

2009 GCU Women's Volleyball Prospectus

With eight players returning with ample experience and a promising group of newcomers, Grand Canyon University's women's volleyball team is "Ready for Battle" in 2009.

"Every night we go into competition we'll have to be ready to battle," said GCU coach Kris Naber, in her 15th season as the Lopes head coach.

GCU is led by senior outside hitter **Dana Edington (Peoria, AZ/Centennial)**. She has received Pacific West Conference honors three straight years. She was the league's Freshman of the Year in 2006 and in spite of suffering some injuries, was a second-team all-league choice in 2007 and was honorable mention in 2008.

Naber believes her star may be healthier than ever. "Overall, she's in the best shape she's been in a couple of years."

Junior outside hitter **Megan Toth (Phoenix, AZ/Arcadia)** and senior middle hitter **Jenna Skadeland (Williston, ND/Williston)**, both had outstanding moments during the 2008 season. Toth had GCU-best 21 kills in a Sept. 20 win over Dixie State and had a 20-kill performance in an Oct. 3 victory over Chaminade.

Skadeland, an honorable mention all-conference choice, ranked 10th in PacWest matches in hitting percentage (.248) and led GCU in total blocks with 97.

Sophomore **Laurann Durbin (Phoenix, AZ/Sunnyslope)** proved to be one of the league's top liberos during her rookie season. Durbin set a new school mark for digs in a season with 530, breaking the old mark of 515 set in 1989 by head coach Naber. She ranked third in the PacWest in digs at 4.57 per game.

Senior outside hitter **Whitney Estes (Gardnerville, NV/Douglas)** was an all-PacWest honorable mention choice in 2007 and battled back from off-season surgery to have double-figures in kills five times in 2008.

There is plenty of back row experience with the likes of senior **Vicky Bauler (Phoenix, AZ/Agua Fria)**, junior **Brooke Baker (Glendale, AZ/Ironwood)** and sophomore **Lisa Ramirez (Peoria, AZ/Peoria)**.

GCU has a veteran and newcomer all in one with freshman setter **Kristen Preach (Phoenix, AZ/Xavier Prep)**. An injury kept Preach from playing in 2007 and an illness sidelined her in 2008, though she was able to practice on a regular basis late in the season. She is expected to step in and take the setting role with junior **Katie Meyers (Phoenix, AZ/Sunnyslope)**, who had a PacWest high 61 assists in one match, out for the season due to shoulder surgery.

"I have one of my better groups of returnees. They have a good attitude and they're hard workers," said Naber. "They're ready to battle, ready to win and they know what it takes to work hard and not be satisfied to just being OK or mediocre."

The veteran group showed great improvement from 2007 to 2008. After winning seven matches in 2007 and placing seventh in the PacWest, the Lopes were 15-15, 6-8 in the league, and placed fifth in the league.

Naber expects a group of newcomers to come in and help right away. That group is led by freshman outside hitter **Caelen Hiller (Phoenix, AZ/Sunnyslope)**, frosh libero **Erin Compton (Billings, MT/West)** and a pair of freshman middle hitters in **Shelby Taylor (Phoenix, AZ/Christian)** and **Katie Peterson (Glendale, AZ/Mountain Ridge)**.