

2002-03 SEASON PREVIEW

Senior Jamey Cox





Season Preview

A New Feeling In The Air

If you were to set foot on the San Diego State campus, it would be hard not to notice the heightened level of excitement and enthusiasm coming from the Aztec women's basketball office.

Nor would you be hard pressed to find each of this year's 15 players training harder than ever for the upcoming 2002-03 campaign.

That renewed sense of optimism in the air over the San Diego State women's basketball program started with something so seemingly simple - just a move by one person from down the hall at the Aztec Athletics Center.

That person is first-year head coach Jim Tomey, who after three seasons as an assistant with the Aztec men's basketball team, is laying the foundation for another great turn around, a phenomenon that has become a trademark of every stop that Tomey has made.

A coaching legend in the San Diego prep arena, Tomey helped the SDSU men's team to the Mountain West Conference championship and a trip to the NCAA tournament a year ago, as the Aztecs went from 5-23 his first year to 21-12 just two years later.

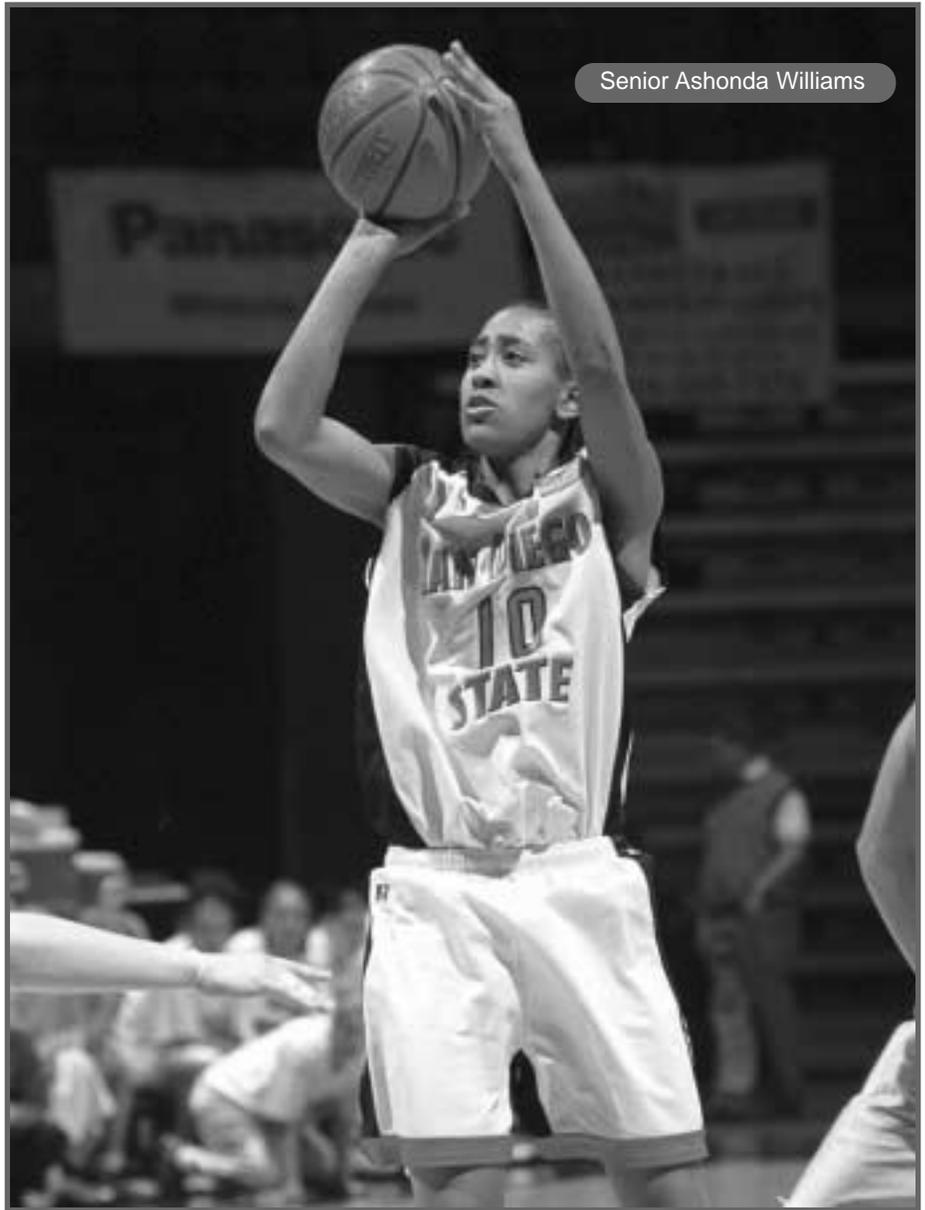
Tomey's stint as an Aztec assistant followed a 10-year stay as head boys' basketball coach at University of San Diego High School, where he led the Dons to a 210-69 record, seven CIF titles and one state championship.

Part of Tomey's ability to direct a turnaround and build a program into a powerhouse has always started with his sincere belief that his players must believe in themselves.

"One of my immediate goals for this team is to make it as competitive as it possibly can be," Tomey said. "We have to believe that every time we take the floor, we have a chance to win. If we do things the right way, if we work hard, smart and together, winning will just happen naturally."

Whether Tomey's first-year at the Aztec helm be the first chapter in a great success story will largely depend on this year's five-member senior class - **Jamey Cox, Valencia Howard, Andrea Kiesling, Tynisha King and Ashonda Williams.**

"We've got five seniors coming back, and I hope that they will be a strength for our team," Tomey said. "The one thing that they have that the seven incoming freshmen don't, is three years of playing experience at the collegiate level. They understand the quickness of the game, the strength that is needed to play the game, the long haul and the ups and downs of the season. We're going to need them to maintain their composure and help the young play-



Senior Ashonda Williams

ers come along as quickly as possible and get them to contribute to our basketball team."

Cox and Williams, along with junior **Nicolette McCartney**, are returning starters from last year's squad, which finished with a 10-18 record. Despite the 10 wins, only two came during Mountain West Conference play, which leaves big room for improvement for this year's team.

"I think we're going to have to work on all areas - offense and defense and the conversion game," Tomey said. "We're going to need to be a great rebounding team. We're not a team of great size, so we're going to have to be very good coming up with all the loose balls."

"We're going to need to be good at all the things that we can control including effort, con-

centration, playing together and playing smart. We won't be a team that beats itself. My hope is that we will be a tough out for anyone we play."

The following is a breakdown of the 2002-03 Aztec women's basketball team:

The Back Court

In the back court, the Aztecs boast the team's most experienced player in Cox (Waterloo, Iowa). The 5-7 guard has led the team in a variety of different areas in her first three seasons on The Mesa, playing all three of the guard positions and offering leadership by example on and off the court.

"Jamey is the most proven player that we have in this program," Tomey said. "She has

2002-03 AZTEC WOMEN'S BASKETBALL



Senior Jamey Cox

game from shooting right on down to defending," Tomey said. "We're going to need her in her last year to play the best basketball of her career at San Diego State."

Cox is the only upperclassman in the Aztec backcourt, as sophomore guards **Maggie Sauls (Borger, Texas)** and **Heather Wolf (Stayton, Ore.)**, will be joined this season by freshmen **Amber Fouse (Los Angeles, Calif.)** and **Veronica Shaw (Phoenix, Ariz.)**.

Wolf is a smooth ball-handler at point guard, playing in 17 games as a freshman before an ankle injury kept her out of the team's final seven games. Prior to her injury, she served as SDSU's first guard off the bench, although she averaged just 1.8 points per game and had six assists in 144 minutes of playing time.

What Wolf lacks in numbers and experience, however, she will more than make up for with her outstanding work ethic and ability to constantly put pressure on the ball on the defensive side. The team will also need her solid skills as a playmaker to create more high-percentage scoring opportunities.

"I think Heather has the ability to solidify the point guard position," Tomey said. "She's a hard worker, maybe one of the hardest workers on the team, and has the ability to handle the ball and solidify our offense. We're looking for her to step up and play like a veteran."

Wolf's classmate, Sauls, impressed the coaching staff last spring with her great instinct for the game, especially on the offensive side. Sauls saw playing time in nine games in 2001-02, but was limited to just 19 minutes, with a season-high of five minutes played against Prairie View A&M in early December.

The freshman duo of Fouse and Shaw will bring similar strengths to the court this season. Both are 5-7 guards who can create plays and put pressure on opponents with their athleticism and speed.

Fouse, who attended Narbonne High School in Harbor City, Calif., is a proven winner, who helped Narbonne to two consecutive *USA Today* national titles her sophomore and junior seasons. Shaw, meanwhile, averaged 16.5 points, 6.2 assists and 7.7 steals as a senior at Mountain Pointe High School in Phoenix, Ariz.,

earning player-of-the-year honors.

The Front Court

Unlike the guard positions, the Aztec front court will see more of a mix in both experience and styles of play.

At the top of the list are two of the team's five seniors in former junior college teammates Williams (Crockett, Calif.) and Howard (Richmond, Calif.).

Williams stepped in immediately in her first season at SDSU, playing in all 28 of the team's games, and earning starting assignments in the Aztec lineup 22 times. The 6-0 forward averaged 7.5 points per game and scored in double figures 11 times, fourth-most on the team. She also gave the team another sharpshooter from beyond the arc along with Cox, ranking 11th in the Mountain West Conference in three-point field goal percentage (33 percent) and 10th in three-point field goals made.

"If we've got three-point shooters, we're going to take three-point shots," Tomey said. "We're hoping Ash and Jamey will have the ability to knock down the three. If we don't, we have to get them better at shooting threes. It's a great advantage to stretch the defense, take pressure off the interior players and take people out of rebounding position."

In addition to her shooting skills, Williams

started for the last three years with results and is a proven scorer in the Mountain West Conference. We're looking for her to solidify our backcourt and bring valuable experience to our team."

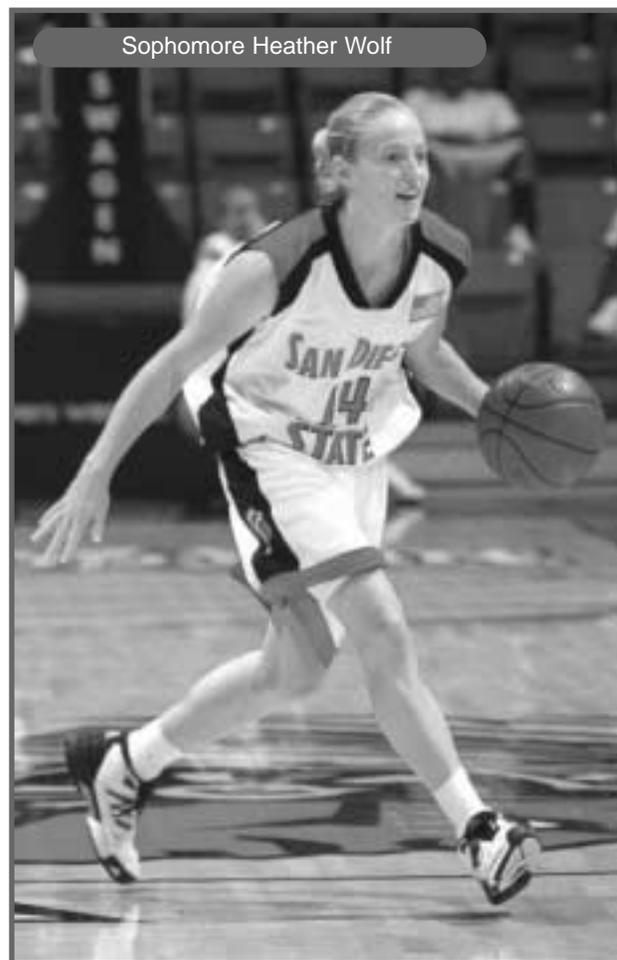
Of the team's five seniors, Cox is one of only two players who have played all three of their previous collegiate seasons at San Diego State. The other is classmate Kiesling, who has seen her Aztec career limited so far by injury to only 28 games.

Besides her experience, Cox has continued to produce results on the floor, leading the team in scoring her first two seasons, while trailing only former standout Claire Swinbank a year ago in that category with 9.8 points per game. In 2001-02, Cox ranked third in the Mountain West Conference in assists per game (3.96), fifth in three-point field goals (53) and was also in the top 20 in scoring, steals and three-point field goal percentage.

Cox's ability to put the ball in the basket should move her into elite company early this coming season, as she needs just 69 points to reach the 1,000-point plateau for her career, becoming only the 16th player in school history to reach the milestone mark. She would also be the first Aztec to do so since Jodi Nowlin-Tres, who starred for SDSU from 1994-97.

With all of her accomplishments so far, Tomey still believes that Cox has room to take her game to another level.

"I would expect her to lift every aspect of her



Sophomore Heather Wolf



must continue to contribute on the boards, a key area which the team hopes to improve on this season. In 2001-02, Williams grabbed six boards or more 11 times and was third on the team in rebounding average (4.2/g).

Howard also will be counted on to contribute in the rebounding department. The hard-nosed, athletic 6-1 forward collected 106 rebounds (3.9 per game) in her first year as an Aztec, while playing in 27 games. Howard averaged 17 minutes per game and started seven times, primarily during mid-season.

The other two seniors in the front court, King (Moreno Valley, Calif.) and Kiesling (Helena, Mont.), both bring different strengths to the court. King has been with the program since the 2000-01 season, which she sat out after transferring from UNC Asheville. She saw limited duty a year ago, playing in five games and logging just 10 minutes, but is a vocal leader and high-energy player who can carve out space around the basket and give the squad strong post defense.

Kiesling will look to stay healthy for her final season as an Aztec, and return to the same form that she exhibited in her first season on The Mesa. At 6-3, Kiesling is one of the team's tallest players and has three years of collegiate

experience to help tutor a youthful San Diego State front court.

"We're looking for Andrea to have an active, productive senior year," Tomey said. "She has been sidelined with difficult injuries through most of her career. We're hoping that she stays injury free and is able to have the kind of senior season that she, and we, would love to have for her."

Although just a junior, McCartney (Chicago, Ill.) is second on the team in career games played with 50 and career starts with 24. McCartney started 11 times in 2001-02, at both forward and center, including six times in the final seven games. She averaged 3.1 points per game and was third on the team in blocks with 15.

"Nicolette is a banger around the basket and is a good screener," Tomey said. "She is someone who has worked very hard to become quicker and stronger and a player who we think can significantly help us this season."

Besides the five upperclassmen, the San Diego State front court will be filled with four new faces. Freshmen **Megan Bryant (Austin, Texas)** and **Tami Garnett (Arlington, Texas)** have been tabbed as "bookends" by Tomey in terms of their physiques and styles of play.

Both Bryant and Garnett are 6-3, Texas natives, who are hard workers and need to contribute quality minutes on the boards.

Ashlee Dunlap (Los Angeles, Calif.) and **Ashley White (Chino Hills, Calif.)** round out the Aztec front court. Dunlap was a proven scorer at Fairfax High School in Los Angeles, and could make a similar impact as Williams' did a year ago with her ability to shoot from the inside or outside. White, meanwhile, is an athletic 6-1 forward, who is a committed hard worker and has shown great all-around skills.

The 2002-2003 Schedule

Six pre-conference home dates plus the renewal of some exciting in-state rivalries highlight the 2002-03 schedule.

"Coming in when we did, this schedule was pretty much set and we only had to add a few games," Tomey said. "I like (the schedule) because it gives us a good mix of home and road con-

tests and should prepare us to compete in the conference. Also, because we play most of the games in California, it gives us a real chance to make an impact in our own backyard."

Unlike recent seasons that have seen San Diego State venture far from home prior to opening league play, the Aztecs will play just one of their pre-conference games outside the Golden State.

After a pair of exhibition games on November 8 and 18, the 2002-03 season gets underway on November 22, at home as the Aztecs welcome Centenary College to Cox Arena. A date in the Bay Area at St. Mary's on November 25, followed by a trip to the Central Valley for the Fresno State tournament precedes a December slate that has the Aztecs playing all five games in America's Finest City, including four in Cox Arena and a fifth at rival USD.

"Anytime you play your local rival, it has to be a red-letter game," said Tomey about the December 11, meeting with the Toreros. "We are going to make sure we put everything we have into that game. But then again, I also think every game in our first year will be important."

A home date with Missouri-Kansas City ushers in the New Year on January 5, and marks the end of a four-game home stand. San Diego State wraps up its non-conference slate with its lone out-of-state contest at Portland State on January 9, and a trip to the state capital for a meeting with CSU sister school Sacramento State on January 11.

Overall, just four of the 12 non-Mountain West teams (Creighton, UMKC, Portland State and Sacramento State) appeared on last season's schedule and San Diego State was 3-1 in those games.

The Mountain West Conference will once again remain tough, as half of the conference's eight teams are coming off NCAA tournament berths in 2002. The Aztecs open play with three straight home games, beginning with a January 18 meeting with UNLV and followed by games against BYU (January 23), a NCAA Sweet 16 participant, and Utah (January 25).

The Aztecs leave the confines of Cox Arena for a two-game trip to New Mexico and Air Force, but then return home to play host to Colorado State and Wyoming on February 6 and 8. After the two games at home, the Aztecs' second half of conference play will take them on the road for five of their final seven regular season contests, before heading to Las Vegas, Nev., for the Mountain West Conference Tournament, March 12-15.



Senior Valencia Howard



Rosters

THE 2002-03 AZTECS

Numerical

No.	Name	Pos.	Ht.	Yr.	Hometown (Previous School)
00	Tynisha King	F	5-10	Sr.	Moreno Valley (UNC-Asheville)
4	Ashley White	F	6-1	Fr.	Chino Hills (Ayala HS)
5	Michelle Strawberry	G	5-10	Fr.	Corona, Calif. (Centennial HS)
10	Ashonda Williams	F	6-0	Sr.	Crockett (Contra Costa CC)
14	Heather Wolf	G	5-6	So.	Stayton, Ore. (Regis HS)
20	Jamey Cox	G	5-7	Sr.	Waterloo, Iowa (West HS)
21	Veronica Shaw	G	5-7	Fr.	Phoenix, Ariz. (Mountain Pointe HS)
23	Amber Fouse	G	5-7	Fr.	Compton (Narbonne HS)
24	Nicolette McCartney	C/F	6-2	Sr.	Chicago, Ill. (Hersey HS)
33	Maggie Sauls	G	5-9	So.	Borger, Texas (Borger HS)
34	Valencia Howard	F	6-1	Sr.	Richmond (Contra Costa CC)
35	Ashlee Dunlap	F	6-1	Fr.	Los Angeles (Fairfax HS)
42	Tami Garnett	C	6-3	Fr.	Arlington, Texas (Sam Houston HS)
50	Megan Bryant	C	6-3	Fr.	Austin, Texas (Westlake HS)
52	Andrea Kiesling	C	6-3	Sr.	Helena, Mont. (Helena HS)

Alphabetical

No.	Name	Pos.	Ht.	Yr.	Hometown (Previous School)
50	Megan Bryant	C	6-3	Fr.	Austin, Texas (Westlake HS)
20	Jamey Cox	G	5-7	Sr.	Waterloo, Iowa (West HS)
35	Ashlee Dunlap	F	6-1	Fr.	Los Angeles (Fairfax HS)
23	Amber Fouse	G	5-7	Fr.	Compton (Narbonne HS)
42	Tami Garnett	C	6-3	Fr.	Arlington, Texas (Sam Houston HS)
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4	Ashley White	F	6-1	Fr.	Chino Hills (Ayala HS)
10	Ashonda Williams	F	6-0	Sr.	Crockett (Contra Costa CC)
14	Heather Wolf	G	5-6	So.	Stayton, Ore. (Regis HS)

Head Coach: Jim Tomey (Michigan '81), first year
Assistant Coaches: Matt Hart (Long Beach State '92), first year
 Nicole Anderson (UCLA '93), first year
 Jennifer Gross (UC Davis '97), first year
Athletic Trainer: Sara Williamson (East Stroudsburg '92), fifth year
Strength and Conditioning: Dave Ohton (Arizona State '84), 17th year
Head Manager: Dustin Finley (UC Davis, '02), 1st year

How To Say It ...

VALENCIA Howard	vuh-LEN-cee-uh
ANDREA KIESLING	an-DREE-uh KEE-sling
TYNISHA King	tuh-KNEE-shuh
ASHONDA Williams	uh-SHON-duh
Jim TOMEY	toe-ME



Roster Breakdown/Schedule

2002-03 Schedule

November

8	Basketball Travelers (Exhibition)	San Diego, Calif.	Cox Arena	7:05 p.m.
18	West Coast All-Stars (Exhibition)	San Diego, Calif.	Cox Arena	7:05 p.m.
22	Centenary	San Diego, Calif.	Cox Arena	7:05 p.m.
25	at St. Mary's	Moraga, Calif.	McKeon Pavilion	7:05 p.m.

at Fresno State Classic (San Diego State, Fresno State, Murray State, Butler)

29	vs. Murray State	Fresno, Calif.	North Gymnasium	1:00 p.m.
30	Consolation/Championship Game	Fresno, Calif.	North Gymnasium	12/2:00 p.m.

December

4	UC Irvine	San Diego, Calif.	Cox Arena	7:05 p.m.
11	at University of San Diego	San Diego, Calif.	J. Craig Pavilion	7:00 p.m.
19	American University	San Diego, Calif.	Cox Arena	7:05 p.m.
22	Creighton	San Diego, Calif.	Cox Arena	2:05 p.m.
28	Cal State Northridge	San Diego, Calif.	Cox Arena	2:05 p.m.

January

5	University of Missouri-K.C.	San Diego, Calif.	Cox Arena	2:05 p.m.
9	at Portland State	Portland, Ore.	Stott Center	7:05 p.m.
11	at Sacramento State	Sacramento, Calif.	Hornet Gym	2:00 p.m.
18	UNLV*	San Diego, Calif.	Cox Arena	5:05 p.m.
23	Brigham Young*	San Diego, Calif.	Peterson Gym	7:05 p.m.
25	Utah*	San Diego, Calif.	Peterson Gym	5:05 p.m.
30	at New Mexico*	Albuquerque, N.M.	The Pit	7:00 p.m.

February

1	at Air Force*	USAF, Colo.	Clune Arena	2:00 p.m.
6	Colorado State*	San Diego, Calif.	Cox Arena	7:05 p.m.
8	Wyoming*	San Diego, Calif.	Cox Arena	5:05 p.m.
15	at UNLV*	Las Vegas, Nev.	Cox Pavilion	7:35 p.m.
20	at Utah*	Salt Lake City, Utah	Huntsman Center	7:00 p.m.
22	at Brigham Young*	Provo, Utah	Marriott Center	1:00 p.m.
27	Air Force*	San Diego, Calif.	Cox Arena	7:05 p.m.

March

1	New Mexico*	San Diego, Calif.	Cox Arena	5:05 p.m.
5	at Wyoming*	Laramie, Wyo.	Arena Auditorium	7:00 p.m.
7	at Colorado State*	Fort Collins, Colo.	Moby Arena	7:00 p.m.
12-15	MWC Tournament Championship	Las Vegas, Nev.	Thomas & Mack	TBA

(For NCAA Tournament Information - see page 6)

Returning Letterwinners (8)

Jamey Cox, G, 9.8 p, 1.9 r, 4.0 a
Valencia Howard, F 3.8 p, 3.9 r
Andrea Kiesling, C, 1.1 p, 0.7 r
Tynisha King, F, 1.0 p, 0.4 r
Nicolette McCartney, F/C, 3.5 p, 3.1 r
Maggie Sauls, G, 0.7 p, 0.3 r
Ashonda Williams, F, 7.5 p, 4.2 r
Heather Wolf, G, 1.8, 0.7 r

Letterwinners Lost (5)

Atim Oti, F 9.3 p, 5.8 r
Tanisha Knight, F 5.6 p, 3.4 r
Claire Swinbank, G 12.1 p, 4.3 r
Morgan Vargas, C 4.0 p, 2.6 r
Missy Shoemaker, F 3.2 p, 2.2 r

Returning Starters (3)

Jamey Cox, G, 9.8 p, 1.9 r, 4.0 a
Nicolette McCartney, F/C, 3.5 p, 3.1 r
Ashonda Williams, F, 7.5 p, 4.2 r

Starters Lost (2)

Atim Oti, F, 9.3 p, 5.8 r
Claire Swinbank, G, 12.1 p, 4.3 r

Newcomers (7)

Megan Bryant, 6-3, Fr., C
Ashlee Dunlap, 5-11, Fr., F
Amber Fouse, 5-6, Fr., G
Tami Garnett, 6-3, Fr., C
Veronica Shaw, 5-8, Fr., G
Michelle Strawberry, 5-10, Fr., G
Ashley White, 6-1, Fr., F

Class Breakdown

Seniors (5): Cox, Howard, Kiesling, King, Williams
Junior (1): McCartney
Sophomores (2): Sauls, Wolf
Freshmen (7): Bryant, Dunlap, Fouse, Garnett, Shaw, Strawberry, White

Position Breakdown

Forwards (6): Dunlap, Howard, King, McCartney, White, Williams
Centers (4): Bryant, Garnett, Kiesling, McCartney
Guards (6): Cox, Fouse, Sauls, Shaw, Strawberry, Wolfe

Aztecs By Height

6-3	Megan Bryant
	Tami Garnett
	Andrea Kiesling
6-2	Nicolette McCartney
6-1	Ashlee Dunlap
	Valencia Howard
	Ashley White
6-0	Ashonda Williams
5-10	Tynisha King
	Michelle Strawberry
5-9	Maggie Sauls
5-7	Jamey Cox
	Amber Fouse
	Veronica Shaw
5-6	Heather Wolf