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## Gai caps career w/GNAC Player of the Year

**PORTLAND, Ore.** – Putting the finishing touches on one of the greatest women’s basketball careers in Great Northwest Athletic Conference history, Central Washington senior **Asher Cai** was selected by the league’s coaches as the 2025-26 Player of the Year.

Among her numerous achievements this season, Cai became the league’s all-time leading scorer and enters this week’s GNAC Championships tournament having accumulated 2,195 points since the outset of her career in 2022. She became just the second player in league history to surpass 2,000 points, breaking Alisha Breen’s GNAC record of 2,001 points set from 2013-18 while playing at Montana State Billings.

GNAC regular-season champion Western Washington featured the GNAC Newcomer of the Year in senior **Olivia Hodges** and the GNAC Coach of the Year **Carmen Dolfo**. **Avery Oaster** of Saint Martin’s was voted the GNAC Defensive Player of the Year and Montana State Billings’ **Cassie Chesnut** got the nod as GNAC Freshman of the Year.

### 2025-26 GNAC Women’s Basketball All-Conference Team

- Player of the Year: [Asher Cai, Central Washington University](#)
- Coach of the Year: [Carmen Dolfo, Western Washington University](#)
- Defensive Player of the Year: [Avery Oaster, Saint Martin’s University](#)
- Newcomer of the Year: [Olivia Hodges, Western Washington University](#)
- Freshman of the Year: [Cassie Chesnut, Montana State University Billings](#)

#### First-Team All-Conference

Name	School	Position	Ht.	Yr.	Hometown (Previous School)
<a href="#">*1%^ Asher Cai</a>	Central Washington	Guard	5-9	SR	Colfax, WA (Colfax)
<a href="#">*Olivia Hodges</a>	Western Washington	Forward	6-1	SR	Pasadena, CA (Pasadena/Cal State LA)
<a href="#">Avery Oaster</a>	Saint Martin’s	Forward	6-1	SR	Golden, CO (Green Mountain)
<a href="#">Mahaila Harrison</a>	Alaska Anchorage	Forward	6-0	SO	Vancouver, WA (DME Acad./VCU)
<a href="#">*Kylani Rookstool</a>	Western Oregon	Guard	5-9	JR	Snohomish, WA (Glacier Peak/North Idaho)
<a href="#">Libby Stump</a>	Western Washington	Guard	5-8	JR	Ferndale, WA (Lynden Christian/Montana)

#### Second-Team All-Conference

Name	School	Position	Ht.	Yr.	Hometown (Previous School)
<a href="#">@\$ Capri Sims</a>	Central Washington	Forward	6-0	JR	Post Falls, ID (Post Falls)
<a href="#">Trinidadie Nichols</a>	Northwest Nazarene	Guard	5-5	SR	Post Falls, ID (Post Falls/UM Western)
<a href="#">Cassie Chesnut</a>	Montana State Billings	Forward	6-2	FR	Lake Forest Park, WA (Shorecrest)
<a href="#"># Jada Travis</a>	Saint Martin’s	Guard	5-5	SO	Tacoma, WA (Bellarmine Prep)
<a href="#">Fiona Snashall</a>	Central Washington	Forward	6-2	JR	La Canada, CA (Holy Family/Regis)
<a href="#">Rachel Loukes</a>	Simon Fraser	Guard	5-10	JR	Prince George, BC (College Heights)

#### Honorable Mention All-Conference

Name	School	Position	Ht.	Yr.	Hometown (Previous School)
<a href="#">@ Elaina Mack</a>	Alaska Anchorage	Guard	5-8	SR	King Cove, AK (King Cove)
<a href="#">Annalee Coronado</a>	Central Washington	Guard	5-9	JR	Othello, WA (Othello)
<a href="#">Kaitlin Grossman</a>	Montana State Billings	Forward	5-11	SR	Billings, MT (Billings West)

<a href="#">Tailey Harris</a>	Montana State Billings	Guard	5-6	FR	Billings, MT (Lockwood)
<a href="#">Kyla Momberg</a>	Montana State Billings	Guard	5-8	JR	Box Elder, MT (Box Elder/UM Western)
<a href="#">!\$ Kendall Clark</a>	Northwest Nazarene	Forward	5-10	JR	Melba, ID (Melba)
<a href="#">Laiken Hill</a>	Saint Martin's	Guard	5-7	SO	Yakima, WA (West Valley)
<a href="#"># Kiana Bios</a>	Saint Martin's	Guard	5-9	SR	Warden, WA (Warden)
<a href="#">Layne Kearns</a>	Seattle Pacific	Guard	5-7	JR	Hamilton, MT (Hamilton)
<a href="#">Enid Vaifanua</a>	Western Oregon	Guard	5-6	SR	St. George, UT (Desert Hills/Snow Coll.)
<a href="#">Ciona Wells</a>	Western Oregon	Guard	5-7	SO	Tacoma, WA (Lincoln)
<a href="#">@ Demi Dykstra</a>	Western Washington	Guard	5-9	JR	Lynden, WA (Lynden Christian)

\* - Unanimous Selection | ! - 2024-25 First-Team All-GNAC | # - 2024-25 Second-Team All-GNAC | @ - 2024-25 Honorable Mention All-GNAC  
 % - 2023-24 First-Team All-GNAC | \$ - 2023-24 Honorable Mention All-GNAC  
 ^ - 2022-23 Honorable Mention All-GNAC

Cai saved her best offensive season for last, averaging a career-high 23.1 points per game this winter to lead the GNAC and rank second in NCAA Division II women's basketball. Her scoring average also stands as the fourth-highest in GNAC single-season history. The 5-foot-9 guard from Colfax, Wash., surpassed 20 points in a game in 19 of 28 contests so far this season, and had a quartet of 30-point performances. She scored a career-high 37 points on Nov. 29 against Mary and then matched that figure on Feb. 12 against Montana State Billings. Cai had three double-doubles including a season-high 13 rebounds on Jan. 15 against Seattle Pacific, and she recorded a season-high nine assists on Nov. 15 against Cal Poly Humboldt. She helped lead the Wildcats to an overall record of 23-5 during the regular season, and CWU tied for second in the GNAC standings at 14-4 to earn the No. 2 seed and a first-round bye into the conference tournament.

One of the league's most versatile, all-around players, Cai has also contributed 6.1 rebounds per game and a career-best 4.5 assists per game this season. Cai is the GNAC all-time leader in made field goals (732) and made 3-pointers (279), ranks third in GNAC history in points per game (18.29) and made free throws (452), fifth in games started (119) and minutes played (3,982), 11th in total rebounds (832) and 24th in total assists (368). She becomes the fifth woman in CWU history and the fourth in the last five seasons to claim the league's top honor, joining former teammates Sunny Huerta (2025) and Samantha Bowman (2023), Cassidy Malcolm (2022) and Rose Shaw (2002). She also became the fifth player in conference history to earn first-team all-league three times, joining Huerta (2023-25), Alaska Anchorage's Rebecca Kielinski (2007-09), Simon Fraser's Nayo Raincock-Ekunwe (2011-13) and Montana State Billings' Bobbi Knudsen (2012-14).

Also earning unanimous first-team all-conference selection was WWU's Hodges, who has had a season for the record books as well. Entering the conference tournament, Hodges leads Division II women's basketball with 13.0 rebounds per game, a figure that stands fourth-highest in GNAC single-season history. Hodges reached double digits in rebounding in all but seven of her 29 games played during the regular season and capped her stellar year with a season-high 22 boards in the finale against Montana State Billings last Saturday. The 6-foot-1 forward from Pasadena, Calif., completed a league-leading 21 double-doubles throughout the campaign, including a season-high 37 points to go along with 17 rebounds against Azusa Pacific on Nov. 22. Hodges contributed 16.2 points per game to her team offensively, and she ranked eighth in the conference with 0.8 blocked shots per game. Hodges, who transferred last offseason from fellow Division II Cal State Los Angeles, is the fourth player in WWU history to earn the GNAC Newcomer of the Year honor, joining Dani Iwami (2018), Jessica Summers (2009) and Mollie Stelmack (2006).

Saint Martin's lived up to its preseason coaches poll ranking of third thanks in large part to the play of Oaster, who became the first player in school history to claim GNAC Defensive Player of the Year honors. Oaster averaged 8.2 rebounds per game to rank sixth in the GNAC, 1.2 blocks per game to rank sixth and 1.7 steals per game to rank 10th. In her fourth season with the Saints, the 6-foot-1 senior from Golden, Colo., started all 27 contests and contributed 12.6 points per game and 1.9 assists per game on the offensive end. She posted seven double-doubles this season, five of which came in her final seven contests as she found her stride down the stretch. Her signature performance was a 30-point, 16-rebound game in a win over Northwest Nazarene on Feb. 19. She became just the fourth player in SMU history to garner first-team all-conference recognition, joining Martina Kartikova (2005), Beth Layton (2006) and two-time selection Dara Zack (2009, 2011). The No. 3 seed Saints went 18-9 overall and tied CWU for second in the GNAC standings with a league record of 14-4.

The first woman in program history to earn GNAC Freshman of the Year honors, Chesnut was a big reason the Yellowjackets made it back to the postseason despite losing four all-conference starters from last year's roster. The 6-foot-2 forward from Shorecrest

High School in Lake Forest Park, Wash., made her presence known immediately, leading the team in both scoring at 12.9 points per game and rebounding at 8.6 boards per game during the regular season. Chesnut ranked fifth in the GNAC in rebounds per game, second in the league with 1.4 blocks per game and 11th in scoring. Like Hodges and Oaster, Chesnut was a double-double machine finishing with nine in her debut collegiate campaign. Her stellar year included a season-high 27 points to go with 11 boards on Dec. 21 against Daemen, and a season-high 16 rebounds to go with 20 points on Jan. 3 against Seattle Pacific. Eight of her double-doubles came in the second half of the season, as she helped MSUB to a winning record of 17-14 overall and a tie for fifth place in the league standings at 9-9.

Earning GNAC Coach of the Year for the sixth time in her career, Dolfo was selected by her peers for the honor after piloting her team to its seventh GNAC regular-season title. The Vikings won eight consecutive games to close the regular season, going 15-3 in conference play and 23-6 overall. The top seed and host for the upcoming GNAC Championships, WWU posted a spotless 11-0 record on its home court inside Sam Carver Gym during the regular season. A fixture in the college basketball coaching landscape for more than a quarter century, Dolfo stands as one of the most successful coaches of her era across all levels within the sport. She is the GNAC's winningest all-time coach, holding records of 500-185 (.730) overall and 313-101 (.756) in conference games since the league was formed in 2001-02. Since her career began in 1991, Dolfo holds an overall record of 732-279 (.724) in her 35 seasons at WWU. She is one of just 45 coaches in NCAA history and seven in NCAA Division II history to accumulate at least 700 wins, and on Jan. 15 this season she coached her 1,000th game at WWU. In addition to WWU's seven regular-season crowns, Dolfo has led the Vikings to four GNAC Championships tournament titles (2024, 2023, 2014, 2013). WWU advanced to the NCAA Championships tournament 19 times, made it to the Elite Eight three times and to the Division II national title game in 2022.

The 2026 GNAC Women's Basketball Championships kick off on Thursday afternoon in Bellingham, Wash. All tournament information, including ticketing, schedules and live coverage, [can be found online here](#).