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# Redhawks Prepare to Soar on the Basketball Court

Ben Wiley, Copy Chief

Seattle University's Men's and Women's Basketball teams are eagerly anticipating the oncoming start of their 2021-22 seasons. Both squads are looking forward to playing in front of fans again and aiming to build off of their achievements from last year's season, which was negatively impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The women's basketball team lost an exhibition game Nov. 4 against Central Washington University. However, the contest served as a way to help the Redhawks identify areas of improvement in preparation for their season opener Nov. 9, against Northwest University.

Meanwhile, the men's team will start their season Nov. 10 against Alcorn State University.

Last year, Seattle U's Women's Basketball team finished with an 11-14 record, going 6-8 in Western Athletic Conference (WAC) play. This year, the media predicted them to finish eighth in the WAC, while other WAC coaches predicted a ninth-place finish.

The Redhawks bring back just about everyone from last year's squad, an element of continuity that may prove beneficial to the team's success.

Senior Bree Calhoun looks to improve on last year's performance, which earned her the WAC Defensive Player of the Year award as well as a spot on the conference's All-Newcomer and All-Defensive teams. She led the conference in steals with 83 in 25 games and finished second in the WAC with 5.6 assists per game.

Redshirt senior McKenzie Williams came back after earning All-WAC Second Team honors last season by being one of only three WAC players to score over 15 points per game (ppg). WAC Coaches as well as the media named Calhoun to the Preseason All-WAC Second Team, while the coaches selected Williams to the Preseason Second Team.

In addition, the Redhawks welcome Freshman Taliyah Clark and two graduate transfers, Jadyann Alexander and Barbara Rangel, both of whom previously played at the University of Hawaii.

In the wake of the women's basketball team's victory in their season opener Nov. 9, Redshirt junior Georgia Kehoe mentioned how the squad's performance in their first game as well as the experience they gained playing last year during the pandemic will help them achieve greater success moving forward.



Number 33 Kobe Williamson and number 25 Brandton Chatfield face off at the tip off of a team scrimmage.

“It was definitely nice to get a win last night. It gives us some confidence as we prepare to face quite a few tough oppositions in the next couple of weeks,” Kehoe said. “Last year was tough due to COVID, but it gave us an opportunity to play as a team. Thus, this year, girls are used to playing with each other and our chemistry this year with the new additions is better than it was last year. I think that we are going to prove people wrong and dominate the WAC.”

Head Coach Suzy Barcomb is looking forward to the season starting and seeing what her team can accomplish this year.

“We have our goals. We want to play better than we did last year. There are a lot of new teams in the WAC, so it will take some time to get to know what those WAC teams are. We just have to find something that we can hang our hat on,” Barcomb said.

Barcomb shared the happiness that she and the student-athletes felt being able to play in front of fans again instead of in empty stadiums due to the stricter COVID-19 restrictions previously in place.

The Seattle U Men’s Basketball team returns all five starters from last year’s team that went 12-11. The team will likely be led by the duo of Sophomore Darrion Trammell and Junior Riley Grigsby, two players that shined last year, respectively averaging 20.5 and 17.8 ppg.

Trammell—who briefly entered the transfer portal after last season before deciding to stay at Seattle U—was voted WAC Men’s Basketball Preseason Player of the Year. He earned spots on both the coaches’ and media’s Preseason All-WAC First Teams, while Grigsby joined him on the coaches’ Preseason All-WAC First Team.

Entering his second year at Seattle U, Trammell expressed excitement for the upcoming season.

“Ultimately, I want to be a winning team and show that we are one of the best teams in the WAC,” Trammell said. “I feel like we are battle tested and ready for this year after going through everything last year with the pandemic ... We are working really hard and I think that we are a really fun team to watch.”

Trammell also emphasized the impact that having fans at the games will have on the team. He encouraged students and other members of the community to come cheer on the Redhawks.

Over the past four years, all home games have been played at the Redhawk Center. This year, in addition to playing at the Redhawk Center, the men’s basketball team will play eight games at the brand new Climate Pledge Arena in downtown Seattle.

The Redhawks play their first game there Nov. 14 against Idaho State University at 5 p.m. Tickets are free for students, faculty and staff, and transportation to and from the arena will be provided for students on campus.

When the men play their first game Nov. 10, they will do so without their current head coach. Seattle U placed men’s basketball coach Jim Hayford on administrative leave Friday, Nov. 5 for allegedly using a racial slur. The Athletics Department declined to comment.

Associate Head Coach Chris Victor has been named the team’s Interim Head Coach for the time being.