

# PORTLAND STATE BASKETBALL HISTORY

**P**ortland State basketball began along with the formation of Vanport Extension Center in 1946. John Jenkins was the first head coach for Vanport that year. He was followed by Joe Holland, then Arba Ager, who led Vanport to its first 20-win season in 1949-50. That same year, Vanport became a member of the Oregon Collegiate Conference.

Little reference material remains from the early days of Viking basketball, however the Vikings pieced together six wins in their first season of competition. Originally a two-year college, Vanport played four-year schools, junior colleges and some AAU teams.

Coach Arba Ager led Vanport to Oregon Collegiate Conference titles in 1951 and 1952. Ager won more than 60 percent of his games in five seasons as head coach.

Sharkey Nelson took over the Vikings in 1953 and began a 12-year run that included three OCC titles and two trips to the NAIA playoffs before the end of the decade.

It was not until 1955 that Vanport became Portland State College, a four-year school. During that time the Vikings still scrambled for a home venue, playing many games in high school gyms, in particular, the closely located Lincoln High School.

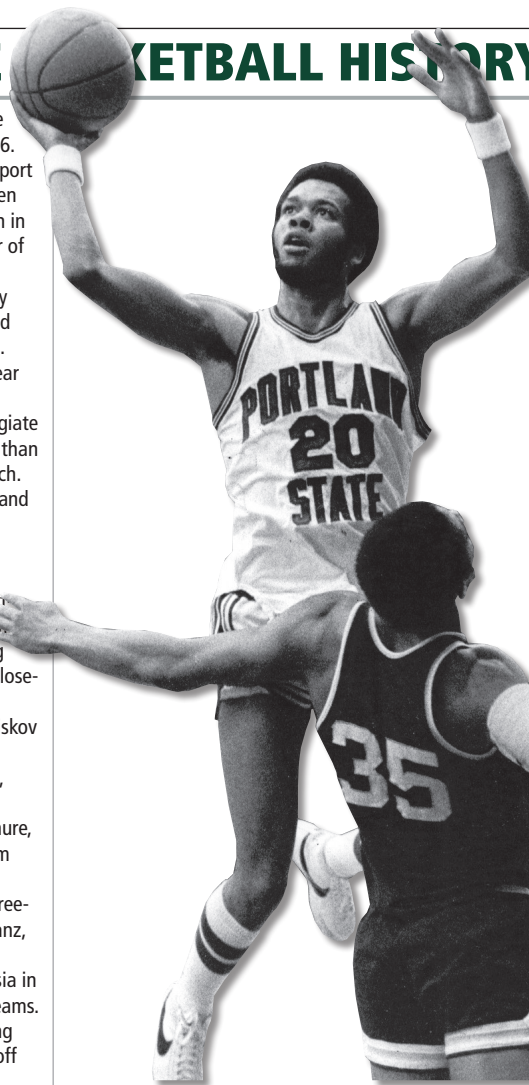
Paul Poetsch, John Winters, Jack Parker, Jack Viskov and Jim Perkin were just a few of the stars from the Nelson era. Winters became PSU's first All-American, earning third team NAIA honors in 1959.

Sharkey Nelson won 162 games during his tenure, which ended in 1965. His son, John, who played from 1962 to 1966, was the first of many great scorers at Portland State throughout history. Others included Freeman Williams, Willie and Charlie Stoudamire, Leo Franz, Bill Wilkerson and Jason Hartman.

Nelson took his team on a trip to southeast Asia in 1954 to compete against U.S. Military and foreign teams. The Vikings won 13 of 17 contests. And despite losing in the first round both years, PSU made its first playoff appearances in the NAIA in 1955 and 1956.

Marion Pericin took over as head coach in 1965, just as PSU was joining the NCAA. He quickly raised the level of the program's play, and in 1967, PSU earned an NCAA College Division tournament berth. Pericin's teams were exciting, averaging more than 90 points per game for a six-season stretch, breaking the 100-point barrier 42 times. In 1970-71, PSU averaged 99 points

per game. The Stoudamires, Willie and Charlie, were stars when they began playing in 1969. Willie averaged nearly 25 points per game in his career. Pericin brought many great players to the program, including Willie and Charlie Stoudamire, Leo Franz, Leon Edmonds, Hal Dohling, Bill Wilkerson, Mike O'Gara and Don Suloff among others. Dohling was a third team NCAA College Division



**John Nelson (above) was the first Viking to score 2,000 career points... until Freeman Williams (left) arrived a decade later. Freeman went on to score more points (3,249) than any player in NCAA history except Pete Maravich.**

All-American in 1968.

Pericin's style put Portland State basketball on the map, as it made the transition from the NAIA to NCAA level of competition in 1965. He set the stage for the continued success during the Ken Edwards' era later in the 1970s.

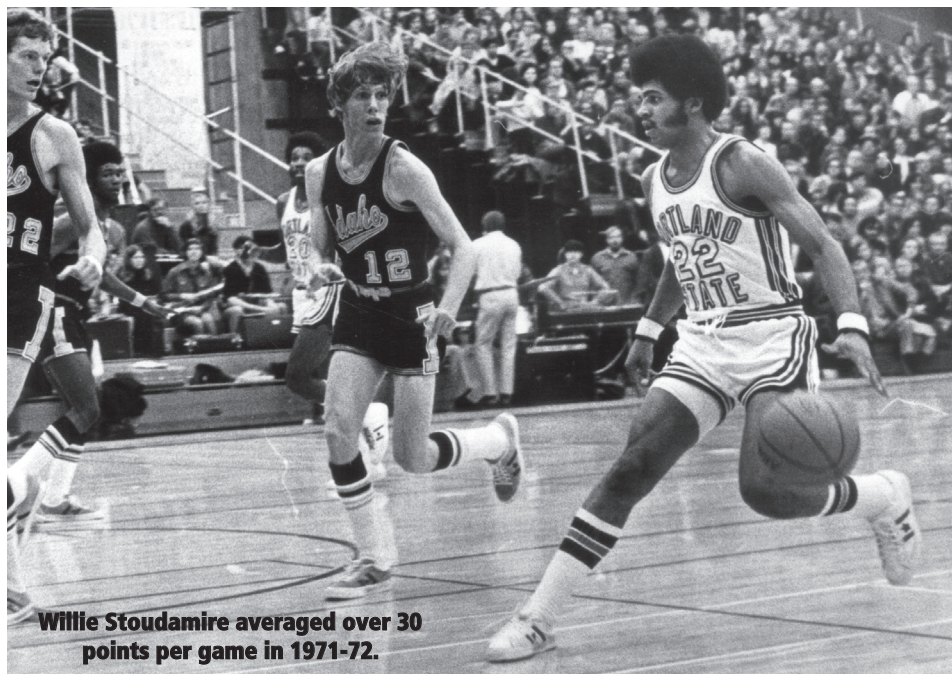
Portland State College was undergoing transition in the 60s, growing dramatically, and constructing an on-campus gym, which became known as the Peter W. Stott Center in the late 1990s. PSC also achieved university status in 1969.

During the mid-1970s, Ken Edwards took over the Vikings and continued the success of his predecessors. Edwards led PSU to seven winning seasons. He also brought to campus a player by the name of Freeman Williams. "Free" became PSU's all-time scoring leader, and the second all-time leading scorer in Division I history, behind only Pete Maravich. Williams averaged nearly 39 points per game in 1977, and 36 points the following season. He was complemented by other stars like Terry Adolph, Chucky Smith, Derreck Brooks, Ed Buchanan and Bob Sisul. Williams was named an All-American in 1978 on a team that included Larry Bird and Magic Johnson.

PSU frequently played home games in Portland's Memorial Coliseum, most significantly all of its matchups with the University of Portland from 1971 to 1981.

Portland State dropped basketball in 1981 for budgetary reasons, and the program remained dormant for 15 years. But in 1996-97, behind great support, Viking basketball returned to the Park Blocks.

Ritchie McKay was hired to revive the basketball program and provided fans with almost immediate success. Tabbed by most publications and pundits to lose every game their first season, the Vikings surprised everyone by winning nine times, six times in conference play. The following year, PSU won 15 games and placed third in the conference. In fact, the Vikings had winning seasons in three of their first four under McKay, and then Joel Sobotka. All-Big Sky Conference players included Brian Towne, Jason Hartman and Derek Nesland, as well as Ime Udoka, who has gone on to an NBA career with four different teams. Nesland, a great all-around



**Willie Stoudamire averaged over 30 points per game in 1971-72.**

**2023-24 PORTLAND STATE BASKETBALL**

Marion Pericin's go-go Vikings of the late 60s and early 70s were pure excitement, averaging nearly 100 points per game.



student-athlete honored the university by becoming PSU's first-ever Academic All-American in basketball.

The Coliseum and the Rose Garden also served as home venues for the Vikings during this time, hosting dozens of games over PSU's first eight years back as a Division I program. However, the Stott Center underwent a major overhaul in 2002, after remaining largely unchanged since being built in 1967. The \$1 million renovation project turned the arena – although still small - into a first-class facility with new chair-back seats, a new floor, new basketball standards, sound system, scoreboards and overall aesthetic upgrade.

Anthony Lackey led the Vikings into the new millennium. An outstanding all-around player, Lackey finished his career as the fourth all-time scorer in PSU history. A young teammate of his was Seamus Boxley who formed a bridge to the Heath Schroyer era.

Schroyer was hired in 2002, taking over a struggling program. In three seasons, he converted the Vikings from Big Sky Conference also-rans to Big Sky Champions. The Vikings won the regular season title with an 11-3 record - their first-ever Big Sky Championship and first finish above third place in nine seasons as a member.

Boxley was named Big Sky Player of the Year and earned Defensive Player of the Year for a second time as

he led PSU to a 19-9 record. That tied the PSU mark for the most wins ever at the Division I level, as a sold-out Stott Center was reminiscent of the Freeman Williams era.

The record for wins and excitement only lasted a few years, though. Ken Bone, who took over as head coach for the 2005-06 season, rebuilt the Viking program and led it to its' finest season ever in 2007-08. The Vikings won the Big Sky Conference regular season and tournament titles, establishing a new school record with 23 wins. PSU also made a first-ever appearance in the NCAA Division I tournament, losing to eventual national champion Kansas. The Vikings won their last 14 games against Big Sky opponents, as Bone was named Big Sky Coach of the Year, while point guard Jeremiah Dominguez was named the league's Player of the Year.

That success continued the following season as the Vikings again won 23 times, won the Big Sky Conference Tournament Championship - on a dunk by Julius Thomas in the closing seconds - and earned a number 13 seed in the NCAA Tournament. The Vikings lost in the opening round to Xavier. But, the 2008-09 season also included one of the biggest highlights in school history (to date) - a 77-70 win at seventh-ranked Gonzaga. It was a first-ever win over a top 10 team in school history.

In 2017-18, first-year Head Coach Barret Peery led the Viking program to a 20-win season - the most by a Viking team in 10 seasons and the most for a first-year coach. PSU beat two Pac-12 schools for the first time in school history (Cal, Stanford). Meanwhile, a 10-3 non-conference mark and 10-6 road record were the best in PSU program history. PSU led the Big Sky in six statistical categories while ranking third in the nation in scoring, second in steals, turnovers forced and offensive rebounds, and first in turnover margin.

The 2018-19 season brought a landmark transition to the Portland State Basketball program. The



Jeremiah Dominguez was the Big Sky Conference Player of the Year in 2007-08 and led the Vikings to two NCAA Tournament appearances.



Derek Nesland was Portland State's first Academic All-American in basketball.

Viking Pavilion, PSU's shiny, new basketball \$51 million arena opened up on campus, giving the university its first-ever NCAA Division I quality venue. The impact was immediate as attendance doubled for the Vikings in the first season on the new hardwood.

Point guard Holland Woods helped Peery's Vikings' grab attention through his flashy play. In 2019-20, Woods set new PSU career records for assists and steals and climbed to fifth all-time in scoring in just his third season. In all, Woods set four new Portland State statistical records during his career.



Portland State reached the NCAA Division I Tournament for the first time in 2008, beating Northern Arizona in the Big Sky final.

Portland State wins the 2007-08 Big Sky Conference Tournament, reaching the NCAA Division I Tournament for the first time.



## BIG MOMENTS IN VIKING HISTORY

**1967**

Portland State reaches an NCAA post-season for the first time and only time in its history. The Vikings earned a College Division berth after averaging more than 91 points per game in just its second season as an NCAA independent program.

**1978**

Freeman Williams scores point number 3,249 in his final game against the University of Puget Sound. Williams completes his four-year career at Portland State as the second-all-time leading scorer in NCAA history behind only Pistol Pete Maravich. During his 107-game career, Williams scores 35 or more points 41 times, 50 or more six times, and a career-best 81. He is named a first team All-American for the 1977-78 season.

**1995**

Portland State Administration approves the Viking Athletic Program's move to a full-fledged Division I competing institution. The result is the reinstatement of a men's basketball program that had been dead since the conclusion of the 1980-81 season due to budget cuts. After a long winter void in PSU Athletics, and countless questions of, "will you ever bring back basketball?" the Vikings have their answer. Portland State begins play in 1996-97, and after numerous basketball publications predicted the Vikings would go winless, Head Coach Ritchie McKay leads PSU to a 9-17 record (6-10 in conference). In just their second season, the Vikings pull off a winning record (15-12).

**November 24, 1997**

Portland State upsets the University of Oregon, 56-54, at McArthur Court in Eugene in just PSU's 28th game since reinstating its basketball program for the 1996-97 season. Sophomore guard Derek Nesland hit a three-point field goal with three seconds remaining to provide the winning margin. PSU, which had been without a men's basketball program from 1981 to 1996, was a huge underdog and had never beaten the down-state program. The victory legitimized Portland State as a Division I basketball program after a long absence, and led the Vikings to a stunning 15-12 record (10-6 in conference) in just its second season. It was also Portland State's first-ever win over a Pac-10 school.

**February 24, 2005**

Portland State clinches its first-ever Big Sky Conference Championship in its ninth season as a member of the league. The Vikings win a Big Sky game for the first time in Bozeman, beating Montana State, 88-82, overtime. PSU finished 11-3 in league play and 19-9 overall.

**March 12, 2008**

Portland State puts a cap on the finest season in school history, defeating Northern Arizona, 67-51, at the Rose Garden to win the Big Sky Conference Tournament and earn a first-ever berth in the NCAA Division I Tournament. PSU wins a school record 23 games, setting 16 other school records during the course of the season.

**December 23, 2008**

The Portland State Vikings treated themselves to the best holiday gift they could, a victory over the seventh-ranked Gonzaga Bulldogs, 77-70, in Spokane. The win was arguably the biggest regular season victory in the history of the Portland State basketball program. It marked the first time the Vikings had beaten a nationally-ranked team since basketball returned to the Park Blocks in 1996-97. And it is unlikely the Viking program of 1970s could match it as they seldom saw a Top-25 opponent (no records of ranked opponents exist from that era). The only other win that compares was the first Big Sky Conference Tournament title game victory over Northern Arizona (67-51) on March 12, 2008 which vaulted the Vikings into the NCAA Tournament for the first time in school history - but that was a post-season game. Making it all the more impressive, a major snowstorm in the Portland area had the airport and some airlines shut down on Dec. 21-22 as the Vikings attempted to get to Spokane for the game with Gonzaga. PSU's flight was cancelled and the Vikings had to resort to a last-second bus trip. That wasn't easy either as the direct route on Interstate-84 was closed. So, the Vikings left by bus from PSU and headed north to the Seattle area, arriving near midnight on Monday. The team then departed on Tuesday morning at 9 a.m. arriving in Spokane about three hours prior to game time. Without the normal shoot-around and game-day preparation, the Vikings went into McCarthy Athletic Center and pulled off a stunning upset against one of the premier programs in the nation over the previous decade.

**March 11, 2009**

The Portland State Vikings did it again - winning the Big Sky Conference Tournament for a second straight season - this time on the road and advanced to the NCAA Tournament. PSU pulled out a 79-77 victory over Montana State in the Championship game in Ogden, UT when forward Julius Thomas slammed home the game-winning basket with less than two seconds left to play.

**November 10, 2018**

Portland State played its first official home game in the new \$52-million Viking Pavilion on November 10, 2018 against UC Riverside. It marked the first time ever that PSU had a Division I-quality, on-campus facility it could call home. The Pavilion, which took more than six years from fund-raising to conception to construction, has proven to be a transformative facility for the Athletic Program and Portland State University.

# PORTLAND STATE ATHLETICS HALL OF FAME

The Portland State Athletics Hall of Fame honors excellence within the Viking athletics program. There has been no shortage of success in the past 70 years of Viking athletics and a portion of that is represented in the Hall of Fame.

The Hall of Fame list includes 110 former student-athletes, coaches, administrators or teams. Among those honored are 10 former basketball players and two former coaches:

**PLAYERS**

- Seamus Boxley
- Jeremiah Dominguez
- Anthony Lackey
- John Nelson
- Derek Nesland
- Paul Poetsch
- Charlie Stoudamire
- Willie Stoudamire
- Julius Thomas
- Bill Wilkerson
- Freeman Williams

**COACHES**

- Sharkey Nelson
- Marion Pericin

The Portland State Athletics Hall of Fame was founded in 1997. New members were inducted annually until 2003, at which time the Hall of Fame committee changed induction ceremonies to an every-other-year basis. In 2004, the Hall of Fame Committee also created a "veterans committee," charged with selecting candidates that are 30 or more years past their playing careers.

A new Hall of Fame was installed in the newly-built Viking Pavilion honoring all of Portland State's all-time greats. The Beetham Family Athletics Hall of Fame is located in the lobby of the north side entrance to the Pavilion.

Member (years of competition)	Inducted	Member (years of competition)	Inducted
Lee Allen, Wrestling (1952-54)	2000	Jeff and Marty Mozzochi, Volleyball Coaches (1984-92)	1999
Pokey Allen, Football Coach (1986-92)	1997	Debbie Myra, Track, Cross Country (1984-87)	2000
Kiauna Anderson, Softball (1998-2001)	2014	Barry Naone, Football (1985-88)	2008
Rena Aschoff, Basketball (1990-93)	2006	John Nelson, Basketball (1962-66)	2002
Wilbur Bauer, Wrestling (class of 1954)	2001	Sharkey Nelson, Basketball Coach (1953-65, 1975-76)	2001
Anna Bertrand, Softball (2010-13)	2022	Derek Nesland, Basketball (1997-2000)	2006
Geronne Black, Track and Field (2010-13)	2018	Jen Norlin, Volleyball (1986-89)	2006
Jimmy Blanchard, Football (1997-2000)	2008	Laurie Northrop, Basketball (1989-92)	2004
Joseph Blumel, University President (1974-86)	1998	Tom Oberg, Football (1966-67)	2002
Seamus Boxley, Men's Basketball (2001-05)	2012	Marion Pericin, Basketball Coach (1965-72)	1998
Greg Bruce, Women's Basketball Coach (1986-96)	2002	Leanne Peters, Volleyball (1990-93)	2000
Orshawante Bryant, Football (1997-2000)	2010	Marlene Piper, Volleyball Coach (1969-83)	1997
Brennen Carvalho, Football (2004-07)	2016	Paul Poetsch, Basketball (1952-55)	1999
Tony Champion, Wrestling (1989-92)	2002	Don Read, Football Coach (1968-71, 1981-85)	1999
John Charles, Football (1991-92)	2018	Gordon Riese, Baseball (1960-64)	1997
Terry Charles, Football (1998-2001)	2022	Dave Robbins, Cross Country (1967-70)	2002
Mark Colville, Meritorious Service (1987-2016)	2016	Mary Ross, Softball (1980-83)	2002
Lisa Couch, Volleyball (1982-85)	2001	Shelley Rumberger, Volleyball (1985-88)	2010
Chris Crawford, Football (1985-88)	1998	Dan Russell, Wrestling (1988-91)	1998
Mouse Davis, Football Coach (1975-80)	1997	Joy Russell, Volleyball (1990-93)	2002
Ralph Davis, Track & Football Coach (1954-70)	1998	Rick Sanders, Wrestling (1965-68)	1997
Curtis Delgado, Football (1986-90)	1999	Garyn Schlatter, Volleyball (2010-13)	2018
Arthur Dickson, Football (1973-76)	2022	Chuck Seal, Wrestling (1966-69)	2010
Clint Didier, Football (1979-80)	2000	Larry Sellers, Administrator/Meritorious Service (1968-99)	2004
Jeremiah Dominguez, Men's Basketball (2007-09)	2022	Jordan Senn, Football (2004-07)	2014
Charles "Chip" Dunn, Football (1997-2000)	2006	James Sisson, Wrestling (1989-93)	2004
Jack Dunn, Baseball Coach (1975-94)	1998	DeShawn Shead, Football (2008-11)	2016
Jim Dunn, Baseball (1977-79)	2012	Kristi Smith, Basketball (1993-96)	2001
Tracey Eaton, Football (1983-85, 87)	2001	Dave Stief, Football (1974-77)	2000
Claire Faucher, Basketball (2007-10)	2016	Peter Stott, Meritorious Service (1990-2018)	2018
Deb Fitzhugh, Softball (1980-83)	1999	Charlie Stoudamire, Basketball/Football (1969-72)	2002
Nique Fradella, Volleyball (2006-09)	2014	Willie Stoudamire, Basketball (1969-72)	1999
Ryan Fuqua, Football (2001-04)	2012	Karen Strong, Basketball (1975-77)	2010
Stuart Gaussoin, Football (1978-1981)	2014	Julius Thomas, Basketball/Football (2008-11)	2016
Marlin Grahn, Wrestling Coach/Athlete (1969-2006)	2008	Mike Tichy, Baseball Coach/Meritorious Service (1957-92)	2000
Karen Haberlach, Volleyball (1975-78)	1998	Sarah Tiller, Women's Golf (2001-05)	2012
Kayla Henningsen, Women's Soccer (2011-14)	2022	Tom Trebelhorn, Baseball (1967-70)	1998
Joe Holland, Athletic Director, Coach (1946-64)	1997	Nick Trubachik, Track and Field (2007-10)	2016
Michele Hughes, Basketball/Softball (1988-91)	2004	Robin Unger, Track, Volleyball (1991-96)	2001
Theresa Huitinga, Volleyball (1982-85)	2008	Tim Von Dulm, Football (1969-70)	2008
Kristin Jacobs, Softball (1990-91)	2006	Tim Walsh, Football Coach (1993-2006)	2012
Lynda Johnson, Volleyball (1982-85)	1997	Travis West, Wrestling (1986-90)	2016
Felicia Johnston, Golf Coach (2001-07)	2014	Howard Westcott, Wrestling Coach (1952-71)	1997
Eryn Jones, Women's Basketball (2008-12)	2022	Billy "Bye-Bye" White, Football (1960-63)	2006
June Jones, Football (1975-76)	1998	Bill Wilkerson, Basketball (1965-67)	2004
Kelsey Kahle, Basketball (2005-09)	2014	Freeman Williams, Basketball (1974-78)	1997
Terri Jo Kelly, Volleyball (1983-84)	2014	Britney Yada, Golf (2009-13)	2018
Kari Kockler, Volleyball/Basketball (1986-91)	2004	Masaru Yatabe, Wrestling (1964-69)	1999
Cathy Kuntz, Volleyball/Basketball (1984-89)	1998	1962 NAIA Runner-Up Baseball Team	2012
Anthony Lackey, Men's Basketball (1998-2002)	2018	1967 National Champion Wrestling Team	1997
Neil Lomax, Football (1977-80)	1997	1981 National Runner-Up Volleyball Team	2014
Roy Love, Athletic Director, Coach, Athlete (1962-93)	1998	1984 National Champion Volleyball Team	1998
Don Lovell, Baseball (1982-85)	1999	1985 National Champion Volleyball Team	1998
Cynthia Macom, Softball (1988-91)	2010	1987 and 1988 National Runner-Up Football Teams	2018
Matt Mandigo, Golf (1990-93)	2010	1988 National Champion Volleyball Team	2006
Kim Manifesto, Women's Basketball (1993-96)	2001	1989 National Champion Wrestling Team	1999
Teri Mariani, Softball Coach/Three-sport athlete (1970-2008)	1999	1990 National Champion Wrestling Team	1999
Dan Mello, Wrestling (1972-75)	2016	1991 National 3rd Place Softball Team	2022
Jerry Minor, Golf (1975-78)	2000	1992 National Champion Volleyball Team	2008