

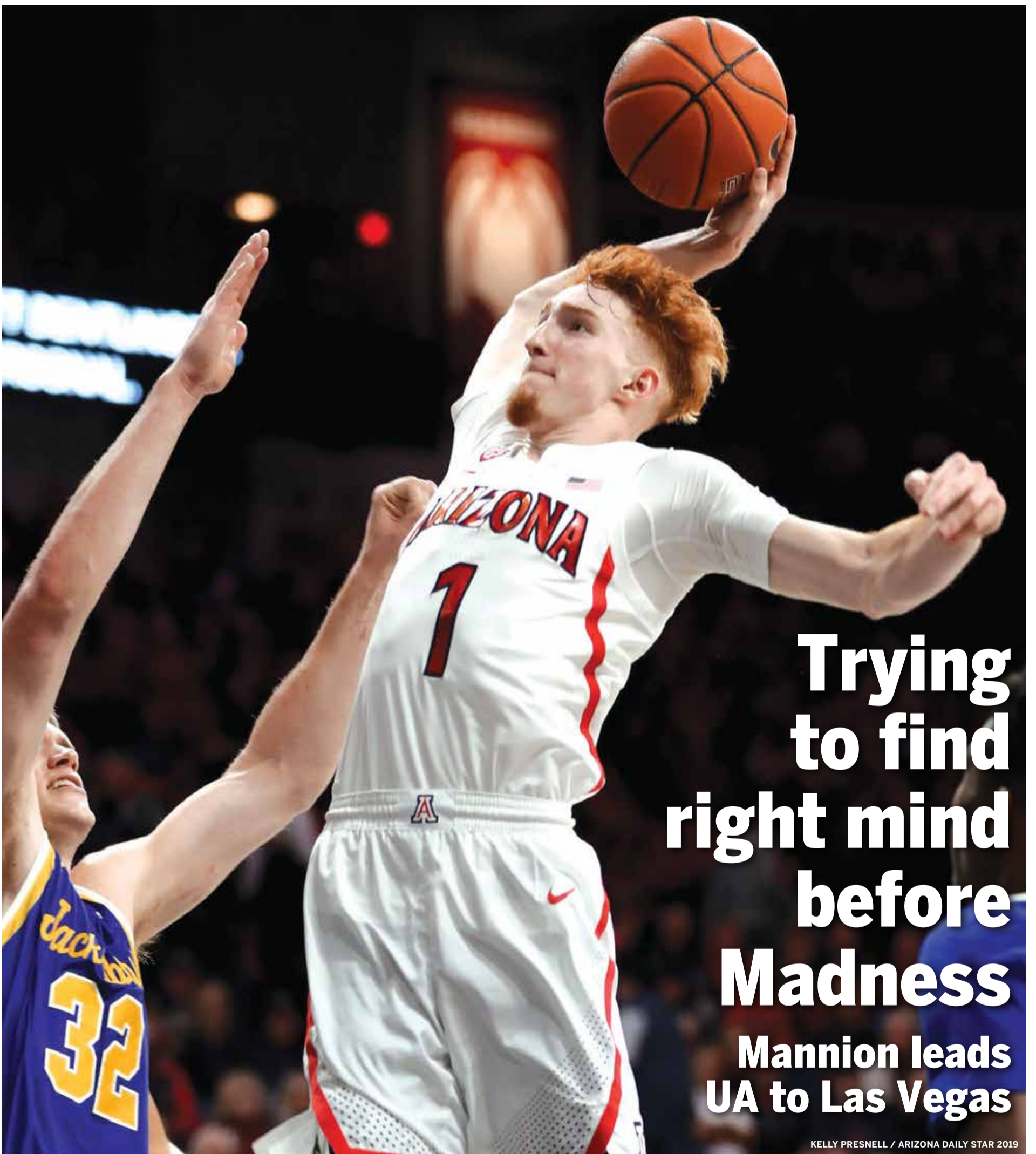


tucson.com sports | **THE WILDCASTER**

# PAC-12 EXTRA

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 11, 2020 • SECTION C

Editor: Ryan Finley / 520-573-4312 / sportsed@tucson.com



KELLY PRESNELL / ARIZONA DAILY STAR 2019

**Finding the formula**  
Greg Hansen: Cats can look to past for right roster mix / **C2**

**Plenty to play for**  
Pac-12 tourney a chance for UA to put it all together / **C4**

**Unpredictable Pac-12**  
A team-by-team look at who could hit the jackpot / **C11**

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RAY CHAVEZ / THE ASSOCIATED PRESS 2012

Cal's Jorge Gutierrez probably got on the nerves of most Arizona fans when he was with the Golden Bears, but a tenacious defensive player like that is someone who can help you win big.

# FIVE PLAYERS FROM PAC-12'S PAST CAN SHOW CATS NEW WAY FORWARD

From Sombrero Peak to Mount Lemmon, from Sentinel Peak to Mount Wrightston, the Southern Arizona chorus echoes: *Sean Miller has got to stop recruiting five-star recruits.*

No more McDonald's All-Americans.

No more one-and-dones. It ain't working.

Go get another T.J. McConnell. Find the next Solomon Hill. Oh, how we miss Nick Johnson.

So far, no one has stepped forward with a tangible, sustainable plan for Arizona's basketball success. It's just: Don't do this any longer.

I have a plan that will work. I'm serious.

From 2001-15, the Pac-12 Conference produced five players of the year who were exactly the kind of stay-and-play prospects that could take Arizona back to the Final Four.

Introducing:

• **Sean Lampley, 2001, Cal. Power forward.** He was a 3-star recruit from the Chicago area who was probably going to attend Eastern Michigan before new Cal coach Ben Braun, then at EMU, persuaded Lampley to follow him to Berkeley. Lampley became Cal's all-time scoring leader, 1,716 points, averaging 19.5 as a senior, helping the Bears finish 11-7, fourth in the Pac-10. Draft stock? Not much. He was the 44th overall selection in the 2001 draft and never started an NBA game.

• **Sam Clancy, 2002, USC. Center.** Undersized a bit at 6 feet 7 inches, Clancy chose USC over Cincinnati amid claims that he was paid \$25,000 by the Trojans. Those allegations were never proved. In his senior year at USC, Clancy averaged 19 points and 10 rebounds on a 22-10, second-place team. Draft stock? He was No. 45 overall and never



Greg Hansen

played an NBA game, but did play for 17 European teams.

• **Jerome Randle, 2010, Cal. Shooting guard.** Still the Bears' career scoring leader, 1,835 points, Randle was the quintessential college ballplayer. He averaged 18 points as a senior when the Bears won the Pac-10 at 13-5. A 3-star recruit from the Chicago area, Randle went to Cal because it was a better offer than his other finalists: Tulsa, Dayton and DePaul. Draft stock? He went undrafted and has played for more than a dozen pro teams from the Maine Red Claws to his current club, Fuenlabrada in Spain's Euroleague.

• **Jorge Gutierrez, 2012, Cal. Point guard.** Arizona fans surely remember Gutierrez because he was annoying, playing with passion and an in-your-face demeanor. He averaged 13 points for the Golden Bears as a senior, when they went 13-5 and finished in second place in the Pac-12. He was the league's top defensive player. He was a 3-star recruit who chose Cal over offers from UTEP, Northern Colorado and UC Santa Barbara. NBA stock? Undrafted, although he did play in 47 NBA games before hitting the minor-league circuit.

• **Joseph Young, 2015, Oregon. Wing.** Young signed with Providence after his high school days in Houston, but was released from his letter-of-intent and played two seasons for the hometown Houston Cougars. He was a three-star prospect who then transferred to Oregon,



DEAN KNUTH / ARIZONA DAILY STAR 2010

Former Cal player Jerome Randle didn't receive any attention from the game's perennial powers coming out of high school, but ended up averaging 18 points per game as a senior as the Golden Bears won the Pac-10.

where he led the Ducks with 21 points per game in 2015, reaching the NCAA Tournament Round of 32. He played with a chip on his shoulder and could score from deep 3-point range. Draft stock? He was selected 43rd overall but played in just 127 NBA games — one career start — before a Euro-League career that now finds him playing in China for the Nanjing Monkey Kings.

That's five Pac-12 players of

the year. Lampley. Clancy. Randle. Gutierrez. Young. None were first-round draft picks. None were McDonald's All-Americans. All played four years of college basketball.

All had a knock against them. Clancy wasn't quite tall enough to be a dominant center, yet he became a sturdy inside presence, the Pac-10's player of the year in 2001.

Lampley wasn't a fluid enough

athlete, not an NBA prospect. He broke his foot as a senior in high school. Yet he became the Pac-10's top player in 2002.

Randle was considered a mid-major prospect, sort of like 2012 Arizona starting point guard Mark Lyons, who put in three years at Xavier before becoming a clutch, all-conference, Sweet 16 standout at Arizona.

Gutierrez wasn't a good shooter, wasn't an elite athlete, didn't dazzle anyone on the AAU circuit. All he could do is find a way to beat you.

Young was in the dime-a-dozen package of wing shooters who didn't get serious attention from the nearby Texas Longhorns or Big 12 schools like Oklahoma and Kansas. He developed into a Big Game shooting specialist and scored 2,304 college points.

The same not-quite-elite prospects exist every year, but blueblood coaches don't pursue them because it's too irresistible to sign five-star prospects and ignore how fleeting their college days are apt to be.

So the Lampleys and Clancys wind up at second-tier basketball schools where, given four years, they become certified game-changers.

If you could assemble a latter-day group of three-star players to match Clancy, Lampley, Randle, Gutierrez and Young, you would need to travel with scissors in March to cut down the nets at your conference tournament. You would sell every seat in the arena, and your product would be sustainable at the highest level of college basketball.

Unless you are Duke or Kentucky or Kansas, it is the most sensible path to success.

Contact sports columnist Greg Hansen at 520-573-4362 or ghanen@tucson.com. On Twitter: @ghansen711

## THE RIGHT MIX

Washington won the 2010 Pac-10 Tournament championship on the backs of its upperclassmen, with juniors and seniors combining for 74% of the team's scoring.

A year later, the Huskies used the same formula to repeat as champs: Six juniors and seniors combined to score 67% of the team's points.

Things have certainly changed in the last decade, but the basic idea — that scoring must come from a mix of savvy veterans and talented freshmen — remains the same. Here's a look at the last 10 Pac-12 Tournament champions and how much each class contributed to the team's offensive output:

**2019 champion: Oregon**  
 • Scoring average: 70.5 points per game  
 Points by class  
 • Seniors (2): 18%  
 • Juniors (1): 14%  
 • Sophomores (3): 18%  
 • Freshmen (5): 50%

**2018 champion: Arizona**  
 • Scoring average: 80.9 ppg  
 Points by class  
 • Seniors (2): 24%  
 • Juniors (1): 22%  
 • Sophomores (1): 16%  
 • Freshmen (5): 38%

**2017 champion: Arizona**  
 • Scoring average: 76.3 ppg  
 Points by class

• Seniors (1): 11%  
 • Juniors (3): 22%  
 • Sophomores (2): 27%  
 • Freshmen (3): 40%

**2016 champion: Oregon**  
 • Scoring average: 78.8 ppg  
 Points by class  
 • Seniors (2): 28%  
 • Juniors (1): 15%  
 • Sophomores (4): 39%  
 • Freshmen (2): 18%

**2015 champion: Arizona**  
 • Scoring average: 76.4 ppg  
 Points by class  
 • Seniors (1): 13%  
 • Juniors (3): 38%  
 • Sophomores (2): 18%  
 • Freshmen (5): 31%

**2014 champion: UCLA**  
 • Scoring average: 81.8 ppg  
 Points by class  
 • Seniors (2): 17%  
 • Juniors (1): 13%  
 • Sophomores (3): 46%  
 • Freshmen (4): 24%

**2013 champion: Oregon**  
 • Scoring average: 71.7 ppg  
 Points by class  
 • Seniors (4): 53%  
 • Juniors (2): 10%  
 • Sophomores (0): 0%  
 • Freshmen (6): 37%

**2012 champion: Colorado**  
 • Scoring average: 67.5 ppg  
 Points by class  
 • Seniors (3): 42%

• Juniors (2): 6%  
 • Sophomores (4): 23%  
 • Freshmen (3): 29%

**2011 champion: Washington**  
 • Scoring average: 83.5 ppg  
 Points by class  
 • Seniors (4): 53%  
 • Juniors (2): 14%  
 • Sophomores (1): 10%  
 • Freshmen (3): 23%

**2010 champion: Washington**  
 • Scoring average: 79.8 ppg  
 Points by class  
 • Seniors (1): 24%  
 • Juniors (3): 50%  
 • Sophomores (3): 16%  
 • Freshmen (3): 10%



# WONDER MAKES ME ACHIEVE



Australian Phil Evans traveled across the Pacific and into unfamiliar territory to join our internationally recognized Adaptive Athletics program. He's now a phenomenal business student and member of our championship Men's Wheelchair Basketball team. Phil is proof that wonder makes us dare to achieve the unimaginable. And the more wonder makes us do, the more it makes us who we are.



# CATS LIKELY HEADED FOR NCAA BID, BUT THERE'S STILL MUCH TO PLAY FOR

By Bruce Pascoe  
ARIZONA DAILY STAR

The computers still love them. The bracketologists still say they're nowhere near the bubble.

And Arizona's past history in the Pac-12 Tournament doesn't always correlate with NCAA Tournament success.

Consider 2014-15, when the Wildcats lost to UCLA in the Pac-12 Tournament championship ... but nearly made the Final Four, losing 64-63 in overtime to Wisconsin. Or 2017-18, when confetti rained over the Wildcats and dominating center Deandre Ayton ... but they lost to Buffalo in the first round of the NCAA Tournament five days later.

So what is there, really, for Arizona to play for this week?

"You want to play with your sense of urgency," coach Sean Miller said. "You want to play to win. If you don't win, it's not because you didn't care as much. It's that they beat you."

Except just about every other team in the Pac-12 Tournament might have even more motivation than the Wildcats do this week.

There's Oregon, with a proud history of strong play in the event, and a conference player of the year in Payton Pritchard who appears to live for clutch moments.

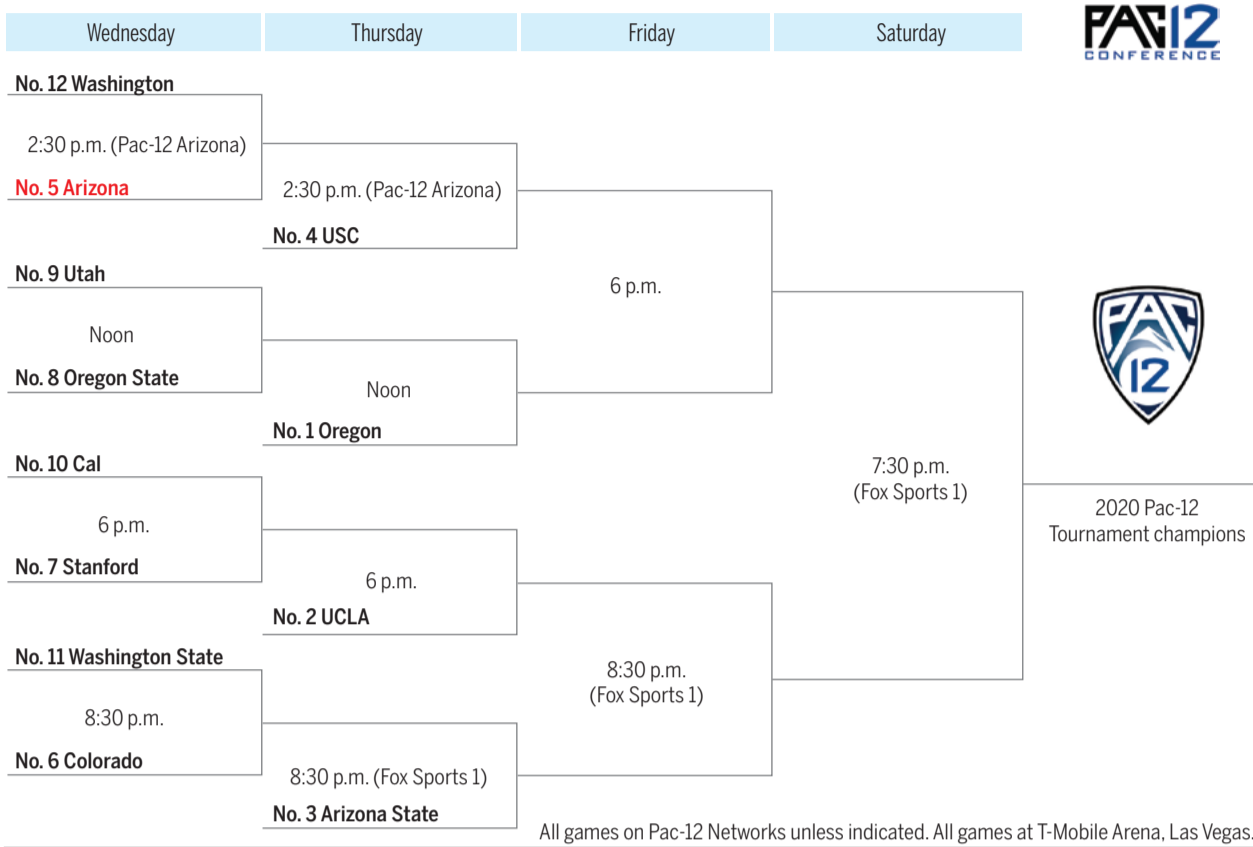
There's the LA teams, both on a roll to end the season: UCLA surged to a surprising second-place finish after buying into new coach Mick Cronin's system and USC shrugged off a crippling virus in the Rockies to win its last three, including a buzzer-beater over UCLA last Saturday.

There's Stanford, perhaps the bubblest team of them all, probably needing to at least beat Cal on Wednesday in order to breathe easily on Selection Sunday.

There's Colorado, widely considered the No. 1 or No. 2 team entering the season before falling out of the race with a four-game losing streak to end conference play. Colorado also has a history of playing well in Las Vegas, including a four-game run to win it all in 2011-12, so there's a chance for redemption, to a degree.

ASU, likewise, has another chance at a title after letting the regular-season one

## 2020 Pac-12 Men's Tournament bracket



**WEDNESDAY**

- **What:** Pac-12 Tournament, first round: No. 5 seed Arizona (20-11) vs. No. 12 seed Washington (15-16)
- **When:** 2:30 p.m.
- **Where:** Las Vegas
- **TV:** Pac-12 Arizona
- **Radio:** 1290-AM, 107.5-FM



slip away by losing three of its final four games.

Then there's the group of five at the bottom: Washington, Oregon State, Cal, Utah and Washington State, all of whom need to win the entire thing to get in the NCAA Tournament field. Two of them - Washington and OSU - could make up for their particular underachievement during the season by getting hot in Las Vegas.

And, by the way, Utah is the same team that just happened to beat No. 8 Kentucky on the same floor that the Pac-12 Tournament will be played on, Las Vegas' T-Mobile Arena. This time the Utes won't have to deal with Big Blue Nation, the legions of Kentucky fans who showed up for that Dec. 18 game.

But what about the Wildcats?

They don't need to win the Pac-12 Tournament to get into the NCAA Tournament field and, even if they did, they still probably wouldn't have a good enough résumé to get into the 1-4 seed lines, where placement is prioritized.

And, arguably, Arizona might not even want to reach the championship game, considering the wear and tear that playing four



KELLY PRESNELL / ARIZONA DAILY STAR

UA starters huddle near midcourt during Saturday's game against Washington in McKale Center. The two teams play again Wednesday in the first round of the Pac-12 tournament.

days in four games could bring.

But there is one issue that could help. Anyone who has seen them over the past three weeks can probably guess what that is.

The Wildcats just need to feel better. Have that sense of urgency Miller is talking about. Some passion. Confidence down the stretch.

Momentum. While losing four of their past five games, the Wildcats have not held possession of any of those things for too long. They were un-

"They play with desperation in a positive way," Miller said. "They don't make the game bigger than it needs to be made, but they play with a tremendous effort. Almost as if they can't comprehend not being able to play the next day, and that comes from within the locker room."

"You want to have some kind of that good desperation, you want to have that fight inside of you that you're willing to do whatever is necessary for your team to win."

Forward Zeke Nnaji said the Wildcats will bring that sort of mentality to Las Vegas.

"I definitely think that our mindset right now is we're really hungry," Nnaji said. "I mean, we didn't get the win against Washington and we felt like we played really bad."

"And right now we're just trying to bounce back and be the most aggressive team we can be."

The Wildcats can count on Nnaji to be part of that. The 6-foot-11-inch forward/center won the Pac-12 Freshman of the Year award on Monday after leading the Wildcats in scoring (16.1) and rebounds (9.2) while shooting 50.3% from the field in conference games

this season.

Miller says the other part about going on a roll in March is riding really good play from quality players - no doubt guys like Nnaji and UA point guard Nico Mannion - but also getting more help from somebody else you might not expect.

"You ride the wave of a hot hand, somebody that you know just cannot miss and plays even better than he has all year long," Miller said. "That's always the storyline in March?"

But who would that be?

Arizona's third-leading scorer, Josh Green, has been inconsistent and missed two games with a lower back issue over the past month. Wing Dylan Smith broke his nose against Washington and might have to wear a mask this week. Guard Jemarl Baker has been held scoreless in three of his last five games, while making just 3 of 19 3-pointers over that period.

Meanwhile, Max Hazard, recruited as a grad transfer from UC Irvine for his sharpshooting, isn't even playing, still in limbo with what Arizona is calling a "personal" issue that appears to be out of his control at this point.

And while center Chase Jeter is back from a two-game suspension, he's only been a limited factor in five games played since he was removed from the starting lineup in mid-January.

Somehow, maybe some of them - maybe all of them - can turn it up a notch starting this week.

Even if, on paper, there isn't much to play for.

"We've always approached the Pac-12 Tournament with a sense of urgency," Miller said. "You're playing college basketball. You're playing in a world-class arena, in front of amazing fans."

"This is March Madness, what everybody really loves about college basketball."

## WEDNESDAY'S FIRST-ROUND GAMES



**No. 9 seed Utah (16-14, 7-11) vs. No. 8 seed Oregon State (17-13, 7-11)**

**When:** Noon

**Bottom line:** Utah is set to take on Oregon State in the first round of the Pac-12 tourney. The teams split the regular-season series at one win apiece. The teams last faced each other on Feb. 13, when the Beavers shot 47.1% from the field while holding Utah to just 37.3% en route to the 19-point victory.

**Big men on campus:** Oregon State's Tres Tinkle has averaged 18.4 points and seven rebounds while Ethan Thompson has put up 14.9 points, 4.2 rebounds and 4.5 assists. For the Runnin' Utes, Timmy Allen has averaged 17.5 points and 7.3 rebounds while Rylan Jones has put up 8.9 points and 4.1 assists.

**Creating offense:** Thompson has made or assisted on 50% of all Oregon State field goals over the last five games. Thompson has accounted for 27 field goals and 29 assists in those games.

**Asset distribution:** The Beavers have recently gotten baskets via assists more often than the Utes. Oregon State has an assist on 45 of 64 field goals (70.3%) across its past three matchups

while Utah has assists on 35 of 79 field goals (44.3%) during its past three games.

**Did you know?** Oregon State has attempted the second-most free throws among all Pac-12 teams. The Beavers have averaged 21.1 foul shots per game this season.



**No. 12 seed Washington (15-16, 5-13) vs. No. 5 seed Arizona (20-11, 10-8)**

**When:** 2:30 p.m.

**Bottom line:** Washington is set to match up against Arizona in the opening round of the Pac-12 tournament. The teams split the regular-season series at one win apiece. The teams last faced each other on Saturday, when the Huskies shot 42.9% from the field while limiting Arizona's shooters to just 35.1% on their way to the 69-63 victory.

**Early risers:** Each of these teams has relied heavily on their freshmen this year. For Washington, Isaiah Stewart, Jaden McDaniels, Nahziah Carter and Hameir Wright have collectively accounted for 67% of all Washington scoring.

**Creating offense:** Nico Mannion has been directly responsible for 46% of all Arizona field goals

over the last three games. Mannion has 17 field goals and 18 assists in those games.

**Winless when:** Arizona is 0-7 this year when it scores 65 points or fewer and 20-4 when it scores at least 66.

**Assist ratios:** The Wildcats have recently used assists to create baskets more often than the Huskies. Arizona has 47 assists on 76 field goals (61.8%) over its past three contests while Washington has assists on 39 of 78 field goals (50%) during its past three games.

**Getting defensive:** Washington has held opposing teams to 38.1% shooting from the field this year, the sixth-lowest percentage among all Division I teams.



**No. 10 seed California (13-18, 7-11) vs. No. 7 seed Stanford (20-11, 9-9)**

**When:** 6 p.m.

**Bottom line:** Cal and Stanford are prepared to face off in the first round of the Pac-12 tournament. The teams split the regular-season series at one win apiece. The teams last played on Jan. 26, when the Golden Bears created 15 Stanford turnovers and turned the ball over just seven times en route to a two-point victory.

**Stepping up:** Stanford's Oscar

da Silva has averaged 15.6 points and 6.1 rebounds while Tyrell Terry has put up 14.5 points and 4.4 rebounds. For the Golden Bears, Matt Bradley has averaged 17.5 points and 4.9 rebounds while Grant Anticevich has put up 8.4 points and 5.5 rebounds.

**Mighty Matt:** Bradley has connected on 38.6% of the 166 3-pointers he's attempted and has made 12 of 27 over his last five games. He's also made 86.6% of his free throws this season.

**Slipping at 68:** Stanford is 0-9 this year when it allows 68 points or more and 20-2 when holding opponents to fewer than 68.

**Perfect when:** Cal is a perfect 10-0 when its defense holds opponents to a field goal percentage of 41 or less. The Golden Bears are 3-18 when allowing the opposition to shoot any better than that.

**Did you know?** The Stanford defense has allowed only 62.5 points per game to opponents this season, ranking the Cardinal 16th among Division I teams. The Cal offense has averaged 63.2 points through 31 games (ranked 298th, nationally).



**No. 11 seed Washington St. (15-16, 6-12) vs. No. 6 seed Colorado (21-10, 10-8)**

**When:** 8:30 p.m.

**Bottom line:** Washington State is set to match up against Colorado in the first round of the Pac-12 tournament. The only meeting between the teams this season came on Jan. 23, when the Buffaloes outshot Washington State 45.6% to 37.3% and hit 13 more free throws en route to a 22-point victory.

**Leading the charge:** Colorado's McKinley Wright IV has averaged 14.2 points, 5.6 rebounds and 5.1 assists while Tyler Bey has put up 13.2 points and 8.8 rebounds. For the Cougars, CJ Elleby has averaged 18 points and 7.8 rebounds while Isaac Bonton has put up 13.3 points.

**Offensive threat:** Wright has directly created 46% of all Colorado field goals over the last five games. The junior guard has 37 field goals and 23 assists in those games.

**Perfect when:** The Buffaloes are 18-0 when they hold opposing teams to 67 points or fewer and 3-10 when opponents exceed 67 points. The Cougars are 8-0 when they hold opponents to 61 points or fewer and 7-16 when opponents exceed 61 points.

**Did you know?** The Colorado defense has allowed only 63.7 points per game to opponents this season, ranking the Buffaloes 29th among Division I teams. The Washington State offense has averaged 69.5 points through 31 games (ranked 204th nationally).

- The Associated Press

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MESSAGE RECEIVED

Restored UA runs ASU off court in 28-point win

Cats play with energy and toughness after break, wreck Sun Devils



Cats can't hold off Oregon, lose in overtime in Eugene

Arizona set for challenge unlike any program has faced before

Lessons from program's best start in history



CRUSHED IN CORVALLIS: CATS FALL APART LATE

Arizona was outscored 33-16 over the final 12 minutes of the game

OSU's Tres Tinkle poured in 20 points, including three 3-pointers

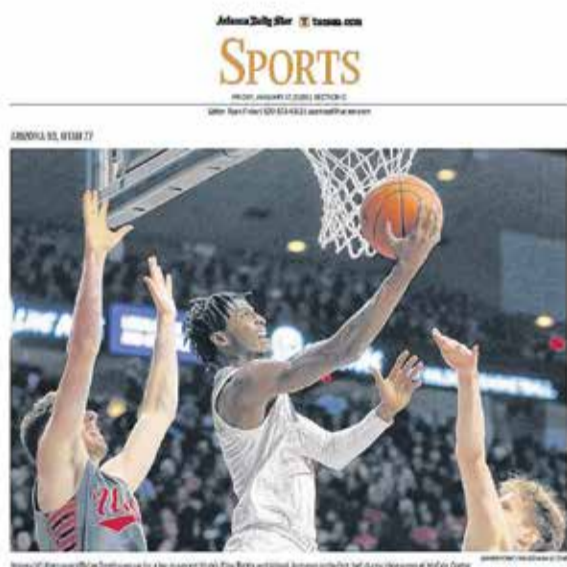
Jan. 4: No 25 Arizona 75, ASU 47
What went down: The Wildcats led from start to finish over their rival to begin conference play as Zeke Nnaji recorded 17 points and 11 rebounds...

Jan. 9: No. 9 Oregon 74, No. 24 Arizona 73 (OT)
What went down: The Cats had both a six-point lead in the final 1:47 of regulation and a one-point lead in the final 20 seconds of overtime...

Jan. 12: Oregon State 82, No. 24 Arizona 65
What went down: Arizona was outscored 33-16 over the final 12 minutes of the game and all five Beavers starters reached double-figures...

YOUNG CATS ENDURED GROWING PAINS

UA put it all together at times but struggled to win close games in Pac-12 play



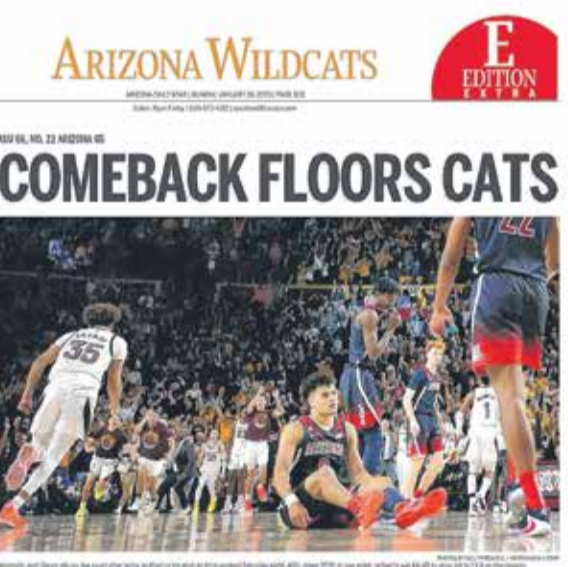
New look helps Cats easily handle Utah

Utah will be solid next year — and that's OK



Noisy McKale crowd spurs Cats to easy win over Buffs

UA has plenty to smile about after emphatic home sweep



ASU erases 22-point deficit to stun Arizona

How to lose a game in 10 steps: Poor first-half finish dooms UA

Advertisement for Watson youth soccer tournament.

Advertisement for Geico Motorcycle Insurance.

Advertisement for Arizona Wildcats.

Jan. 16: Arizona 93, Utah 77
What went down: The UA's Max Hazzard erupted for 24 points off six 3-pointers and Nnaji also had 24 points.

Jan. 18: Arizona 75, No. 20 Colorado 54
What went down: In the lone regular season matchup with the Buffaloes, the Cats stayed hot offensively after the Utah game as they drained nine 3s.

Jan. 25: ASU 66, No. 20 Arizona 65
What went down: Down by as many as 22 points, the Sun Devils roared back in the second half to stun Arizona in Tempe.

**ARIZONA WILDCATS** EDITION

**CATS CLAW TO FIRST ROAD WIN**

**Baker's late 3 lifts UA past Huskies in Seattle**

**Jan. 30:** Arizona 75, Washington 72  
**What went down:** The Wildcats earned their first true road win of the season in Seattle as Jemarl Baker's go-ahead 3-pointer with 42 second left put the UA up for good. Baker amassed a season-high 17 points and Stone Gettings was a zone-buster from mid-range, scoring 13 points.  
**He said it:** "We've been in so many close games — ASU, Oregon — it's been literally one play away. It was just really nice to be able to pull one out." — Gettings

**ARIZONA WILDCATS** EDITION

**SPORTS**

**Rolling Stone helps Wildcats gather momentum for sweep**

**Feb. 1:** Arizona 66, Washington State 49  
**What went down:** Gettings continued his impressive play with a season-high 19 points on 8-of-13 shooting. Arizona became the first Pac-12 team this season to earn a road sweep.  
**He said it:** "I felt it a little bit at Washington and a little bit at the Red vs. Blue game, but it wasn't since my Cornell days that I felt this good." — Gettings

**ARIZONA WILDCATS** EDITION

**WHEW! WILDCATS WIN**

**UA survives after USC erases huge lead**

**Feb. 6:** No. 23 Arizona 85, USC 80  
**What went down:** The Cats almost let another 20-plus point lead slip away as USC's Jonah Mathews made it a 3-point game with five seconds left. But Mannion made two free throws to ice it. Mannion, Nnaji and Green combined for 56 points.  
**He said it:** "We have a very young group. We have a group with a lot to learn. We're very fortunate to win tonight." — Miller

**ARIZONA WILDCATS** EDITION

**CATS CRUMBLE IN 2ND HALF**

**Arizona sets McKale mark for futility in loss to UCLA**

**Feb. 8:** UCLA 65, No. 23 Arizona 52  
**What went down:** Arizona had its worst shooting performance in the 47-year history of McKale Center: 25.4 FG% on 15 of 59 shots. It also marked the third straight victory in Tucson for the Bruins, dating back to 2017.  
**He said it:** "We played good defense and they missed some shots, too." — UCLA coach Mick Cronin

**ARIZONA WILDCATS** EDITION

**UA'S SHOTS FALL, FINALLY**

**Feb 13:** Arizona 68, Cal 52  
**What went down:** After just 27 first-half points, the UA responded with 41 in the second half to down the Golden Bears on the road. Senior Dylan Smith hit 4 of 5 3s to secure the win.  
**He said it:** "(Dylan) was certainly due and did a great job and we're really proud of him." — UA assistant coach Jack Murphy

**ARIZONA WILDCATS** EDITION

**CATS AGAIN FLATTEN CARDINAL**

**UA beats Stanford for 20th straight time**

**Feb 15:** Arizona 69, Stanford 60  
**What went down:** Stanford had no answer for Nnaji as he scored 21 points and added 11 rebounds. Arizona became the first Pac-12 school to earn two road sweeps this season.  
**He said it:** "A road sweep in the Pac-12 is coveted. Every group of guys that does it, you realize how hard it is." — Miller

**ARIZONA WILDCATS** EDITION

**SPORTS**

**GETTING A BETTER HANDLE**

**More-experienced Arizona gains revenge against OSU**

**Feb 20:** No. 24 Arizona 89, Oregon State 63  
**What went down:** The Cats used a balanced offensive effort — 10 3s and 23 of 28 free throws — to avenge the early-season loss against the Beavers. Mannion scored 12 of his 16 points in the second half.  
**He said it:** "It wasn't something we talked about, but I think as a group, we kind of had that in mind. We owed them one." — Mannion

**ARIZONA WILDCATS** EDITION

**Cats can't close out Ducks, fall in OT**

**Cowboys eager to ride Saturday, knowing finals are a day away**

**Feb 22:** No. 14 Oregon 73, No. 24 Arizona 72 (OT)  
**What went down:** Arizona once again blew a late lead to the Ducks and fell in overtime. The UA lost control of a four-point lead in the final minute of regulation and Oregon's Shakur Juiston hit the game winner with under two seconds left. Payton Pritchard had a monstrous 38-point night.  
**He said it:** "You've got to consider yourself a little lucky when you win five overtime games." — Oregon coach Dana Altman

**ARIZONA WILDCATS** EDITION

**CATS SO COLD IN SOCAL**

**UA, down two players, is 'inept' in ugly loss**

**Feb 27:** USC 57, Arizona 48  
**What went down:** Onyeka Okongwu's 72-foot basket at the first-half buzzer gave USC all the momentum in this one. The Wildcats offense was a no-show as they shot just 16 of 57 (28%) and missed 23 of their 26 3-pointers.  
**He said it:** "Our offense is inept." — Miller

**ARIZONA WILDCATS** EDITION

**ANOTHER ROUGH NIGHT IN LA**

**Cats let late lead slip away in loss to Bruins**

**Feb 29:** UCLA 69, Arizona 64  
**What went down:** Another late lead, another lost lead. Up by four with under four minutes remaining, Arizona committed three straight turnovers and UCLA took control in the final minute. Miller received two technical fouls and was ejected midway through the second half, leaving Murphy as the designated head coach the remainder of the night.  
**He said it:** "The fact that we spotted UCLA three points (on the technical free throws) ... I certainly regret (the ejection)." — Miller

**ARIZONA WILDCATS** EDITION

**A MUCH-NEEDED BLOWOUT**

**March 5:** Arizona 83, Washington State 62  
**What went down:** Down 31-29 at the break, the Cats used a 26-0 run in the second half to rout the Cougars and end a three-game losing streak. Mannion's 23 points were his most since the Wooden Legacy in November.  
**He said it:** "When we're locked, we're a really confident group, getting stops, getting out in transition. That's when we're at our best." — Mannion

**ARIZONA WILDCATS** EDITION

**PHYSICAL UW TAKES DOWN UA**

**Teams will rematch on Wednesday in Vegas**

**March 7:** Washington 69, Arizona 63  
**What went down:** Arizona's shooting woes resurfaced as it shot just 35% (20 of 57) and turned the ball over 18 times in a home loss to the last-place Huskies. UW freshmen Isaiah Stewart and Jaden McDaniels combined for 36 points.  
**He said it:** "Our performance tonight was poor. We weren't ready to play." — Miller



When Arizona's Nico Mannion struggles with his shot, the Wildcats usually end up with a loss. When he's on, the UA has proved it can play with anyone in the conference. REBECCA SASNETT / ARIZONA DAILY STAR 2019

# PLAYING THE ODDS IS NO FOOL'S BET IF THESE PLAYERS SHINE IN SIN CITY

**By Jon Gold**  
SPECIAL TO THE ARIZONA DAILY STAR  
Las Vegas is all about the odds, baby. You never want to back a heavy favorite and get a miniature payout. Why not go for broke? Here we provide the odds for what could be some impressive individual performances in the Pac-12 Tournament:

**Chances that Nico Mannion regains his shooting stroke: 25%**

Mannion, Arizona's much-ballyhooed freshman guard, has struggled greatly from the field the last month, finishing with a shooting percentage over 45% just twice since the calendar flipped to February. Can Mannion flip a switch in short order? That could be the story of the post-season for the Wildcats. If Mannion plays like he has against Oregon in two one-point overtime losses — 9 for 17 for 20 points on Jan. 9 and 5 of 10 for 13 points with eight assists in on Feb. 22 — then Arizona has a chance to make some noise. If he plays like he did against USC on Feb. 27 in a 57-48 loss — 3-of-14 shooting, 1 for 7 from deep — the Cats are in serious trouble.

**Chances that UCLA's Tyger Campbell drops 10 dimes: 35%**

The starless Bruins have had to find some interesting ways to generate offense, but putting the ball in the hands of Campbell seems to have worked. One of the best assist men in the Pac-12, Campbell has soared of late as the Bruins have. In their just-broken seven-game



KELLY PRESNELL / ARIZONA DAILY STAR

Washington's Isaiah Stewart, right, gave Arizona fits in the Huskies' 69-63 win Saturday at McKale Center. For the season, he's third in the Pac-12 with 8.7 rebounds per game, and grabbed 19 boards in a loss to league champion Oregon.

conference winning streak, snapped by USC on Saturday, Campbell averaged more than seven assists per game, including games of 11 assists at Colorado and 14 against Arizona State. The Bruins don't always know where their scoring is going to come from, but usually Campbell is involved.

**Chances that Colorado's Tyler Bey averages 10 boards: 40%**

Perhaps we should have seen this coming last year, when Bey exploded for 9.9 rebounds per game, an improvement of 4.8 over his freshman season. The 6-foot-7 guard saw his rebounding numbers dip a bit this year to 9.1 per game, but he's been in double figures a

dozen times, including five times in the last nine games. In a five-game stretch beginning Feb. 6, Bey had games of 10, 12, eight, 15 and 11 boards. Someone get this guy some Windex.

**Chances that Washington State's Issac Bonton has five turnovers: 60%**

Since his return from a three-game layoff because of a hip injury, Wazzu's Bonton has been an absolute machine. A turnover machine, that is. Bonton had seven giveaways in a Feb. 28 matchup with rival Washington, but that did not prevent the Cougars from pulling out a much-needed 78-74 win. The next two games? Eight gaffes in a 19-point loss at Arizona and 11, a season-high, in a regular season-ending loss at Arizona State on Saturday.

**Chances that Oregon State's Kylor Kelley has five blocks in a game: 43%**

Kelley has been an eraser for the Beavers, racking up 3.5 blocks per game. He started the season on a good note, blocking four CSUN shots in the opening game. He'd go on to have seven blocks in three different

games, six blocks in two and five blocks in three. Can Kelley be the typical immovable object in Las Vegas? The Beavers are going to need him to be.

**Chances that Oregon's Payton Pritchard averages three 3-pointers per game: 33%**

Pritchard, the best player on the league's best team, has become arguably the most well-rounded contributor in the Pac-12. Pritchard averages better than 20 points, five assists and four rebounds per game, but it is his distance shooting that makes the Ducks a favorite to win the tournament and to make some noise in March Madness. Pritchard leads the league with 2.8 3-pointers made per game, on a sparkling 42% shooting. It'd be one thing if he was just high volume. He's high volume and efficient, a deadly combo for a dead-eye shooter.

**Chances that Arizona State's Remy Martin averages 20 points per contest: 35%**

Martin has been one of the most consistent scorers in the league, topping 20

points 18 times this season, including seven straight games at one point. He's also had some absolute stinkers — six points on 2-of-14 shooting in a March 5 loss to Washington, zero points on 0-for-7 shooting in a 40(!)-point loss to Saint Mary's back in December. But when he's on, he's on, and he should rise to the occasion in Sin City.

**Chances that Utah's Timmy Allen gets to the free-throw line 10 times in one game: 15%**

Allen has made his living at the free-throw line, where he averages 6.9 attempts and 5.0 makes per game. He's hit double-figures in attempts six times this year, including three times in conference play and a 9-for-12 performance — to go along with 25 points — in a 69-66 win over Kentucky on Dec. 18. Pitted against the Oregon State Beavers in the first round Wednesday, he'll have to play more like he did in their first matchup (13 of 15 from the line, 25 points in a 12-point win on Jan. 2) than the second (36 minutes, six points, 0 for 1 from the free-

throw line in a 19-point loss on Feb. 13.

**Chances that USC's Onyeka Okongwu shoots better than 60% from the field: 60%**

The USC forward is averaging 16.2 for the season, which would be impressive enough, but he's scoring with terrific efficiency, as well. Okongwu is shooting a league-best 62% from the field and he has as many games over 70% shooting as he does under 50% (eight). Simply put, don't let him near the rim.

**Chances that Washington's Isaiah Stewart snags double-figure rebounds in one game: 40%**

The fantastic freshman is third in the Pac-12 at 8.7 rebounds per game, and he's been a double-double threat every time he steps on the floor. He has 14 double-digit rebound games, a little under half his games played, and he's regularly pounded good teams on the boards. Against Oregon, albeit in a close loss, he had a season-high 19 rebounds.

**Chances that Cal's Matt Bradley shoots 90% from the free-throw line: 90%**

There must be something in the Bay Area water, as both Bradley and Stanford's Tyrell Terry are nails from the free-throw line. Can Bradley, who is shooting 86.6% from the stripe, stay true once more? Eighteen times this season, Bradley has shot 100% from the line. Topping 90 should be a piece of cake.

**Chances that Stanford's Daejon Davis averages three steals per game: 40%**

Davis has been a pick-pocket ever since he opened the season with five steals against Montana back on Nov. 6. Davis hasn't hit that mark since that game, but he has hit three steals six other times. He'll have a tough go of it against a Cal team that is relatively stingy, committing the fifth-fewest turnovers in the league.

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Oregon guard Payton Pritchard, right, is Oregon's career assists leader and is the only player in Pac-12 history to have over 1,500 career points, 600 assists and 500 rebounds.

# PAC-12'S CHAOTIC REGULAR SEASON ENDS AS PREDICTED – WITH OREGON ON TOP

By Justin Spears

ARIZONA DAILY STAR

As Forrest Gump said, "Life is like a box of chocolates; you never know what you're gonna get."

And on any given Thursday (or Saturday), you never knew what you were getting when it came to Pac-12 basketball this season.

For the third time in five seasons, Oregon — led by head coach Dana Altman and star point guard Payton Pritchard — was crowned Pac-12 regular-season champion. That was almost expected: the Ducks were voted to finish first in the Pac-12 preseason poll.

Oregon was one of just two conference teams that finished exactly where it was supposed to according to preseason predictions. Washington State, which finished 11th, was the other.

The Ducks are the only team from the league ranked in the AP Top 25 heading into the Pac-12 Tournament, but the league's depth and talent make it one of the toughest in the country. ESPN's bracketologist Joe Lunardi projects the Pac-12 to earn seven bids in next week's NCAA Tournament, with Arizona State, UCLA and Stanford among the last bubble teams in.

Lunardi isn't the only analyst bullish on the Pac-12. Washington is ranked 55th in the NCAA Evaluation Tool (NET) rankings despite sitting in last place in the league. Arizona, the No. 5 seed in the Pac-12, ranks 14th nationally in NET rankings.

The Wildcats and Huskies will play Wednesday in the first round of the Pac-12 Tournament.

To sum up a chaotic year in the Pac-12, here are some superlatives:

**Biggest surprise: UCLA**

For two weeks, Stanford was the trending pick for the biggest surprise. Picked to finish 10th in the Pac-12, the Cardinal started conference play 4-0, but then won only one of its next eight games. No team in the Pac-12 climbed further than UCLA: First-year coach Mick Cronin implemented his defensive-minded style of play with Steve Alford's players, and after a few ugly losses, the Bad News Bears got good. UCLA won seven of its final eight conference games, and finished second in the Pac-12.

**Biggest disappointment: Washington**

Mike Hopkins won Pac-12 Coach of the Year honors a year ago as Washington made the NCAA Tournament. The Huskies were predicted to finish third in the Pac-12, thanks in part to a stellar recruiting class headlined by five-star prospects Isaiah Stewart and Jaden McDaniels and the addition of Kentucky transfer Quade Green.

But Green was ruled academically ineligible for the season, and Washington struggled, losing nine straight at one point.

However, the Huskies won three of their final four games. Maybe UW becomes the dark horse in Las Vegas and adds another chapter to the wacky 2020 Pac-12 season?

**Best coaching performance: Mick Cronin (UCLA)**

Raise your hand if you thought a

**PICKING THE PAC**

A look at the Pac-12 preseason poll vs. the final regular-season league standings:

**PRESEASON POLL**

**TEAM (FIRST-PLACE VOTES)**

1. Oregon (9)
2. Colorado (9)
3. Washington (6)
4. Arizona (2)
5. USC (1)
6. Arizona State
7. Oregon State
8. UCLA
9. Utah
10. Stanford
11. Washington State
12. Cal

**PAC-12 STANDINGS**

TEAM	PAC-12	OVERALL
Oregon	13-5	24-7
UCLA	12-6	19-12
Arizona State	11-7	20-11
USC	11-7	22-9
<b>Arizona</b>	<b>10-8</b>	<b>20-11</b>
Colorado	10-8	21-10
Stanford	9-9	20-11
Oregon State	7-11	17-13
Utah	7-11	13-18
Cal	7-11	13-18
Washington State	6-12	15-16
Washington	5-13	15-16

UCLA team with a 7-6 nonconference record would be in contention to win the Pac-12 regular-season title. Anybody? UCLA squeaked by Long Beach State (11-21) by four points in the season opener, lost to Hofstra by 10 at home and fell to Cal State Fullerton.

As the calendar flipped to Jan-

uary, however, Cronin and the Bruins had found their identity.

UCLA won nine out of its final 11 games and leap-frogged a number of teams, including UA, to second place in the Pac-12 standings. ASU's Bobby Hurley was a close second for this pick, but considering the Bruins could be an NCAA Tournament team after the program climbed out of irrelevance three months ago, makes what Cronin did this season the best performance in the Pac-12.

**Best freshman: Onyeka Okongwu (USC)**

For those who struggle to pronounce his name, follow Bill Walton's lead and just call him "Big O." Okongwu entered the season as a projected top-10 pick in the NBA draft and will leave USC as a likely top-10 choice. The 6-foot-9-inch rim protector is in the top five of rebounds (8.6), blocks (2.7) and field goal percentage (61.6%) per game among other Pac-12 players. While Zeke Nnaji won Pac-12 Freshman of the Year, Okongwu displayed better statistics close to the basket.

**Breakout player: Alonzo Verge (ASU)**

The legend of Alonzo Verge didn't begin until Dec. 18, when he scored 43 points in a 40-point loss to St. Mary's. Verge shot 18 of 29 from the field, including one 3-pointer and six free throws; the rest of his teammates combined to hit just five shots. Verge played his way into the rotation and molded into the ideal complimentary piece for Remy Martin. Verge is averaging 14.6 points, 3.5 rebounds and 2.3 assists per game.

He also scored the go-ahead basket in a come-from-behind win over rival Arizona in Tempe.

**Best performance: Payton Pritchard (Oregon) vs. Arizona**

Oregon's do-everything point guard was a Pac-12 Player of the Year favorite before the season even started, but ASU's Martin snuck into the conversation after leading the Sun Devils to seven straight wins in February. Pritchard then stamped his application for the conference's top player when he scored a career-high 38 points on 43%-shooting from 3-point range in an overtime win at Arizona. The Wildcats threw every perimeter defender they had at Pritchard — even Christian Koloko — but couldn't stop the Oregon star from knocking down 3-pointers. Pritchard's 38 points against Arizona were the most by a Duck since Luke Jackson in 2004.

**Best player: Payton Pritchard (Oregon)**

The Pac-12 Player of the Year is a prime example of what staying in school can do for basketball players. As a freshman in 2017, Pritchard was the point guard that orchestrated passes to then-Pac-12 Player of the Year Dillon Brooks, Jordan Bell, Tyler Dorsey and Chris Boucher.

Fast forward to 2020, Pritchard became Oregon's career assists leader and is the only player in Pac-12 history to have over 1,500 career points, 600 assists and 500 rebounds. He's also the best player on the best team in the Pac-12, and he just might be an All-American.

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**PROBABLE STARTERS**

**ARIZONA**

- G Nico Mannion (6-3 freshman)
- G Dylan Smith (6-5 senior)
- F Josh Green (6-6 freshman)
- F Stone Gettings (6-9 senior)
- C Zeke Nnaji (6-11 freshman)

**WASHINGTON**

- G Marcus Tsohonis (6-3 freshman)
- G Jamal Bey (6-6 sophomore)
- F Nahziah Carter (6-6 junior)
- F Hameir Wright (6-9 junior)
- C Isaiah Stewart (6-9 freshman)

**HOW THEY MATCH UP**

**How they got here:** The Huskies fell from first to worst in the Pac-12 this season, going just 5-13 in conference play and picking up the No. 12 seed in the Pac-12 Tournament. The UA finished in a tie for fifth place with Colorado at 10-8 but earned the No. 5 seed because the Wildcats beat the Buffaloes the only time they played during the regular season, 75-54 at McKale Center on Jan. 18.

**The season series:** Arizona and Washington won on each other's home courts. In Seattle on Jan. 30, Jemarl Baker hit a go-ahead 3-pointer with 44 seconds left and Arizona hung on for its first road win of the season, 75-72 at Hec Edmundson Pavilion. Baker scored a career-high 17 points while hitting 4 of 7 3-pointers. The Wildcats shot only 38.7% but held Washington standout freshman forward Isaiah Stewart to 3-for-13 shooting; Arizona only turned the ball over six times in the last 36 minutes.

At McKale Center last Saturday, Arizona had one of its worst offensive halves of the season in a 69-63 loss to the Huskies.

The Wildcats scored just 23 points while shooting 20% in the first half. In the second half, UA couldn't cut Washington's lead to less than four points despite a spirited Senior Day effort from Dylan Smith, who hit 6 of 8 3-pointers after halftime after having suffered a broken nose seven minutes into the game.



KELLY PRESNELL / ARIZONA DAILY STAR

After a rough first half Saturday against Washington, UA freshman Nico Mannion played better in the final 20 minutes, registering five assists and just one turnover. He'll need to be on top of his game for 40 minutes Wednesday if the Wildcats are to move on in the Pac-12 Tournament in Las Vegas.

**What's new with the Huskies:**

Not much, really. Washington will be playing Arizona just four days after the McKale Center matchup, a fate that befell both teams after ASU beat Washington State, Utah beat Colorado and USC beat UCLA earlier Saturday. On Monday, Washington freshman forward Jaden McDaniels picked up the Pac-12's Freshman of the Week award in part for scoring 20 points, with six rebounds and three blocks against the Wildcats. He also had 16 points, six rebounds, three assists and two blocks in Washington's win at ASU last Thursday.

**Pac-12 Tournament history:** The Huskies and Wildcats haven't met in the conference tournament since Washington's Isaiah Thomas sent the 10-team league off on a classic note by hitting a step-back jumper at the buzzer to beat Arizona 77-75 in overtime at Los Angeles' Staples Center in 2011.

**Series history:** Washington has won three of the last four against Arizona, but the Wildcats lead 11-8 in the Sean Miller era and 53-31 in the all-time series.

**KEY PLAYERS**

**WASHINGTON**

**Jaden McDaniels**

Long, athletic and skilled, the Huskies' talented but puzzling forward drips with NBA potential and he's put it on display more over the past month. McDaniels has come off the bench in eight of the Huskies' last nine games, but plays starters' minutes. He's averaged 16.8 points, 6.3 rebounds and 2.0 blocks over his past four games and is a difficult matchup at power forward, able to work his way inside or shoot from 3-point range at 6-foot-9.

**ARIZONA**

**Nico Mannion**

Washington feeds off turnovers created by its aggressive 2-3 zone defense, so when Mannion had four turnovers to no assists in the first half Saturday, it was no surprise the Huskies led by 15 at halftime. Mannion had five assists to only one more turnover in the second half but he'll need that

sort of performance in both halves this time.

**HE SAID IT**

"One of their gifts is they use their defense to create offensive opportunities and they have a lot of great athletes. When they get out into the open court ... a two-on-one for them is a dunk. And in the first half (Saturday), not only did we turn the ball over 10 times (in the first half), but they took those turnovers and went down and converted. When you turn the ball over a total of 18 times against Washington, it's going to be tough. Not only is that 18 shot attempts that we don't get, but those are fouls and dunks and points that they can get, not because of their offense but because of the defense.

"McDaniels is a very talented young player. Those guys seem to always hit their stride at some point in their freshman year, and it seems like he's hitting his stride here at the end. He just has the ability to shoot over the top of people, and finish above the rim. And defensively in their zone he takes up a lot of space. The light bulb can go on for those talented freshmen and young players at different times and I think he's playing his best basketball right now down the stretch."

— UA coach Sean Miller

tested positive for the virus, meaning the Huskies had no classes to go back to Monday or Tuesday morning anyway.

The Seattle region has been the United States' hardest-hit city so far, reporting the first cases of the infection and the first death. And with over 55,000 students attending the public university, an online petition to close the campus had more than 26,000 signatures as of Friday, according to the Washington Post.

"We're not worried about all that," Hopkins said. "I know it's a concern but I think that the university and everybody is showing great leadership in the decisions that they're making."

**Best of the best**

Arizona forward/center Zeke Nnaji was studying film with assistant coach Danny Peters on Monday when he was told he had been named Pac-12 Freshman of the Year, meaning the league's 12 coaches voted him over a bunch of guys who were more highly rated out of high school.

In 247Sports.com's player rankings for the class of 2019, eight players who signed with Pac-12 schools were rated higher than Nnaji: Washington's Isaiah Stewart and Jaden McDaniels, Oregon's N'Faly Dante and C.J. Walker, USC's Onyeka Okongwu and Isaiah Mobley — and even Nnaji's own teammates, Nico Mannion and Josh Green.

"Yeah. Yeah," Nnaji said when asked Tuesday if he was surprised. "I was going up against a lot of really good players. Big O (Okongwu) and Isaiah Stewart are both really great players and to be able to win the award over them is really humbling and it means a lot."

Nnaji's award was announced Monday, a day before UA's Miller held his weekly news conference, so he wasn't immediately asked about it. So, 10 minutes into his press conference, he brought the topic up himself while answering a question about the Wildcats' motivation entering the Pac-12 Tournament.

"I also want to congratulate Zeke Nnaji," Miller said. "It's quite an award to win when you

consider those that have won the award in the past and this year in particular with the deep freshman class — and we have four of them on our own team."

There are "quite a few high school All-Americans. Quite a few players that are incredibly talented, that when they when their time ends in college. I have no doubt that they'll play in the NBA. This is as deep of a young group of talent as maybe we've had in our conference."

**Unmasked man**

Smith played 24 minutes Saturday after suffering a broken nose with nothing other than cotton stuffed into his nostrils.

He might just play the Pac-12 Tournament without a protective mask, too.

But he was wearing one in practice this week, just in case. "It's just to protect him, just as simple as a basketball not hitting him in the face at the moment," Miller said. "But I think every day that goes by, he'll get better."

Miller doesn't know if Smith will wear a mask Wednesday, but said he is counting on the senior wing to play against the Huskies. The fact that Smith hit 6 of 8 3-pointers in the second half Saturday after suffering the injury in a collision with Stewart is a pretty good indication he will.

"Dylan played a great second half," Miller said. "I'm sure he's really, really sore, but we expect him to play and he hasn't missed a thing (since then) which is really a testament to Dylan. For him to be able to overcome a broken nose like he has is remarkable."

**Numbers game**

**70.8** UA's winning percentage in Pac-12 Tournament games under Miller (17-7).

**8** Wins against two losses in Arizona's first Pac-12 Tournament game during the Miller era.

**8** Years since Washington swept the "desert" road trip by beating Arizona and ASU as the Huskies did last weekend.

**65** Blocks this season by Isaiah Stewart, the best ever for a UW freshman.

— Bruce Pascoe

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# CONFERENCE TEAMS GO ALL-IN AS PAC-12 TOURNAMENT DAWNS



## ARIZONA WILDCATS

- **Coach:** Sean Miller
- **2019-20 record:** 20-11
- **Conference record:** 10-8
- **Pac-12 Tournament seed:** No. 5
- **Jackpots:** 73-66 vs. Wake Forest, Dec. 1; 75-47 vs. Arizona State, Jan. 4; 75-54 vs. Colorado, Jan. 18; 85-80 vs. USC, Feb. 6
- **Busted out:** 63-58 at Baylor, Dec. 7; 84-80 vs. Gonzaga, Dec. 14; 70-67 vs. St. John's, Dec. 21; 69-63 vs. Washington, March 7
- **Studs:** F Zeke Nnaji (16.3 ppg, 8.6 rpg); G Nico Mannion (14.0 ppg, 5.4 apg, 2.5 rpg); G Josh Green (11.7 ppg, 4.6 rpg)
- **Wild cards:** G Dylan Smith (8.5 ppg, 3.1 rpg)
- **All-in:** A 1-4 run to end the season has Arizona fans reeling, as only a win over Washington State stemmed the bleeding of losses to Oregon, USC, UCLA and Washington. And to think, the Wildcats seemed to be turning the corner with a 7-2 stretch in the middle of Pac-12 play. Now the Cats get Washington in the Pac-12 Tournament, just a few days after losing to the Huskies to close the regular season. Not ideal.



Pac-12 Player of the Year Payton Pritchard averaged 20.5 points a game to help top-seeded Oregon win the conference regular-season crown by one game over UCLA. The senior dropped 38 on Arizona at McKale Center in a 73-72 Ducks overtime win over the Wildcats on Feb. 22.

KELLY PRESNELL / ARIZONA DAILY STAR



## ARIZONA STATE SUN DEVILS

- **Coach:** Bobby Hurley
- **2019-20 record:** 20-11
- **Conference record:** 11-7
- **Pac-12 Tournament seed:** No. 3
- **Jackpots:** 80-67 vs. St. John's, Nov. 23; 79-59 vs. Georgia, Dec. 14; 66-65 vs. Arizona, Jan. 25; 77-72 vs. Oregon, Feb. 20
- **Busted out:** 48-45 vs. Virginia, Nov. 24; 96-56 vs. Saint Mary's, Dec. 18; 75-47 at Arizona, Jan. 4; 67-65 at Washington State, Jan. 29
- **Studs:** G Remy Martin (19.2 ppg, 4.0 apg, 3.2 rpg); G Alonzo Verge Jr. (14.4 ppg, 3.3 rpg); G Rob Edwards (11.7 ppg, 3.5 rpg)
- **Wild cards:** F Romello White (10.2 ppg, 9.0 rpg)
- **All-in:** After improving to 23-11 and 12-6 in Pac-12 play in Bobby Hurley's fourth season, the Sun Devils regressed just a bit this year, finishing the regular season 20-11 and 11-7 in conference play. ASU was wildly inconsistent at times, losing by 40 to Saint Mary's while scoring wins over Arizona and Oregon.



## COLORADO BUFFALOES

- **Coach:** Tad Boyle
- **2019-20 record:** 21-10
- **Conference record:** 10-8
- **Pac-12 Tournament seed:** No. 6
- **Jackpots:** 78-76 vs. Dayton, Dec. 21; 74-65 vs. Oregon, Jan. 2
- **Busted out:** 72-58 at Kansas, Dec. 7; 79-76 vs. Northern Idaho, Dec. 10; 76-68 vs. Oregon State, Jan. 5; 72-64 at Stanford, March 1; 74-72 (OT) at Utah, March 7
- **Studs:** G McKinley Wright IV (14.0 ppg, 5.6 rpg, 5.1 apg); Tyler Bey (13.6 ppg, 9.0 rpg, 1.5 spg); D'Shawn Schwartz (10.4 ppg, 3.6 rpg)
- **Wild card:** F Evan Battey (8.9 ppg, 6.1 rpg)
- **All-in:** Under Boyle, one of the better and longest-tenured coaches in the Pac-12, the Buffaloes have never really gotten over the hump. Case in point: After beating No. 4 Oregon in Eugene on Jan. 2, Colorado turned around and lost to Oregon State three days later. This is a team that also handed Dayton one of its two losses. If the Buffs find a way to conquer their self-inflicted demons, they have a real chance in Sin City.



## OREGON STATE BEAVERS

- **Coach:** Wayne Tinkle
- **2019-20 record:** 17-13
- **Conference record:** 7-11
- **Pac-12 Tournament seed:** No. 8
- **Jackpots:** 82-65 at Arizona, Jan. 12; 63-53 vs. Oregon, Feb. 8
- **Busted out:** 64-49 at Texas A&M, Dec. 21; 89-76 at Washington State, Jan. 18; 69-67 at Cal, Feb. 1
- **Studs:** F Tres Tinkle (18.4 ppg, 7.4 rpg, 3.2 apg); G Ethan Thompson (14.9 ppg, 4.2 rpg, 4.5 apg); F Kaylor Kelley (11.1 ppg, 5.3 rpg)
- **Wild cards:** G Zach Reichle (7.9 ppg, 3.2 rpg)
- **All-in:** Tinkle had to think his team was on the rise after improving from 10th to tied for fourth in the Pac-12 last season. But after going 10-8 last year in league play, the Beavers went 7-11 this year despite the presence of an all-league senior in Tres Tinkle, the school's all-time leading scorer.

- at Colorado, Feb. 22; 69-64 vs. Arizona, Feb. 29
- **Busted out:** 88-78 vs. Hofstra, Nov. 21; 75-61 at Notre Dame, Dec. 14; 77-74 vs. Cal State Fullerton, Dec. 28; 84-66 at Arizona State, Feb. 6
- **Studs:** G Chris Smith (13.1 ppg, 5.4 rpg); F Jalen Hill (9.0 ppg, 6.9 rpg); G Jaime Jaquez Jr. (8.9 ppg, 4.8); F Tyger Campbell (8.3 ppg, 5.0 apg)
- **Wild cards:** G Prince Ali (6.8 ppg, 2.3 rpg)
- **All-in:** After a 7-6 nonconference slate, Cronin's message finally sank in four games into the Pac-12 campaign. UCLA started conference play 1-3, but went 11-3 the rest of the way, with a seven-game winning streak that became the talk of college hoops. A couple of wins in the conference tournament would be a boon to the team's NCAA Tournament odds.

appeared to have taken the Utes to the next level, guiding them to a 27-9 mark in 2015-16, the team has stalled out. Four multigame losing streaks in conference play has a tendency to do that to a team.



## WASHINGTON HUSKIES

- **Coach:** Mike Hopkins
- **2019-20 record:** 15-16
- **Conference record:** 5-13
- **Pac-12 Tournament seed:** No. 12
- **Jackpots:** 74-67 vs. Baylor, Nov. 8; 72-40 vs. USC, Jan. 5; 90-83 at Arizona State, March 5; 69-63 at Arizona, March 7
- **Busted out:** 66-64 vs. UCLA, Jan. 2; 61-55 at Stanford, Jan. 9; 61-58 (OT) at Cal, Jan. 11
- **Studs:** F Isaiah Stewart (16.6 ppg, 8.7 rpg); F Jaden McDaniels (13.1 ppg, 5.8 rpg); G Nahziah Carter (12.5 ppg, 5.0 rpg); G Quade Green (11.6 ppg, 5.3 apg)
- **Wild cards:** G Marcus Tsohonis (6.9 ppg, 2.2 apg)
- **All-in:** Not just the most thoroughly disappointing team in the Pac-12 but one of the true duds of the season, the Huskies labored through Pac-12 play and could never get it going. Surprisingly, the presence of Stewart — the conference's best projected incoming freshman — did little to galvanize this group.



## USC TROJANS

- **Coach:** Andy Enfield
- **2019-20 record:** 22-9
- **Conference record:** 11-7
- **Pac-12 Tournament seed:** No. 4
- **Jackpots:** 76-66 at Nevada, Nov. 16; 74-63 at UCLA, Jan. 11; 57-48 vs. Arizona, Feb. 27; 54-52 vs. UCLA, March 7
- **Busted out:** 70-61 vs. Temple, Nov. 22; 101-79 vs. Marquette, Nov. 29; 72-40 at Washington, Jan. 5; 79-65 at Utah, Feb. 23
- **Studs:** F Onyeka Okongwu (16.2 ppg, 8.6 rpg); G Jonah Mathews (13.4 ppg, 2.5 rpg); F Nick Rakocevic (10.5 ppg, 8.3 rpg)
- **Wild cards:** G Daniel Utomi (8.2 ppt, 3.8 rpg)
- **All-in:** Enfield really hasn't gotten the credit he deserves, leading USC to its fourth 20-win season in five years. The Trojans were marred by some inexplicable disappearances this year, but they've got the talent to pull off a run.



## STANFORD CARDINAL

- **Coach:** Jerod Haase
- **2019-20 record:** 20-11
- **Conference record:** 9-9
- **Pac-12 Tournament seed:** No. 7
- **Jackpots:** 73-54 vs. Oklahoma, Nov. 25; 70-60 vs. Oregon, Feb. 1; 72-64 vs. Colorado, March 1
- **Busted out:** 68-67 vs. Butler, Nov. 26; 64-56 (OT) at Utah, Feb. 6; 68-65 at Oregon State, March 5
- **Studs:** F Oscar da Silva (16.1 ppg, 6.3 rpg); G Tyrell Terry (14.9 ppg, 4.5 rpg, 3.2 apg)
- **Wild cards:** F Spencer Jones (8.9 ppg, 3.3 rpg); G Daejon Davis (8.6 ppg, 3.7 apg, 3.2 rpg)
- **All-in:** The Cardinal topped the 20-win plateau for the first time under Haase (and first since 2014-15), so there is progress. But a 1-7 stretch in the middle of conference play doomed Stanford in the long run. Of course, the one win was over Pac-12 champion Oregon, so who knows anything anymore?



## UTAH UTES

- **Coach:** Larry Krystkowiak
- **2019-20 record:** 16-14
- **Conference record:** 7-11
- **Pac-12 Tournament seed:** No. 9
- **Jackpots:** 69-66 vs. Kentucky, Dec. 18; 79-65 vs. USC, Feb. 23; 74-72 (OT) vs. Colorado, March 7
- **Busted out:** 79-57 at Coastal Carolina, Nov. 21; 65-61 vs. Tulane, Nov. 24; 83-64 at Arizona State, Jan. 18; 70-62 at Stanford, Feb. 26
- **Studs:** F Timmy Allen (17.5 ppg, 7.3 rpg, 3.0 apg); G Both Gach (11.0 ppg, 3.7 rpg, 2.7 apg); G Rylan Jones (9.6 ppg, 4.5 apg, 2.9 rpg)
- **Wild cards:** F Riley Battin (8.0 ppg, 4.6 rpg)
- **All-in:** Just when Krystkowiak



## UCLA BRUINS

- **Coach:** Mick Cronin
- **2019-20 record:** 19-12
- **Conference record:** 12-6
- **Pac-12 Tournament seed:** No. 2
- **Jackpots:** 72-68 vs. Colorado, Jan. 30; 65-52 at Arizona, Feb. 8; 70-63



## CAL GOLDEN BEARS

- **Coach:** Mark Fox
- **2019-20 record:** 13-18
- **Conference record:** 7-11
- **Pac-12 Tournament seed:** No. 10
- **Jackpots:** 79-75 (OT) vs. UNLV, Nov. 12; 52-50 vs. Stanford, Jan. 26; 87-52 at Washington, Feb. 22
- **Busted out:** 87-52 vs. Duke, Nov. 21; 62-45 vs. Texas, Nov. 22; 71-63 vs. Harvard, Dec. 29; 87-52 at Washington, Feb. 22
- **Studs:** G Matt Bradley (17.5 ppg, 4.9 rpg); G Paris Austin (9.1 ppg, 2.6 rpg, 2.5 apg); G Kareem South (8.7 ppg, 2.2 rpg); F Grant Anticevich (8.4 ppg, 5.5 rpg)
- **Wild cards:** F Andre Kelly (7.7 ppg, 5.5 rpg)
- **All-in:** A four-win improvement in Pac-12 play indicates better things are on the horizon under Fox. The Bears scored big conference wins over Colorado, Stanford and Oregon State, among others. The Bears are a year — and a lot of talent — away from being on the rise.



## OREGON DUCKS

- **Coach:** Dana Altman
- **2019-20 record:** 24-7
- **Conference record:** 13-5
- **Pac-12 Tournament seed:** No. 1
- **Jackpots:** 82-74 vs. Memphis, Nov. 12; 71-69 vs. Seton Hall, Nov. 27; 71-70 at Michigan, Dec. 14; 74-73 vs. Arizona, Jan. 9
- **Busted out:** 73-72 vs. Gonzaga, Nov. 28; 78-74 vs. North Carolina, Nov. 29; 72-61 at Washington State, Jan. 16; 70-60 at Stanford, Feb. 1
- **Studs:** G Peyton Pritchard (20.5 ppg, 5.5 apg, 4.3 rpg); G Chris Duarte (12.9 ppg, 5.6 rpg); G Will Richardson (11.0 ppg, 3.7 rpg, 2.3 apg)
- **Wild cards:** G Anthony Mathis (8.5 ppg); F Skakur Juiston (7.9 ppg, 6.3 rpg)
- **All-in:** Oregon's season is pretty much the definition of the Pac-12 over the last decade. Remarkable highs, including wins over Memphis, Seton Hall and Michigan, plus inexplicable losses to Washington State, Stanford and Oregon State that kept the Ducks out of the top 5. With Pritchard leading the way, this team can get hot in a hurry, though, so Vegas could be their coming-out party.



## WASHINGTON STATE COUGARS

- **Coach:** Kyle Smith
- **2019-20 record:** 15-16
- **Conference record:** 6-12
- **Pac-12 Tournament seed:** No. 11
- **Jackpots:** 79-71 (OT) vs. UCLA, Jan. 4; 79-67 vs. Washington, Feb. 9; 78-74 at Washington, Feb. 28
- **Busted out:** 70-62 at Santa Clara, Nov. 12; 85-77 vs. Omaha, Nov. 21; 82-71 vs. Nebraska, Nov. 25
- **Studs:** F C.J. Elleby (18.0 ppg, 7.8 rpg); G Isaac Bonton (15.3 ppg, 3.9 apg, 3.7 rpg)
- **Wild cards:** F Jeff Pollard (8.8 ppg, 4.1 rpg)
- **All-in:** The Cougars stumbled early in the season with a 3-4 start but got hot just as Pac-12 play was set to begin, heading into conference play with a six-game winning streak. That didn't mean much once Wazzu entered Pac-12 territory as it struggled to keep games close. Only a 86-83 overtime loss to UCLA was determined by fewer than five points.

- Jon Gold, Special to the Arizona Daily Star

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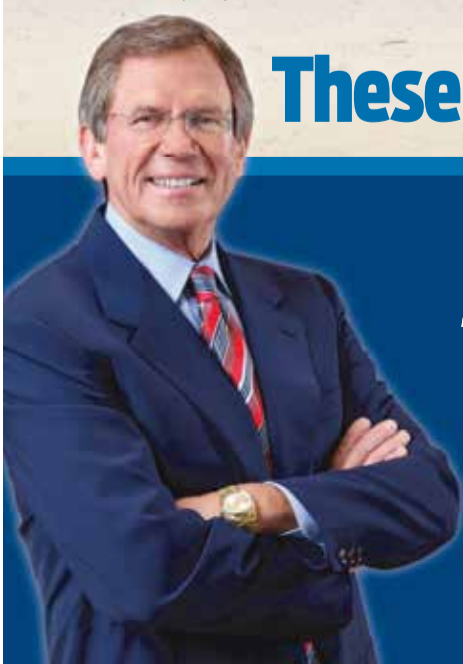
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