

Despite inroads, seating is our greatest issue

Greetings from Virginia, home to NCAA tournament anarchy.

The first No. 15 seed to advance? Richmond over Syracuse in 1991. Hampton (2001) and Norfolk State (2012) followed, upsetting Iowa State and Missouri, respectively.

Two of the four No. 11s to reach the Final Four, the lowest seeds ever to advance that far, hail from the commonwealth, George Mason in 2006 and VCU in 2011. And the Rams remain the lone First Four team to make the national semifinals.

Of the 44 at-large selections that finished below .500 in conference, one reached the Final Four: Virginia in 1984.

Speaking of the Cavaliers, perhaps you've heard that in March they became the first No. 1 to lose to a No. 16 as UMBC rolled by 20.

Whether similar bracket wreckage will transpire this season is unknown. What is known is the USBWA's continuing advocacy for all who cover college basketball.

Access, game-day operations and seating have been our primary targets, and thanks to members such as Mark Zeigler (San Diego Union-Tribune), Luke DeCock (Raleigh News & Observer), Kirk Wessler (Peoria Journal Star), Vahe Gregorian (Kansas City Star) and John Akers (Basketball Times), we're making progress.

Our efforts are rooted in the USBWA ad hoc committee that DeCock (seating) and Wessler (access) chaired. Gregorian and Akers took the group's recommendations last year to the NCAA's Basketball Oversight Committee, which then produced a Best Practices

David Teel
Newport News Daily Press
President



Memo for Division I schools.

A USBWA membership survey identified many programs that fall short of the suggested guidelines. The NCAA's Dave Worlock re-sent the memo this year, and we reached out to the schools most mentioned in our survey.

Moreover, DeCock (ACC), Wessler (Missouri Valley) and Zeigler (Mountain West, Big 12, Pacific 12 and American Athletic) attended spring meetings to huddle with conference and school reps. Some results:

Oklahoma athletic director Joe Castiglione, a former selection committee chairman and long a media advocate, spoke with his Big 12 colleagues about the best practices and afterward texted Zeigler that they had "a very good and lengthy discussion."

Clemson associate athletic director Joe Galbraith wrote DeCock that the Tigers have expanded what was a limited postgame working space.

Florida State basketball SID Chuck Walsh told DeCock that media sitting behind fans will be placed on ris-

ers this season, with more power outlets and better Wi-Fi.

Senior staffers from Virginia and Virginia Tech assured me of improved access to players and coaches.

Not all was encouraging. Syracuse, where baseline media seating is behind fans and offers no risers, said no changes are planned. And North Carolina, singled out for praise in our member survey, is moving media this season from behind the basket to an upper level.

Indeed, seating is our greatest challenge. Even schools open to dialogue on other concerns – Clemson, Virginia and Virginia Tech – said their less-than-ideal locations won't be changing.

As since-retired Clemson legend Tim Bourret told DeCock, the NCAA's slashing of courtside seats gave schools a green light to sell that real estate, and they're not about to stop.

That said, please know that the NCAA's Worlock and Dan Gavitt have been beyond supportive in our striving to keep the media's remaining courtside locations.

"Overall, I think we made some inroads," Zeigler said of our most recent efforts. "If nothing else, we raised awareness about the best practices and let folks know that we're watching them."

As most of you are aware, Joe Mitch is retiring as the USBWA's executive director after the Final Four in Minneapolis. We hope to choose his successor ASAP, so I encourage anyone interested in the position to call/email Joe or me.

USBWA mourns passing of O'Connell, Guback

By MALCOLM MORAN

The USBWA lost two of the most influential and devoted leaders in its history with the passing of past presidents and Hall of Fame members Jim O'Connell and Steve Guback.

O'Connell, the longtime basketball writer for the Associated Press, died on July 2 at the age of 64. He joined the AP as a full-time staff member in 1978, served as its national basketball writer since 1987 and was USBWA president in 1997-98. He received the Curt Gowdy Print Media Award from the Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame in 2002 and was inducted into the USBWA Hall of Fame the same year.

"He was the source on college basketball," Terry Taylor, the AP sports editor from 1992 to 2013, said in the AP obituary. "He knew coaches, players, games, dates of games and final scores – all manner of factoids – off the top of his head. And when you looked it up, he was always right."

O'Connell – "Oc" to generations of USBWA members and AP colleagues – has been remembered as much for his storytelling and presence in press rooms



Steve Guback



Jim O'Connell

as he was for his achievements. He was at the center of Final Four lunches and dinners at Steak 'n Shake restaurants from Michigan to Texas. His description of an armed robbery at a White Castle restaurant in Queens became a comedy routine that inspired annual requests.

He would volunteer advice he received as a student at St. John's University from his mentors, athletic director Jack Kaiser and basketball coach Lou Carnesecca. His open casket revealed that he was wearing a Final Four credential and holding a pen, with his tape recorder nearby.

He covered 39 consecutive Final Fours, from 1979 at Salt Lake City through 2017 at Glendale, Ariz. His last three Final Fours took place after a leg was amputated as a result of complications from diabetes.

For decades, O'Connell shaped the development of young reporters at AP bureaus around the world and college students at the annual "Full Court Press" seminar at the Final Four by emphasizing the importance of accuracy, fairness and the development of relationships.

He attended every Big East tournament from 1980, the league's first season, through 2017. The conference announced in October that the media area at future tournaments will be called the Jim O'Connell Media Center.

His Olympic coverage extended from 1984 in Los Angeles to 2004 in Athens, Greece. According to FIBA, O'Connell held the unofficial record for most

CONTINUED on Page 4

The United States Basketball Writers Association
803 Wildview Lane; Manchester, Mo.
63021. Visit us at: www.usbwa.com
314-795-6821; Fax: 314-444-4333

PRESIDENT – Dave Teel, Newport News Daily Press; O: 757-247-4636; C: 757-897-2049; dteel@dailypress.com

FIRST VICE PRESIDENT – Mike Waters, Syracuse Post-Standard; C: 315-416-6031; mwaters@syracuse.com

SECOND VICE PRESIDENT – Seth Davis, The Fieldhouse/CBS; C: 917-225-5788; sethdavishoops@gmail.com

THIRD VICE PRESIDENT – Shannon Ryan, Chicago Tribune; 312-451-7692; sryan@chicagotribune.com

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR – Joe Mitch, H: 636-227-9113; C: 314-795-6821; mitch@usbwa.org

BOARD MEMBERS

DISTRICT I – Gavin Keefe, New London Day; C: 401-527-8625; g.keefe@theday.com

DISTRICT II – Joe Juliano, Philadelphia Inquirer; C: 215-932-7413; jjuliano@phillynews.com

DISTRICT III – Luke DeCock, Raleigh News & Observer; C: 919-812-7195; ldecok@newsobserver.com

DISTRICT IV – Jeff Greer, The Athletic; C: 502-593-9435; j.allen.greer@gmail.com

DISTRICT V – Brendan Quinn, The Athletic; C: 734-660-6659; bfquinn06@gmail.com

DISTRICT VI – Stu Durando, St. Louis Post-Dispatch; 314-650-1760; sdurando@post-dispatch.com

DISTRICT VII – Bob Holt, Arkansas Democrat-Gazette; C: 479-601-4339; bobholt59@gmail.com

DISTRICT VIII – Geoff Grammer, Albuquerque Journal; C: 505-206-0138; ggrammer@abqjournal.com

DISTRICT IX – Mark Zeigler, San Diego Union-Tribune; C: 619-246-3881; markzeigler@msn.com

WOMEN – Mel Greenberg; C: 215-815-5943; poll@att.net

AT-LARGE – George Schroeder, USA Today; C: 541-953-4080; gschroeder@usatoday.com

AT-LARGE – C.L. Brown, The Fieldhouse; C: 502-645-6142; cbrown@theathletic.com

SID – Mike Kern, Missouri Valley Conference; C: 314-435-4779; O: 314-444-4326; kern@mvc.org

NEW MEDIA LIAISON – Randy McClure, Rush the Court; C: 415-608-1837; rushthecourt@yahoo.com

TIPOFF EDITOR – John Akers, Basketball Times; H: 704-849-8627; C: 980-422-1294; johna19081@gmail.com

WEBMASTER – Ted Gangi, C: 214-909-9314; ted.gangi@sportswriters.net

Temple's Dunphy epitomizes ideals of Dean Smith Award

One of the real opportunities for USBWA members each year is to witness the honoring of individuals for their service to the USBWA and to college basketball.

Many of the awards are presented at the men's and women's Final Four. They are given not just to members but also to others in college basketball such as athletics directors, coaches, sports information directors and players.

Counting the hardware for player of the year, coach of the year and freshman of the year for men and women, the USBWA hands out 13 awards each year. Since I've been involved in the organization for the last 39 years, I've seen how much these awards mean to people. There's usually not a dry eye in the house during the USBWA's honors functions at either Final Four.

The USBWA's newest award is named in honor of the late legendary North Carolina coach Dean Smith.

Past president and Hall of Fame member John Feinstein created the award honoring Smith. It is given annually to an individual in college basketball who embodies the spirit and values of Smith. Coaches are recognized for their principles of honesty and integrity, for treating all people with courtesy and respect, for accomplishments off the court and for the impact they have made on their community and the lives of their players.

This year's recipient of the Dean Smith Award is Temple coach Fran Dunphy, who is recognized as much for his charity work and community service off the court as he is for his success on the court.

"To receive an award named in honor of Dean Smith is truly humbling," Dunphy said. "No one had more integrity or did more to promote what is good in college basketball. To be recognized like this is a tremendous

honor."

Dunphy entered his 30th season as a head coach this year, and 13th at Temple, compiling 557 career victories. He has guided his teams at Penn and Temple to 17 20-win seasons, 16 NCAA tournament appearances and 14 conference championships.

But it his tireless devotion to the national Coaches vs. Cancer charity over the past 23 years that has earned him as much respect nationally as the number of championships and games he's won in basketball.

"Fran's record as a coach speaks for itself, but it doesn't begin to make clear the lives he's touched and the remarkable work he's done for charity," Feinstein said. "I know Coach Smith would applaud – no, cheer – the USBWA for giving the award named for him to Fran Dunphy."

Dunphy currently is co-chair of the Philly 6 Coaches vs. Cancer chapter and a member of the national council.

"Coach Dunphy has always given back," said past president and Hall of Famer Dick "Hoops" Weiss. "He epitomizes the highest character, teaching skills and community values that Dean Smith would admire."

Dunphy is the fourth person to receive the Dean Smith Award. Previous winners include retired Georgetown coach John Thompson in 2015, Michigan State's Tom Izzo in 2016 and retired Dayton coach Don Donoher last year.



Busy offseason for USBWA members

A large number of USBWA members or recent members left their previous jobs since last May:

- Hall of Famer and past USBWA president Kirk Wessler left the Peoria (Ill.) Journal after 31 years.

- Hall of Famer and past USBWA president Steve Carp went from the Las Vegas Review Journal, where he had worked for 19 years and was a former UNLV beat writer, to Gaming Today.

- The Athletic hired several writers as college beat writers: Tyson Alger (Oregon), Eamonn Brennan (Georgetown, Virginia, national), Scott Dochterman (Iowa), Dustin Dopriak (Indiana, Purdue, Butler), Seth Emerson (Georgia), Jeff Greer (Louisville), Doug Haller (Arizona State, Arizona), Bill Landis (Ohio State), John Martin and Jason Smith (Memphis), C.J. Moore (Kansas, Kansas State, Missouri), Shannon Russell (Xavier), Jesse Temple (Wisconsin) and Kyle Tucker (Kentucky).

- Former USBWA board member Lee Barfknecht left the Omaha World Herald after 39 years at the paper.

- Jeff Goodman moved from ESPN to The Stadium.

- Kevin Armstrong was among several employees laid off in July by the New York Daily News.

- Kevin Brockway moved from beat writer of the Florida Gators' basketball program at the Gainesville (Fla.) Sun, a post he held since 2003, to the Sun's Florida education beat.

- Ron Higgins went from the New Orleans Times-Picayune to the Clarion (Miss.) Ledger, where he will be the sports editor and columnist.

Beats were switched at the Raleigh News & Observer: Steve Wiseman (from NC State to Duke), Joe Giglio (North Carolina to NC State) and Jonathan Alexander (Duke to North Carolina). Wiseman and Giglio returned to their previous beats.

In other news: USBWA women's rep Mel Greenberg, who spent a 40-year career at the Philadelphia Inquirer, joins ESPN's Claire Smith as legacy of excellence honorees in the 15-member Philadelphia Sports Hall of Fame Class during a Nov. 1 induction. Allen Iverson and Muffet McGraw are also among the honorees.

Former Dayton coach Don Donoher, honored with the USBWA's Dean E. Smith Award in 2017, donated \$2,000 to the Dean Smith Opening Doors Fund, which provides educational opportunities to students from lower-income families.

Lodge Notes

Quinn a big winner in USBWA's best-writing contest

Brendan Quinn of The Athletic placed in four categories in the USBWA's Best-Writing Contest, including first place in spot news/game stories.

Quinn also placed in magazine-length features (third), enterprise reporting (fifth) and moderate-length features (fifth). His winning story was about a critical day in Michigan State's athletic department.

"All of this — from OTL's report, to the facts of past incidents at MSU, to the dark umbrella of (Larry) Nassar's haunting behavior — remains exceedingly difficult to unpack and organize," Quinn wrote. "Lines are blurred in a confluence of controversies. (Tom) Izzo and (Mark) Dantonio have both stood before reporters voicing support for Nassar's survivors, while facing questions lobbed about allegations inside their own programs. A bizarre incongruity.

"To untangle the mare's nest, one must first understand how all these roads intersected."

Mike Waters of the Syracuse Post-Standard placed in two categories, including first in magazine-length features for a story on former Syracuse assistant Mike Hopkins' new job as head coach at Washington.

The other first-place winners: David Teel of the Newport News Daily Press (column writing), Nicole Auerbach of The Athletic (moderate-length features) and Pat Forde and Pete Thamel of Yahoo Sports (enterprise reporting).

Teel won in column writing for a reflective piece on how Virginia should deal with its historic loss to No. 16 seed UMBC in the NCAA tournament.

"Subtle chances? Of course," Teel wrote. "The best coaches, (Tony) Bennett included, make them frequently.

"But a radical departure from the defense-first principles that have fashioned five consecutive NCAA tournament appearances and three outright ACC titles during that span? Uh, no."

Auerbach took first place in moderate-length features for a story on how UMBC coach Ryan Odom and his wife dealt with their son's obsessive compulsive disorder.

"What Odom is doing to revitalize a program that last reached the Tournament in 2008 is impressive," Auerbach wrote. "But what he does just by opening up about his son's mental health challenges can have a far greater impact. 'I don't know why it's so taboo,' Odom says."

Thamel and Forde won the enterprise category for an examination of records that led to an important story about the FBI investigation into college basketball.

Other multiple winners included Nathan Baird of the Lafayette Courier Journal (second for enterprise and fourth for moderate-length features), Jeff Eisenberg of Yahoo Sports (second in moderate-length features and fourth in column writing), Jesse Newell of the Kansas City Star (third in column writing and fourth in enterprise reporting) and Lindsay Schnell of USA Today (fourth in magazine-length features and fourth in moderate-length features). Alex Schiffer of the Kansas City Star took second place in magazine-length features and was part of a team that took third in enterprise reporting.

Nominations being taken for USBWA awards

Nominations are now being accepted for the following USBWA awards to be presented next April.

HALL OF FAME. Established in 1988, the USBWA honors past and current members for their contributions to the organization and for their achievements in sports journalism. To be eligible, an individual must have a minimum of 20 years experience as a sports writer or college athletics administrator dealing with basketball. Send nominations to USBWA Executive Director Joe Mitch at mitch@usbwa.com.

KATHA QUINN AND MARY JO HAVERBECK.

Best-Writing Contest

Column Writing

1. David Teel, Newport News Daily Press. Fans overreact. Wins seem bigger than they are. Losses seem bigger than they are. This particular loss, No. 1 Virginia's loss to 16-seed UMBC, seemed cataclysmic. Take a breath, this column says, and then tells us why we should.
2. Seth Davis, The Athletic. Rick Pitino's predictable fall from grace
3. Jesse Newell, Kansas City Star. Kansas Devonte Graham's lessons from his mom
4. Jeff Eisenberg, Yahoo Sports. Diversity. Helping high-school girls' player find a basketball-ready head covering
5. John Akers, Basketball Times. Lefty Driesell should be in the Hall of Fame

Magazine-Length Feature

1. Mike Waters, Syracuse Post-Standard. The family photo on Mike Hopkins desk is not of his family. And that might tell you all you need to know about the Washington coach. An interesting show-don't tell personality profile.
2. Alex Schiffer, Kansas City Star. Oral history of a high school dunk video that helped Michael Porter Jr. make his first national splash.
3. Brendan Quinn, The Athletic. Xavier Simpson was lost, then found in his hometown of Lima, Ohio.
4. Lindsay Schnell, USA Today. Grayson Allen is a polarizing figure. Here are some reasons why.
5. Jason King, Bleacher Report. Perception and reality. Mohamed Bamba is a star player. He is also a complex person with a complex background.

Moderate-Length Feature

1. Nicole Auerbach, The Athletic. Ryan Odom, coach at UMBC, and his wife share their long road with their son's obsessive-compulsive disorder. It's a compelling story about a crusade that has grown larger than their family.
2. Jeff Eisenberg, Yahoo Sports. This moving story is an extraordinary profile in courage. Avery Martz suffered a stroke on the day she moved into her dorm room at Saint Joseph's. Her basketball future remains to be seen, but her story is worthwhile.
3. David Woods, Indianapolis Star. Basketball's signature is written large at Butler.
4. Nathan Baird, Lafayette Journal and Courier. Dakota Mathias isn't Purdue's star. He's Purdue's symbol.
5. Brendan Quinn, The Athletic. A look behind the scenes of a Hawaiian preseason tournament where a Michigan team tries to find its identity.

Game Story/Spot News

1. Brendan Quinn, The Athletic. A powerful narrative about the day when Michigan State's athletic department reached its breaking point. There was Larry Nassar's sentencing for sexual abuse, the resignation of athletic director Mark Hollis, and questions that stretched into almost every athletic office. And then there was a basketball game.
2. Scott Dochterman, Land of 10. Jordan Bohannon refused to break Iowa's free throw record.
3. Brian Hamilton, The Athletic. UMBC, and a coach who took a journey to get there, pull an upset for the ages.
4. Lindsay Schnell, USA Today. Villanova's shooting tips. An interesting technique for talking about an offensive showcase.
5. Mike Waters, Syracuse Post-Standard. Syracuse shocks three-seed Michigan State. How'd that happen? Story dissects the surprising result.

Enterprise

1. Pat Forde and Pete Thamel, Yahoo Sports. An impressive examination of records provides a clear picture of the depth and sweep of the FBI investigation into college basketball. The story is important and significant in scope.
2. Nathan Baird, Lafayette Journal and Courier. John Neff inherited a basketball prize — a Purdue jersey once worn by John Wooden, one of the Big 10's early stars and later, a legendary coach.
3. Katy Bergen, Aaron Reiss and Alex Schiffer, Kansas City Star. A discovery of abuse complaints filed against Missouri player Terrence Phillips.
4. Jesse Newell, Kansas City Star. An amusing history of a student prank that became the well-known "Beware of the Phog" banner that still hangs at Kansas.
5. Brendan Quinn, The Athletic. A look back at the time that Kareem Abdul-Jabbar considered attending Michigan.



Teel



Waters



Auerbach



Quinn



Forde



Thamel

Both awards recognize individuals in men's and women's basketball for their service to the media and for the inspiration they provide to those in the sports journalism profession. The awards are presented in honor of two former sports information directors who have passed away — Quinn (St. John's) and Haverbeck (Penn State). Send nominations for the Quinn Award in men's basketball to past president Malcolm Moran at moranma@indiana.edu and Mike Waters, USBWA second vice president, at mwaters@syracuse.com, and to Mel Greenberg at poll@att.net for the Haverbeck Award in women's basketball

MOST COURAGEOUS. The USBWA honors a player, coach, official or administrator who demonstrates extraordinary courage while facing adversity in life. First presented in 1978, it is the USBWA's oldest award. Send men's nominations to Shannon Ryan, USBWA third vice president, at sryan@chicagotribune.com, and women's nominations to Greenberg.

RISING STAR. The USBWA honors a member who is under 30 and shows outstanding promise as a journalist covering college basketball. Send nominations to past president John Akers at johna19081@gmail.com.

King, Theisen win initial Guback scholarships

The USBWA has awarded two college scholarships this year as part of the association's Steve Guback Scholarship program honoring the late executive director and past president of the USBWA.

The first to receive a scholarship was Drew King, a May graduate from the University of Texas at Austin. King received a grant from the USBWA for \$1,000. He was chosen from a group of more than 30 students that attended the Larry Donald Memorial "Full Court Press" sportswriting seminar at the NCAA Men's Final Four last April.

The second scholarship went to Jack Theisen, son of USBWA member and SID Chris Theisen. Jack Theisen receives \$1,000 annually from the USBWA for four years. The scholarship is awarded each year to the son or daughter of a USBWA member.

King, who hails from Tyler, Texas, spent two years in Austin after earning his associate's degree in history from Tyler Junior College.

King spent just under two years at The Daily Texan, covering women's basketball as well as track and field. During his final semester in Austin, King freelanced for the Dallas Morning News and wrote long-form stories and covered the first two rounds of the NCAA women's basketball tournament in Austin for Women's Hoops World. After graduating, King accepted a job at the San Marcos Daily Record in Texas as a sports reporter.

King's winning story looked at Phil Booth's role in Villanova's national title run. Booth won his second title at Villanova in three years after being forced to redshirt in 2016-2017 because of an injury.

Theisen is the son of Chris Theisen, Kansas' sports information director at Kansas since 2004.

"Receiving this scholarship would be a tribute to my dad," Jack Theisen wrote in his application for the award. "His commitment to his profession has taught me the value of hard work."

Theisen was named valedictorian at Lawrence's Free State High School, maintaining a perfect 4.0 grade-point average while taking advanced and college prep courses for four years.

Theisen also played four sports – football, basketball, baseball and track and field – and was named second-team all-league tight end during his senior season for a Free State football team that was ranked No. 1 in Class 6A for eight weeks and finished 10-1.

The Guback scholarships are in honor of the former executive director of the USBWA from 1977-83. Guback, who passed away earlier this month, also served as president of the USBWA in 1976-77.

The sportswriting seminar is named for Donald, a publisher of Basketball Times and the only two-time president (1986-88) in the history of the USBWA. Donald passed away in 2000.

O'Connell, Guback

CONTINUED from Page 1

Olympic basketball games covered by a journalist. He is survived by his wife, Anne; sons James and Andrew; and sisters Winnie and Mary.

Guback, whose career in journalism included 20 years at the Washington Star, passed away Oct. 1 at the age of 91. He was USBWA president in 1976-77 and served as USBWA executive director from 1977-83, guiding the organization through a period of controversy that could have threatened its existence.

He became an important advocate for greater access during a period of dramatic growth of the NCAA tournament. He played a pivotal role in the establishment of the Most Courageous Award. He is survived by his brother, Thomas Guback.

Guback also worked at the Richmond Times-Dispatch, Winston-Salem Journal and the Norwalk Hour. He was named the Virginia/DC Sportswriter of the Year three times and served as president of the Atlantic Coast Sportswriters Association.

Shortly before his passing, Guback's gift of \$100,000 to the USBWA created the Steve Guback Scholarship program to provide financial assistance to the son or daughter of a USBWA member and the winner of the annual "Full Court Press" competition at the Final Four.

Notre Dame assumes women's No. 1 ranking

By Mel Greenberg

A year ago, the odds were quite long that Notre Dame would be celebrating its second NCAA women's basketball championship.

The Irish started out with a key roster subtraction caused by injury to Brianna Turner, while several more knee injuries elicited more serious depletions to Muffet McGraw's squad.

But Notre Dame kept swinging back at adversity, reaching the Women's Final Four. On successive last-second shots from Arike Ogunbowale, the Irish took down an unbeaten Connecticut bunch, in a painful repeat semifinals loss for the Huskies, and then Mississippi State to put a stamp on the greatest championship weekend in NCAA women's history.

With nine veterans back, the Irish enter this season occupying a spot that UConn has monopolized for nearly a decade.

Connecticut's dip was affected by Azura Stevens' departure to the WNBA. But with players like Katie Lou Samuelson and Napheesa Collier, perhaps there's a chance to continue business as usual.

Louisville still has Asia Durr heading a talented roster, and Oregon is capable of taking the next step with a dynamic shooting star in Sabrina Ionescu.

Baylor is a perennial power, and Maryland is more experienced. One of the storylines will be how Minnesota fares under new coach and recently retired WNBA All-Timer Lindsay Whalen.

Here's your USBWA Top 25, plus a few.

Women's Preseason Top 25

1. Notre Dame
 2. Oregon
 3. Connecticut
 4. Baylor
 5. Louisville
 6. Mississippi State
 7. Maryland
 8. South Carolina
 9. Stanford
 10. Tennessee
 11. Texas
 12. Oregon State
 13. Iowa
 14. DePaul
 15. Missouri
 16. Texas A&M
 17. Duke
 18. NC State
 19. USF
 20. Georgia
 21. California
 22. Miami
 23. Syracuse
 24. UCLA
 25. Arizona State
- Others Considered:
Marquette; Quinnipiac;
Central Michigan;
Duquesne; Buffalo; Rutgers.

Kansas, Barrett head men's rankings

Kansas and Duke freshman R.J. Barrett are favored to take home top honors this season, according to the USBWA's annual preseason poll.

The Jayhawks edged out Kentucky – which received more first-place votes than Kansas – by just four votes for first place. Kansas received five of a possible 14 first-place votes, to Kentucky's six and Gonzaga's three.

Barrett is the preseason favorite in a wide-open field for the Oscar Robertson Trophy, given to the nation's top player. Barrett received five votes. Purdue's Carsen Edwards received four, Kansas' Detric Lawson three and Gonzaga's Rui Hachimura two.

Barrett also is the favorite for the Wayman Tisdale Award, given to the nation's top freshman. He received 12 votes, to two for teammate Zion Williamson.

Rounding out the top 25 are: Gonzaga, Duke, Tennessee, Virginia, Nevada, North Carolina, Villanova, Auburn, Michigan State, Kansas State and Syracuse in a tie for 12th, West Virginia, Oregon, Virginia Tech, Mississippi State, Florida State, Michigan, Clemson, LSU and Purdue in a tie for 21st, UCLA, TCU and Marquette.



R.J. Barrett

Men's Preseason Top 25

- | | |
|------------------------|-----|
| 1. Kansas (5) | 336 |
| 2. Kentucky (6) | 332 |
| 3. Gonzaga (3) | 320 |
| 4. Duke | 311 |
| 5. Tennessee | 284 |
| 6. Virginia | 262 |
| 7. Nevada | 259 |
| 8. North Carolina | 248 |
| 9. Villanova | 229 |
| 10. Auburn | 217 |
| 11. Michigan State | 206 |
| 12. (tie) Kansas State | 166 |
| Syracuse | 166 |
| 14. West Virginia | 159 |
| 15. Oregon | 150 |
| 16. Virginia Tech | 123 |
| 17. Mississippi State | 107 |
| 18. Florida State | 95 |
| 19. Michigan | 80 |
| 20. Clemson | 63 |
| 21. (tie) LSU | 59 |
| Purdue | 59 |
| 23. UCLA | 47 |
| 24. TCU | 45 |
| 25. Marquette | 39 |
- Others receiving votes –
Washington 34, Indiana 33,
Loyola (Ill.) 23, Nebraska
11, Cincinnati 7, Iowa State
7, Texas Tech 6, Maryland
6, NC State 4, BYU 2,
Central Florida 2, Xavier 2,
Alabama 1, Marshall 1, St.
John's 1, Texas 1.