

Seattle University

ScholarWorks @ SeattleU

The Spectator Online

Newspapers

4-3-2024

2024-04-03 Seattle U Basketball Teams Face Roster Turnover After Electric Season Finales

Riley Zalbert
Seattle University

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarworks.seattleu.edu/spectator-online>

Recommended Citation

Zalbert, Riley, "2024-04-03 Seattle U Basketball Teams Face Roster Turnover After Electric Season Finales" (2024). *The Spectator Online*. 1245.
<https://scholarworks.seattleu.edu/spectator-online/1245>

This News Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Newspapers at ScholarWorks @ SeattleU. It has been accepted for inclusion in The Spectator Online by an authorized administrator of ScholarWorks @ SeattleU.



The Spectator • April 3, 2024 • <https://seattlespectator.com/2024/04/03/seattle-u-basketball-teams-face-roster-turnover-after-electric-season-finales/>

Seattle U Basketball Teams Face Roster Turnover After Electric Season Finales

Riley Zalbert, Volunteer Reporter

The Seattle University men's and women's basketball teams came into the 2023-2024 season with differing expectations. The women's team underwent a complete coaching makeover while adding one new player, while the men's team chased their first NCAA Tournament berth since 1969 with key senior players graduating at the end of the season.

Women's Basketball

Heading into the season, there were high hopes with the program trying to break a five-year losing season streak as the new overhauled coaching staff was ready to lead the team to a winning record. But the team, which won just six games in the 2022-2023 season, got off to a tough start, winning one game in 21 contests. As they headed into the back half of the season, there was a noticeable turnaround as the program went 5-2 from Feb. 10 to March 7.

The last game of the season, Senior Night, was a fight between Tarleton State and Seattle U, both of whom were vying for a spot in the WAC Tournament. After a back-and-forth affair, Seattle U ultimately lost 62-57, ending their postseason hopes. The team finished 6-23 for consecutive seasons and 6-14 in WAC play.

Next season is a distant reality though, as there has already been a flurry of moves. Seven Redhawks are in the transfer portal and there have been two new signings of former Big Ten Champion, Taisiya Kozlova, a guard from Dayton, and former Fresno State forward Tamia Stricklin.

Here is who is already listed in the transfer portal: Senior guard Peyton Howard, Sophomore guards Noemie Bariteau, Asta Blauenfeldt, and Makayla Moore, Senior forwards Irena Korolenko and Mya Moore and Sophomore forward Lisa Michaelson.

Head coach Skyler Young could not be reached for comment as the team continues to navigate the roster-building process.

Men's Basketball

There were numerous record-breaking moments throughout the season for Seattle University Men's Basketball, including Redshirt Senior guard Cameron Tyson's record-breaking 3-point night, and a third consecutive 20+ win season (23-14, 11-9 WAC), the first time since 1957-59.

Although the Redhawks didn't win the WAC Tournament, falling to Grand Canyon in the semi-final, they competed in the Ro College



Annabelle DeGuzman-Carino

Basketball Invitational (CBI) in Daytona, Fla. against other mid-major schools in late March. They went 4-0 and won the tournament.

One key addition this year was Redshirt Sophomore guard John Christofilis at the beginning of the season. Christofilis added a needed shooter to the team to complement the backcourt of Tyson, Senior guard Alex Schumacher and Junior guard Paris Dawson.

Two players who contributed massively and appeared in all 37 games were Junior forwards Brandon Chatfield and Kobe Williamson.

They each had stellar moments throughout the season including Williamson's two game-winners. Chatfield has been skying for alley-oops all season, with his best highlight arguably being a momentum-changing 3-pointer late against High Point in the CBI final.

Next season they will be the leading senior frontcourt as they still search for that elusive tournament berth.

"I'm trying to be louder on the court, in some games I've definitely done that, I'm the one at the back of the defense so I have to talk a lot to try and help everybody else on the court. Especially with the freshman teaching them from our life experiences, and with [Freshman forward] Malek [Gomma] trying to teach him everything I know and everything I've learned so he can be the better player for it," Chatfield said.

Williamson felt the same sentiment in being a role model, but from a more off-the-court stance.

"I'm not a very loud character in the beginning, my impact may be a little more off-court behind the scenes, teaching them from my life experiences and what they can do, instead of being super loud—that's something I'm going to have to work on," he said.

Head coach Chris Victor has been at the helm for the past three seasons. He has led the Redhawks to their most prominent status since reentering Division I sports in the 2008-09 season, with an overall record of 66-35 over these past seasons. He is ready for next season but thankful for what his players accomplished through this season.

"The main goal as always every year is to compete for a WAC championship and go to the NCAA tournament. Even though we didn't meet that goal, I thought we had a heck of a year overall," Victor said. "To have 23 wins and finish it out with a tournament championship was pretty special."

Victor and his staff will now turn toward bringing new recruits and transfers into the program, as the latter have been crucial in establishing this team's identity over the past three seasons. It's a process he navigates with a clear goal in mind.

"We're always recruiting and always looking for, one, who do we bring into our program has to be a fit for what we need as a player... it's also important to find the right fit for SU and for who we are as a program" Victor said. "When we have the whole locker room and staff full of those people then with a shared vision and all rowing the boat in the same direction you have a chance to do some big things."

Both programs may look very different this fall, but if their late-season play is any indicator, more winning years may be on the horizon.

Since the writing of this article, Chatfield has transferred to Iowa State University to complete the final year of his collegiate athletic eligibility.