

Intro

The Portland Pilots were selected to finish seventh in this year's preseason poll, after finishing sixth in the conference last season, as voted on by the head coaches in the league. The Pilots feature an experienced team that returns three starters and five seniors.

Fresh off its first .500 season (15-15) since the 1998-99 season, Portland is led by Jim Sollars, who enters his 23rd year as head coach of the program, easily the most tenured coach in the conference. Last season, the Pilots had a record year at the charity stripe, hitting .774 of their free-throws, setting not only a school record, but also the WCC record for a team's single season free-throw percentage.

The Pilots will be looking to their experience to help improve upon their 5-9 conference record, as they return nine letterwinners from last year's squad. Among those returning are two members of last year's All-WCC honorable mention team in senior Karlie Burris and junior Laiken Dollente, who was also voted to the preseason all-conference team.

Portland Backcourt

Portland will have strong leadership in the backcourt as 5-8 guard Laiken Dollente returns after receiving the team MVP award for the second straight season in 2007-08. Dollente returns after a record-setting season in which she hit 139-of-152 free throws for an amazing .914 clip, which was second in the country last year. She also led the team in points, scoring 14.6 ppg, three-point shooting, hitting 54 treys, and was second on the team in assists with 2.8 apg.

Also expected to contribute is 5-11 guard Karlie Burris, who led the Pilots in assists, with 3.4 apg, which was sixth in the conference last season. She also led the team in steals, averaging 1.7 spg. Burris returns as the team's third leading scorer, averaging 6.8 ppg, with a little over 25 minutes of action per game last year.

The Pilots shored up their backcourt rotation with incoming freshmen ReZina TecleMariam, a 5-8 guard from Bellarmine Prep in Puyallup, Washington, and Nakeisha Brown, a 5-10 guard from Alief Elsie HS in Houston, Texas. TecleMariam was voted All-Narrows League First Team her sophomore and senior years and led the team to a 21-3 record in 2008. Brown averaged 17 ppg and five rpg during her first three years, missing her last season due to injury.

Portland Frontcourt

The Pilots will return experience at the frontcourt as well as they bring back senior Allyson Sievers, a 6-2 forward, who started 23 out of 30 games last season. Sievers led the team in rebounding last year, pulling down 5.2 boards per game, and was third on the team in scoring, averaging 8.9 ppg. She will be looked to for her consistency as she returns as the team's leader in field goal percentage, hitting shots at a .476 clip, which was 10th in the conference last year.

Portland will also expect to get support from Tara Cronin, a 5-10 forward, who played in all 30 games as a freshman last season, starting in eight and should see increased playing time. Cronin enters the year as the team's fourth leading scorer at 5.2 ppg and second leading free throw shooter as she hit on .811 percent of her free throws.

Also returning to the Pilots' frontline is Lauren Angel, a 6-3 center, who saw action in 29

games last year and averaged 3.5 ppg in only 9.3 minutes per game. Jennifer Wassom, a 5-11 forward, enters her last year for the Pilots, and had an impressive performance in the Pilots exhibition win over Concordia, going 5 for 10 for 15 points. Rounding out the returners are Carly Koebel, a 6-5 center, who played in 27 games with one start, Andrea Wujek, a 5-9 forward from Walla Walla, Washington, and Jessica Clemens, who also stars on the Pilots' volleyball team.

Hoping to make an impact in her freshman year is Alexis Gannis, a 6-1 forward from Phoenix, Arizona, who was named a 2007-08 McDonald's preseason All-America nominee and averaged 18 ppg and nine rpg her senior year.