



Inside Beaver Nation



**Expect
Excellence**
(4th Year)



2008-09 OUTLOOK



**Dedicated to
Excellence**
(3rd Year)





**Committed to
Excellence**
(2nd Year)



**Establishing
Excellence**
(1st Year)

2008
OUTLOOK



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2008-09 OUTLOOK

In 2008-09, the Oregon State women's basketball team will be balanced. The Beavers will be talented. And most of all, they will be hungry.

Head coach LaVonda Wagner will have at her disposal an exciting group of returners and newcomers who will come together to become a contender in the Pacific-10 Conference.

She will have a senior class that knows how to lead and who is ready to take on the Pac-10 and climb the ladder. The Beavers have a thirst for success and they know how to get there. They'll use hard work and determination to take on the Pac-10 in Wagner's fourth season at the helm of the Beavers.

Wagner has a vision for making Oregon State a Pac-10 power, one that is mirrored by a strong nucleus of returning players and a set of extremely talented newcomers who know only one thing: winning. They've won at the high school and junior college levels and are ready to aid the Beavers in 2008-09 and beyond.

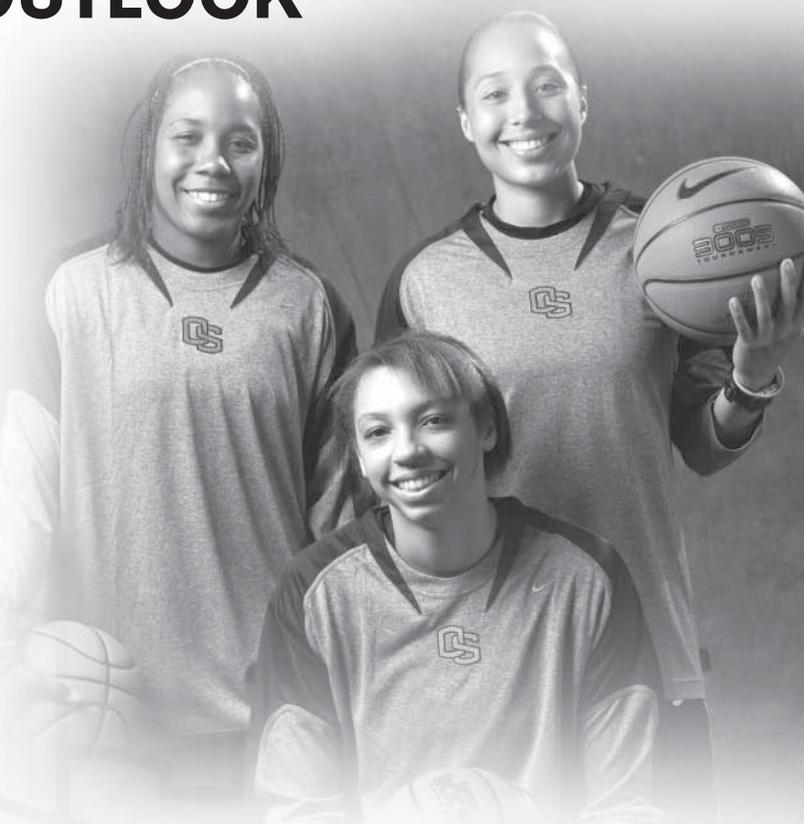
Simply put, there is something special happening in Corvallis.

The Beavers have a talented and experienced senior class that includes guards Brittney Davis and Mercedes Fox-Griffin and post-player Tiffany Ducker. Davis displayed great athleticism last season while Fox-Griffin looks to her third straight season starting at the point. Ducker, meanwhile, is a threat down low and knows what it takes to play in the Pac-10.

"This year's senior class has a lot of experience and is hungry for success," Wagner said. "Mercedes has been a three-year starter for this program. Tiffany Ducker and Brittney Davis both understand what it takes to compete at a high level."

Brittney Davis (Portland, Ore.) took an immediate liking to the Oregon State offense last season, her first with the Beavers after transferring from Minnesota. She became one of Oregon State's starting guards last season and ended the year averaging nearly 13 points per game. Davis, a homegrown talent from Portland, is one of the team's most versatile players and can knock down a shot from beyond the three-point line or slash to the basket. Davis also proved to be the team's sharpest shooter from the free-throw line, making better than 80 percent of her charity shots.

Tiffany Ducker (Stockton, Calif.) returned from a one-year absence last season as though she had never left. Ducker averaged 6.6 rebounds per game as a junior, which placed her sixth in the Pac-10. Armed with great agility, Ducker immediately made the shot block en vogue at Oregon State again and became valuable inside the paint. She led the Beavers by making better than 50 percent of her shots from the field.



Mercedes Fox-Griffin (La Jolla, Calif.) is expected to start her third straight season at the point guard position after averaging nearly five assists per game as a junior. She finished with 140 assists overall, giving her 330 for her career, which places Fox-Griffin in the top 10 in OSU history. She has grown to become an incredibly valuable floor general and leader on the defensive side of the ball. Fox-Griffin has proven to be one of the nation's finest at the point the last couple seasons and should continue that with a number of offensive options of which to dish the ball off to.

The Beavers' junior class is one that includes two high IQ players in Julie Futch and Stacey Nichols and a junior college transfer in Anita Burdick. Futch and Nichols give the Beavers depth and basketball smarts while Burdick will give the squad immediate size down low.

"The junior class will give our team their knowledge for the game and a defensive post presence with Anita Burdick," Wagner said.

Anita Burdick (Reno, Nev.) immediately becomes Oregon State's tallest player after two years at the College of Southern Idaho. While in Idaho, she played a valuable role, ranking among the team's leaders in rebounds and blocked shots. She also has a scoring touch, which will become key once the Beavers get into Pac-10 play.

Julie Futch (Auburn, Wash.) returns to the Beavers and gives OSU a high-tempo option off the bench. The guard entered a number of games last season and picked up big rebound after big rebound. She proved to be an exceptional shooter under pressure, never evidenced by her 13 points and five rebounds at Washington last season in which she almost led the Beavers to a come-from-behind victory.

Stacey Nichols (Beaverton, Ore.) is one of two in-state players for the Beavers and has proven to play with a high basketball IQ in her two previous seasons at Oregon State. Nichols started for most of last season, but also played off the bench, and gave the Beavers valuable minutes in both roles. Now a junior, Nichols has a sense of leadership and will be valuable in that sense.



2008-09 OUTLOOK

Oregon State's sophomores certainly gained experience last season as true freshmen as each enters the 2008-09 season looking to add to the OSU lineup. Talisa Rhea evolved into a dangerous perimeter threat, while Alex Mitchell and Brittany Eskridge became key components of the Beavers' inside game.

"We will look for much needed depth from the sophomore class with Alex, Talisa and Brittany," Wagner said. "Talisa Rhea made an impact on our team as a freshman and we look for her to continue with a successful sophomore campaign. We look for Alex and Brittany to give us scoring options inside the paint."

Brittany Eskridge (Mill Creek, Wash.) gives the Beavers a solid shot blocker in the mold of Ducker. Eskridge is an athletic post player who can run the floor. Now a sophomore, Eskridge gained valuable minutes as a freshman.

Alex Mitchell (Oakland, Calif.) started near the end of the last season and progressed as an imposing post player for the Beavers. Mitchell averaged 30 minutes per game over OSU's last six contests, all starts, and she scored 6.2 points and grabbed 6.2 rebounds per game during that stretch. Mitchell played at Berkeley High School, a highly successful program.

Talisa Rhea (Juneau, Alaska) came to Oregon State from one of the most remote areas of the country and established herself as one of the most promising players on the West Coast last season. Rhea connected on 67 three-pointers, which put her just two off tying the OSU single-season record, and she made eight in a game against Washington State, which set an Oregon State record. She was named the Pac-10 Player of the Week for her effort and was later honored by the Pac-10 to its All-Freshman team.

Oregon State's freshman class includes two players who will be joining the Beavers for the first time and another who spent last season with the squad but was unable to play due to injury. The Beavers' freshman class contains players who know how to win, evidenced by multiple state titles in high school.

"The freshmen will contribute to our program right away," Wagner said. "They both are athletic and can score in transition. After sitting out last year during a medical redshirt season, **Kassandra McCalister** will give us another great shooter on the perimeter."



Brittany Kennedy (Spokane, Wash.) simply won at Lewis and Clark High School in Spokane. Her team lost just 11 games in her four seasons with the program, and she led the high school to three consecutive high school titles. As a talented and athletic point guard, Kennedy makes the players around her better. She's one of the most highly decorated players to come out of the state of Washington, earning All-League honors her senior season.

Kassandra McCalister (San Jose, Calif.) spent last season with Oregon State but was unable to see any game action because of a foot injury suffered before the season. McCalister will undoubtedly add to OSU's guard depth as she is an excellent three-point shooter and passer. McCalister played at Archbishop Mitty High School and is no stranger to winning.

Kirsten Tilleman (Bozeman, Mont.) is accustomed to winning. Her Bozeman High School teams won back-to-back state titles as she became one of the most recognized girls high school athletes in the state. She's a very versatile and athletic post player after excelling in track and field and soccer at Bozeman. She was named the top player in the state of Montana playoffs. She was also the 2006 Montana Gatorade Player of the Year in soccer.

Oregon State will play a strong schedule in 2008-09, highlighted by NCAA Tournament teams Stanford, Arizona State, California and UC Santa Barbara, not including a potential matchup with perennial top-10 team North Carolina. The Beavers will open the Junkanoo Jam in Freeport, Grand Bahamas against the Southeastern Conference's Arkansas and could face the Tar Heels in the second day of action.

The Beavers are also slated to see non-conference action against Sacramento State, Houston, UC Irvine, San Francisco, Western Oregon, CSU-Bakersfield and San Francisco. Pacific-10 Conference play opens Jan. 2 and against USC and UCLA and the Beavers return home for their first league action against the Arizona schools beginning Jan. 8.





ROSTER BREAKDOWN

2008-09 NUMERICAL ROSTER

<u>NO.</u>	<u>NAME</u>	<u>POS</u>	<u>HT</u>	<u>YR</u>	<u>EXP</u>	<u>HOMETOWN (LAST SCHOOL)</u>
1	Mercedes Fox-Griffin	G	5-7	Sr.	3V	La Jolla, Calif. (La Jolla Country Day)
3	Tiffany Ducker	C	6-2	Sr.*	3V	Stockton, Calif. (St. Mary's)
5	Kassandra McCalister	G	5-9	Fr.*	RS	Sunnyvale, Calif. (Archbishop Mitty)
11	Talisa Rhea	G	5-11	So.	1V	Juneau, Alaska (Juneau-Douglas)
20	Brittney Davis	G	5-10	Sr.*	1V	Portland, Ore. (Jefferson/Minnesota)
21	Alex Mitchell	C	6-4	So.	1V	Oakland, Calif. (Berkeley)
23	Julie Futch	G	5-8	Jr.	2V	Auburn, Wash. (Auburn Riverside)
24	Brittany Kennedy	G	5-7	Fr.	HS	Spokane, Wash. (Lewis & Clark HS)
32	Kirsten Tilleman	F	6-1	Fr.	HS	Bozeman, Mont. (Bozeman HS)
42	Anita Burdick	F	6-3	Jr.	TR	Reno, Nev. (North Valleys HS/Southern Idaho)
44	Stacey Nichols	F	6-1	Jr.	2V	Beaverton, Ore. (Southridge)
52	Brittany Eskridge	F	6-3	So.	1V	Mill Creek, Wash. (Henry M. Jackson)

2008-09 ALPHABETICAL ROSTER

<u>NO.</u>	<u>NAME</u>	<u>POS</u>	<u>HT</u>	<u>YR</u>	<u>EXP</u>	<u>HOMETOWN (LAST SCHOOL)</u>
42	Burdick, Anita	F	6-3	Jr.	TR	Reno, Nev. (North Valleys HS/Southern Idaho)
20	Davis, Brittney	G	5-10	Sr.*	1V	Portland, Ore. (Jefferson/Minnesota)
3	Ducker, Tiffany	C	6-2	Sr.*	3V	Stockton, Calif. (St. Mary's)
52	Eskridge, Brittany	F	6-3	So.	1V	Mill Creek, Wash. (Henry M. Jackson)
1	Fox-Griffin, Mercedes	G	5-7	Sr.	3V	La Jolla, Calif. (La Jolla Country Day)
23	Futch, Julie	G	5-8	Jr.	2V	Auburn, Wash. (Auburn Riverside)
24	Kennedy, Brittany	G	5-7	Fr.	HS	Spokane, Wash. (Lewis & Clark HS)
5	McCalister, Kassandra	G	5-9	Fr.*	RS	Sunnyvale, Calif. (Archbishop Mitty)
21	Mitchell, Alex	C	6-4	So.	1V	Oakland, Calif. (Berkeley)
44	Nichols, Stacey	F	6-1	Jr.	2V	Beaverton, Ore. (Southridge)
11	Rhea, Talisa	G	5-11	So.	1V	Juneau, Alaska (Juneau-Douglas)
32	Tilleman, Kirsten	F	6-1	Fr.	HS	Bozeman, Mont. (Bozeman HS)

* Has utilized redshirt season

HEAD COACH:

LaVonda Wagner, Mars Hill College, '86 (4th year)

ASSISTANT COACHES:

- Kellee Barney, Idaho, '83 (1st year)
- Krista Reinking, Illinois, '99 (4th year)
- Anthony Turner, Colorado, '00 (1st year)

DIRECTOR OF BASKETBALL OPERATIONS:

Erin Entwistle, Western Illinois, '04 (4th year)

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF BASKETBALL OPERATIONS:

Stacy Clinesmith, UC Santa Barbara, '00 (1st year)

PRONUNCIATION GUIDE

Talisa **RHEA**: REE-Ah

