
^\$ <a href="#">Izzy Ferguson</a>	Simon Fraser	Sr.	Ottawa, Ont. (St. Mother Teresa)
^@ <a href="#">Lauren Lee</a>	Western Washington	Sr.	Pleasanton, Calif. (Biola)
^@\$ <a href="#">Meera Minhas</a>	Simon Fraser	Sr.	Burnaby, B.C. (IMG Academy)
^@ <a href="#">Dana Smith</a>	Simon Fraser	Jr.	Campbell River, B.C. (Carihi)
^ <a href="#">Orraya Tipasathien</a>	Montana State Billings	Jr.	Bangkok, Thailand (Daronpat)
<a href="#">Zoe Garcia</a>	Seattle Pacific	Jr.	Bend, Ore. (Regis)

### Second-Team All-Conference

Name	School	Yr.	Hometown (Previous School)
#@ <a href="#">Anaya Bhandal</a>	Simon Fraser	Sr.	Surrey, B.C. (Fraser Heights)
# <a href="#">Ella Tannenberger</a>	Montana State Billings	So.	Holzgerlingen, Germany (Schonbuch-Gymnasium)
<a href="#">Carly Ikei</a>	Western Washington	Fr.	Gig Harbor, Wash. (Gig Harbor)
^@\$ <a href="#">Kelsie Inouye</a>	Saint Martin's	Sr.	Aiea, Hawaii (Punahou)
#@\$ <a href="#">Ashley Briland</a>	Saint Martin's	Sr.	Sedro-Woolley, Wash. (Mount Vernon)
<a href="#">Kyleigh McGowen</a>	Montana State Billings	Jr.	Andrews, Texas (New Mexico JC)
<a href="#">Jadyn Gracie</a>	Western Washington	Fr.	Calgary, Alta. (Murray State)

^ - 2024-25 First-Team All-GNAC | # - 2024-25 Second-Team All-GNAC | @ - 2023-24 First-Team All-GNAC | \$ - 2022-23 First-Team All-GNAC

Lee's Player of the Year season has been an extension of where she left off in the spring of 2025, when she finished as the NCAA Division II national runner-up. Her campaign has featured a pair of first-place finishes, as she tied for first at the East Bay Fall Invitational in October among a field of 82 players and she won in playoff fashion the Fujikura Invitational in March among a field of 74 players. Lee also had a runner-up finish at The Big Freeze in March and tied for sixth at the GNAC Championships. Her season will extend at next week's NCAA West Region Championships, where she earned a spot as an individual competitor.

The GNAC's top-ranked player on a national scale, Lee checked in at No. 29 in Division II in the latest Clippd rankings. She is bidding to complete just the fourth season in GNAC history with an average below 75.0 strokes per round as she remains on pace to top her own conference single-season scoring record. Lee is the eighth woman in WWU history to claim the conference's top women's golf award and the first since Megan Billeter in 2022. Ahead of next week's regional, Lee holds a three-year career stroke average of 75.2 which is second-lowest in the history of the conference.

Shining brightest at last week's conference tournament, Ikei delivered a ninth-place finish with a three-round score of 233 (78-74-81) to secure the GNAC's top freshman award. In her first year from Gig Harbor High School, Ikei posted the second-best scoring average on the team at 77.1 strokes per round. In addition to her top-10 finish at the GNAC Championships, Ikei also tied for second at the Bob Grisham Memorial Shootout in her collegiate debut tournament in September. Ikei is the fourth Viking to take home GNAC Freshman of the Year and the first since Dani Bailey in 2021.

In her first season with the Yellowjackets after transferring from New Mexico Junior College, McGowen put together a standout campaign. She ranked third on the squad with a scoring average of 79.8 strokes per round, landing a pair of top-10 finishes and one top-five finish. McGowen finished in the upper-half among the field of 29 players in her debut GNAC Championships tournament, taking 13th with a three-round score of 238 (76-81-81). She became the first-ever MSUB player to garner GNAC Newcomer of the Year honors.

The 2025-26 season will continue next week for the Simon Fraser women, who once again qualified for the NCAA West Region Championships under the guidance of Schaus. In her second season as head coach, Schaus piloted the Red Leafs to a decisive team win at the GNAC Championships as their team score of 913 (303-302-308) was 25 strokes better than runner-up Seattle Pacific. Along with securing its fourth consecutive GNAC Championships team title, SFU tied Western Washington for the most-ever women's golf trophies with its seventh since joining the conference in 2010-11. Schaus is the third SFU coach to win the award multiple times, joining John Buchanan (2016-17) and four-time recipient Matthew Steinbach (2019-20, 23-24).

A trio of Red Leaf players were featured on the all-conference first team, including fourth-year selection **Meera Minhas** and third-year picks **Izzy Ferguson** and **Dana Smith**. One of the most prolific golfers in conference history, Minhas put together another memorable season as she ranked second in the GNAC at 74.7 strokes per round this season. She will continue her bid to join WWU's Lee in becoming the only two players in conference history to have multiple seasons averaging below 75 strokes per round, as her mark of 74.9 strokes per round in 2023-24 stands as the fifth-best season in GNAC history. The 2024 GNAC Player of the Year and 2025 conference tournament champion, Minhas had another stellar showing taking fourth at this year's championship with a score of 228 (73-78-77). Minhas lowered her career scoring average to 75.43 strokes per round, which ranks third all-time in conference history. Minhas's 88-career rounds played are the most in conference history, and she became just the fifth player to earn first-team all-conference four times joining WWU's Kristen Hansen (2013-16) and Jenn Paul (2015-18), SFU's Emily Leung (2016-20) and Concordia's Cammie Decker (2016-20).

Another Red Leaf working on a storied career, Smith took home first-team for the third-consecutive season. The junior sits fourth in the conference in 2025-26 with a stroke average of 75.2, and played her way to her third straight top-five finish at the GNAC Championships placing third last week at the Coeur d'Alene Resort. Smith's resume also includes 2024 GNAC Freshman of the Year, 2024 GNAC Championships medalist and 2025 GNAC Player of the Year. Her current three-year career average of 75.07 strokes per round is the lowest since the conference added women's golf in 2007-08.

Also earning her third-career first-team nod was SFU's Ferguson, who was the runner-up at last week's conference tournament. The SFU senior shot a three-round score of 226 (77-76-73), with her tournament-final round best score leaving her just one stroke behind the individual medalist. A model of consistency since debuting for SFU in 2022, Ferguson ranked second on the team and third in the conference with a stroke average of 75.0 this season. She also stands as one of the top players by measure of career stroke average, where she ranks fourth in GNAC history at 75.87. Ferguson and Smith joined Minhas, Leung and Jaya Rampuri (2017-19, 20) to become the third and fourth Red Leafs to earn three appearances on the all-conference first team.

Making history for second-year program Seattle Pacific last week, sophomore **Lauren Lee** won the GNAC Championships individual title to land herself a spot on the all-conference first team. Lee posted a three-round score of 225 (73-75-77) to hold off SFU's Ferguson by a single stroke, winning her second consecutive tournament and giving the newly-founded Falcons their first-ever women's golf champion. Leading the team all season long, Lee ranked seventh in the GNAC this year with a scoring average of 76.4 strokes per round. Her teammate **Zoe Garcia** also earned first-team all-conference recognition, as she finished just behind her at 10th in the GNAC with 77.2 strokes per round. Garcia's junior campaign at SPU featured a memorable tie for first place at the Tim Tierney Pioneer Shootout, where she broke the GNAC two-round scoring average with back-to-back 4-under-par 68s for a total of 136. Garcia capped her season by tying for fourth at the GNAC Championships, helping the Falcons to a second-place team finish.

Montana State Billings' **Orraya Tipasathien** was voted first-team all-conference for the second consecutive season, and is the conference's other individual player whose season will continue next week as she earned a spot in the upcoming regional championship. Leading the

Yellowjackets all season long with the league's sixth-best scoring average at 75.8 strokes per round, Tipasathien etched another stellar season into her career ledger. Through three campaigns in the Magic City, Tipasathien holds the sixth-best stroke average in GNAC history at 76.66 strokes per round. She joined former NCAA Division II Championships qualifier and MSUB Hall of Famer Kalli Stanhope as the second woman in school history to earn first-team all-GNAC twice.

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