

HERE COME THE AZTECS

Building a tradition...

INTRODUCTION

THIS IS SDSU

COACHING STAFF

PLAYERS

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HISTORY

1

Erin Floros became SDSU's first All-American when she was named a first-team selection by Easton-Bell Sports and a third-team honoree by Louisville/NFCA in 2006.

2

The Aztecs have played in two NCAA Regional championships games in three appearances in the tournament, including last year's Los Angeles Regional.

2

In 2006, Kathy Van Wyk won her second Mountain West Conference Coach of the Year award.

3

The Aztecs have played in the NCAA tournament three times in the past six seasons.

3

SDSU has won three Mountain West Conference championships in the last five seasons.

3

Three Aztecs have been named the Mountain West Conference Freshman of the Year in the last five seasons.

5

An SDSU player has been named the Mountain West Conference Pitcher of the Year five times in the past six years.

6

The Aztecs have logged six NCAA tournament victories.

19

SDSU has had 19 NFCA All-West Region selections, including three last year.

26

Twenty-six Aztecs have been named conference player of the week (14 in MWC, 12 in WAC). San Diego State had two winners last season.

26

Last year's Aztecs set 26 school records, including single-season batting average, runs, home runs and RBI, and single-game runs, hits and home runs.

30

SDSU has had 30 Mountain West Conference Pitcher of the Week winners since 2000, the most by any school in league history.

39

Thirty-nine Aztecs have been named to the conference All-academic team by their respective conference. Monica Alnes, Meagan Hartung and Celena Velasquez were each named to the MWC all-academic squad in 2006.

46

SDSU has had 46 student-athletes receive all-conference accolades, including five last year.

732

The Aztecs have won 732 games in the program's 31 years.

.609

San Diego State has a .609 winning percentage the last seven years.

.636

The Aztecs have won 63.6 percent of their Mountain West Conference games in the league's seven-year history.

.694

The 2006 squad had a school-best .694 winning percentage.

2007 Quick Facts/Table of Contents

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SAN DIEGO STATE UNIVERSITY QUICK FACTS

Location San Diego, Calif.
 Founded 1897
 Enrollment 35,887
 President Dr. Stephen Weber
 Director of Athletics Jeff Schemmel
 Senior Woman Administrator Jenny Bramer
 Nickname Aztecs
 Colors Scarlet and Black
 Conference Mountain West
 Home Field (Capacity) SDSU Softball Stadium (1,000)

SAN DIEGO STATE SOFTBALL QUICK FACTS

Head Coach Kathy Van Wyk (CS Fullerton, 1983)
 Record at SDSU 332-252-1 (.568), 10 seasons
 Overall Record Same
 Softball Office Phone (619) 594-5853
 Assistant Coach Sara Hayes (Notre Dame, 1995)
 Assistant Coach Miranda Bleisch (Point Loma Nazarene, 2004)
 Athletic Trainer Debra Flores (Fresno State, 2005)
 First Year of Division I Softball 1977
 All-time Record 732-821-6 (.471), 31st season
 NCAA Division I Tournament Appearances Three (2001, 2003, 2006)
 2006 Record 34-15
 2005 MWC Record (Finish) 15-3 (First)
 2005 MWC Tournament Record (Finish) 2-2 (Second)
 Letterwinners Returning/Lost 9/7
 Starters Returning/Lost 6/5
 Newcomers 7
 Top Returners Erin Floros (So., C, .388 avg., 4 HR, 22 RBI, .558 SLG%, .467 OB%)
 Christina Ross (Jr., P, 17-10, 1.82 ERA, 5 SHO, 136 K, 31 BB)
 Monica Alnes (So., IF, .379 avg., 3 HR, 32 RBI, .557 SLG%, .447 OB%)
 Key Losses Meagan Hartung (OF, .283 avg., 32 R, 21 BB, 12 SB, 1,000 FLD%)
 Celena Velasquez (P, 10-5, 3.22 ERA, 1 SHO, 93 K, 21 BB)

SAN DIEGO STATE MEDIA RELATIONS

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MEDIA INFORMATION

Requests for interviews and credentials should be directed to Jamie McConeghy in the San Diego State media relations office. Interviews are generally available following practice sessions. Interviews outside practice times should be arranged at least 24 hours in advance by contacting Jamie McConeghy at (619) 594-4348 or at jmcconeg@mail.sdsu.edu. On game days, Aztec players and coaches will only be available postgame following a 10-minute cooling off period.



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MEDIA GUIDE CREDITS

The 2007 San Diego State softball media guide is a publication of the San Diego State athletic media relations office. The publication was written, edited and designed by assistant media relations director Jamie McConeghy. Assistance was provided by Peggy Curtin, Christina Ross, Mike May and Richard Groves.

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Printing by SDSU Repographics.

Date	Day	Opponent	Site	Time
Feb. 8	Thurs	~ OREGON STATE	SDSU Softball Stadium	7:00 p.m. PT
Feb. 9	Fri	~ UC SANTA BARBARA	SDSU Softball Stadium	4:30 p.m. PT
		~ CAL	SDSU Softball Stadium	7:00 p.m. PT
Feb. 10	Sat	~ KANSAS	SDSU Softball Stadium	2:00 p.m. PT
		~ UMASS	SDSU Softball Stadium	4:30 p.m. PT
Feb. 11	Sun	~ OREGON STATE	SDSU Softball Stadium	2:00 p.m. PT
Feb. 16	Fri	! vs. Texas A&M Corpus Christi	Austin, Texas	2:30 p.m. CT
		! at Texas	Austin, Texas	5:00 p.m. CT
Feb. 17	Sat	! vs. North Texas	Austin, Texas	11:00 a.m. CT
		! TBA	Austin, Texas	TBA
Feb. 18	Sun	! TBA	Austin, Texas	TBA
Feb. 23	Fri	@ NORTH DAKOTA STATE	SDSU Softball Stadium	4:30 p.m. PT
Feb. 24	Sat	@ SIENA	SDSU Softball Stadium	11:30 a.m. PT
		@ OREGON	SDSU Softball Stadium	4:30 p.m. PT
Feb. 25	Sun	@ LONG BEACH STATE	SDSU Softball Stadium	4:30 p.m. PT
March 2	Fri	# vs. Minnesota	Fullerton, Calif.	1:30 p.m. PT
		# vs. Northwestern	Fullerton, Calif.	6:00 p.m. PT
March 3	Sat	# vs. Cal Poly	Fullerton, Calif.	11:15 a.m. PT
		# vs. Texas Tech	Fullerton, Calif.	3:45 p.m. PT
March 4	Sun	# vs. Nevada	Fullerton, Calif.	11:15 a.m. PT
March 7	Wed	at San Diego	San Diego, Calif.	6:00 p.m. PT
March 9	Fri	% vs. UC Santa Barbara	Palo Alto, Calif.	10:00 a.m. PT
		% vs. Loyola Chicago	Palo Alto, Calif.	Noon PT
March 10	Sat	% vs. Sacramento State	Palo Alto, Calif.	10:00 a.m. PT
		% at Stanford	Palo Alto, Calif.	2:00 p.m. PT
March 11	Sun	% TBA	Palo Alto, Calif.	TBA
March 13	Tue	FAIRFIELD	SDSU Softball Stadium	6:00 p.m. PT
March 16	Thurs	\$ FORDHAM	SDSU Softball Stadium	7:00 p.m. PT
March 17	Thurs	\$ FAIRFIELD	SDSU Softball Stadium	7:00 p.m. PT
March 18	Fri	\$ IONA	SDSU Softball Stadium	11:30 a.m. PT
		\$ MIAMI (OH)	SDSU Softball Stadium	4:30 p.m. PT
March 21	Wed	GEORGIA TECH	SDSU Softball Stadium	5:00 p.m. PT
		GEORGIA TECH	SDSU Softball Stadium	7:00 p.m. PT
March 24	Sat	vs. Ohio State	Fullerton, Calif.	10:00 a.m. PT
		at CS Fullerton	Fullerton, Calif.	2:00 p.m. PT
March 28	Wed	BROWN	SDSU Softball Stadium	7:00 p.m. PT
April 5	Thurs	* BYU	SDSU Softball Stadium	5:00 p.m. PT
		* BYU	SDSU Softball Stadium	7:00 p.m. PT
April 6	Fri	* UTAH	SDSU Softball Stadium	6:00 p.m. PT
April 7	Sat	* UTAH	SDSU Softball Stadium	1:00 p.m. PT
April 13	Fri	* at Colorado State	Fort Collins, Colo.	1:30 p.m. MT
		* at Colorado State	Fort Collins, Colo.	3:30 p.m. MT
April 14	Sat	* at New Mexico	Albuquerque, N.M.	3:30 p.m. MT
April 15	Sun	* at New Mexico	Albuquerque, N.M.	Noon MT
April 18	Wed	SAN DIEGO	SDSU Softball Stadium	6:00 p.m. PT
April 21	Sat	* at UNLV	Las Vegas, Nev.	6:00 p.m. PT
April 22	Sun	* at UNLV	Las Vegas, Nev.	2:00 p.m. PT
April 27	Fri	* NEW MEXICO	SDSU Softball Stadium	5:00 p.m. PT
		* NEW MEXICO	SDSU Softball Stadium	7:00 pm. PT
April 28	Sat	* COLORADO STATE	SDSU Softball Stadium	6:00 p.m. PT
April 29	Sun	* COLORADO STATE	SDSU Softball Stadium	Noon PT
May 5	Sat	* UNLV	SDSU Softball Stadium	6:00 p.m. PT
May 6	Sun.	* UNLV	SDSU Softball Stadium	1:00 p.m. PT
May 10	Thurs	* at Utah	Salt Lake City, Utah	1:00 p.m. MT
		* at Utah	Salt Lake City, Utah	3:00 p.m. MT
May 11	Fri	* at BYU	Provo, Utah	7:00 p.m. MT
May 12	Sat	* at BYU	Provo, Utah	2:00 p.m. MT

CAPS = home games played at SDSU Softball Stadium
 ~ - Campbell/Cartier Classic at SDSU Softball Stadium
 ! - Texas Invitational at Univ. of Texas (Austin, Texas)
 @ - Aztec Invitational at SDSU Softball Stadium
 # - Worth Invitational at CS Fullerton (Fullerton, Calif.)
 % - Stanford Invitational at Stanford (Palo Alto, Calif.)
 \$ - Aztec Classic at SDSU Softball Stadium
 * - Mountain West Conference Game

NUMERICAL

NO	NAME	POS.	HT.	B/T	YR.-EXP.	HOMETOWN (LAST SCHOOL)
00	Stefanie Quichocho-Rosario	UTIL	5-3	R/R	Fr.-HS	San Diego, Calif. (Morse HS)
1	Kasey Mytinger	IF/OF	5-4	R/R	So.-1L	San Diego, Calif. (West Hills HS)
7	Christy Hollingshead	UTIL	5-5	R/R	RS-Sr.-1L	San Jose, Calif. (West Valley College)
8	Dani Sidoti	OF	5-10	L/R	RS-So.-1L	Tucson, Ariz. (Salpointe Catholic HS)
9	Monica Alnes	IF/P	5-7	R/R	So.-1L	Rancho Palos Verdes, Calif. (Palos Verdes Peninsula HS)
10	Christina Ross	P	5-7	R/L	Jr.-1L	Santa Clarita, Calif. (Univ. of Kansas)
12	Stephanie Frasca	OF	5-9	R/R	Fr.-HS	San Diego, Calif. (San Marcos HS)
14	Taryin Casillas	IF	5-7	R/R	Jr.-2L	San Diego, Calif. (Grossmont HS)
15	Katy Erickson	OF	5-5	R/R	Fr.-HS	Tustin, Calif. (Foothill HS)
17	Tamani Wells	OF/P	5-5	L/R	Jr.-2L	Concord, Calif. (Holy Names HS)
18	Christine Kulick	IF	5-3	L/R	So.-TR	Aliso Niguel, Calif. (Iowa State)
19	Lindsey Marquez	IF/OF/C	5-1	L/R	Fr.-HS	Tustin, Calif. (Lutheran HS)
20	Megan McDonald	C/DP	5-7	R/R	Jr.-2L	Glendale, Ariz. (Cactus HS)
22	Sydney Fleming	C	5-8	R/R	RS-Fr.-HS	Oakland, Calif. (Bishop O'Dowd HS)
23	Melissa Owens	P/IF	5-10	R/R	So.-1L	San Diego, Calif. (Christian HS)
24	Amanda Beasley	UTIL	5-4	R/R	Sr.-3L	San Diego, Calif. (Mount Miguel HS)
27	Janae Portugal	IF	5-8	R/R	Fr.-HS	San Diego, Calif. (Westview HS)
39	Brittany Knudsen	OF	5-5	L/R	Fr.-HS	San Diego, Calif. (Escondido HS)
44	Erin Floros	C	5-7	R/R	So.-1L	San Diego, Calif. (Mt. Carmel HS)

ALPHABETICAL

#	NAME	POS.	HT.	B/T	YR.-EXP.	HOMETOWN (LAST SCHOOL)
9	Monica Alnes	IF/P	5-7	R/R	So.-1L	Rancho Palos Verdes, Calif. (Palos Verdes Peninsula HS)
24	Amanda Beasley	UTIL	5-4	R/R	Sr.-3L	San Diego, Calif. (Mount Miguel HS)
14	Taryin Casillas	IF	5-7	R/R	Jr.-2L	San Diego, Calif. (Grossmont HS)
15	Katy Erickson	OF	5-5	R/R	Fr.-HS	Tustin, Calif. (Foothill HS)
22	Sydney Fleming	C	5-8	R/R	RS-Fr.-HS	Oakland, Calif. (Bishop O'Dowd HS)
44	Erin Floros	C	5-7	R/R	So.-1L	San Diego, Calif. (Mt. Carmel HS)
12	Stephanie Frasca	OF	5-9	R/R	Fr.-HS	San Diego, Calif. (San Marcos HS)
7	Christy Hollingshead	UTIL	5-5	R/R	RS-Sr.-1L	San Jose, Calif. (West Valley College)
39	Brittany Knudsen	OF	5-5	L/R	Fr.-HS	San Diego, Calif. (Escondido HS)
18	Christine Kulick	IF	5-3	L/R	So.-TR	Aliso Niguel, Calif. (Iowa State)
19	Lindsey Marquez	IF/OF/C	5-1	L/R	Fr.-HS	Tustin, Calif. (Lutheran HS)
20	Megan McDonald	C/DP	5-7	R/R	Jr.-2L	Glendale, Ariz. (Cactus HS)
1	Kasey Mytinger	IF/OF	5-4	R/R	So.-1L	San Diego, Calif. (West Hills HS)
23	Melissa Owens	P/IF	5-10	R/R	So.-1L	San Diego, Calif. (Christian HS)
27	Janae Portugal	IF	5-8	R/R	Fr.-HS	San Diego, Calif. (Westview HS)
00	Stefanie Quichocho-Rosario	UTIL	5-3	R/R	Fr.-HS	San Diego, Calif. (Morse HS)
10	Christina Ross	P	5-7	R/L	Jr.-1L	Santa Clarita, Calif. (Univ. of Kansas)
8	Dani Sidoti	OF	5-10	L/R	RS-So.-1L	Tucson, Ariz. (Salpointe Catholic HS)
17	Tamani Wells	OF/P	5-5	L/R	Jr.-2L	Concord, Calif. (Holy Names HS)

HEAD COACH: Kathy Van Wyk (CS Fullerton, 1983), 11th season
ASSISTANT COACH: Sara Hayes (Notre Dame, 1995), first season
ASSISTANT COACH: Miranda Bleisch (Point Loma Nazarene, 2004), second season

<p>BY POSITION Outfielders (7) Erickson, Frasca, Knudsen, Marquez, Mytinger, Sidoti, Wells Infielders (7) Alnes, Casillas, Kulick, Marquez, Mytinger, Owens, Portugal Catchers (4) Fleming, Floros, Marquez, McDonald Pitchers (4) Alnes, Owens, Ross, Wells Utility (3) Beasley, Hollingshead, Quichocho-Rosario</p>	<p>BY BATTING STANCE Right-handed (14) Alnes, Beasley, Casillas, Erickson, Fleming, Floros, Frasca, Hollingshead, McDonald, Mytinger, Owens, Portugal, Quichocho-Rosario, Ross Left-handed (5) Knudsen, Kulick, Marquez, Sidoti, Wells</p>	<p>BY CLASS Seniors (2) Beasley, Hollingshead Juniors (4) Casillas, McDonald, Ross, Wells Sophomores (6) Alnes, Floros, Kulick, Mytinger, Owens, Sidoti Freshmen (7) Erickson, Fleming, Frasca, Knudsen, Marquez, Portugal, Quichocho-Rosario</p>	<p>BY STATE California (17) Alnes, Beasley, Casillas, Erickson, Fleming, Floros, Frasca, Hollingshead, Knudsen, Kulick, Marquez, Mytinger, Owens, Portugal, Quichocho-Rosario, Ross, Wells Arizona (2) McDonald, Sidoti</p>	<p>PRONUNCIATION Players Monica AlnesALL-nes Amanda BeasleyBEES-lee Taryin Casillas.....TAIR-in ca-SEE-es Brittany Knudsenkuh-NOOD-sen Kasey Mytingermy-tin-GUR Stefanie Quichocho-RosarioKEY-cho-cho Dani SidotiDanny seh-DOTE-ee Tamani WellsTOM-ini Coaching Staff Miranda Bleisch.....BLY-sch Kathy Van Wyk.....van WIKE</p>
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00 Stefanie Quichocho-Rosario
Fr • UT • 5-3 • R/R
San Diego, Calif.



1 Kasey Mytinger
So • IF/OF • 5-4 • R/R
San Diego, Calif.



7 Christy Hollingshead
RS-Sr • UT • 5-5 • R/R
San Jose, Calif.



8 Dani Sidoti
RS-So • OF • 5-10 • L/R
Tucson, Ariz.



9 Monica Alnes
So • IF/P • 5-7 • R/R
Rancho Palos Verdes, Calif.



10 Christina Ross
Jr • P • 5-7 • R/L
Santa Clarita, Calif.



12 Stephanie Frasca
Fr • OF • 5-9 • R/R
San Diego, Calif.



14 Taryin Casillas
Jr • IF • 5-7 • R/R
San Diego, Calif.



14 Katy Erickson
Fr • OF • 5-5 • R/R
Tustin, Calif.



17 Tamani Wells
Jr • OF/P • 5-5 • L/R
Concord, Calif.



18 Christine Kulick
So • IF • 5-3 • L/R
Aliso Niguel, Calif.



19 Lindsey Marquez
Fr • IF/OF/C • 5-1 • L/R
Tustin, Calif.



20 Megan McDonald
Jr • C/DP • 5-7 • R/R
Glendale, Ariz.



22 Sydney Fleming
RS-Fr • C • 5-8 • R/R
Oakland, Calif.



23 Melissa Owens
So • P/IF • 5-10 • R/R
San Diego, Calif.



24 Amanda Beasley
Sr • UT • 5-4 • R/R
San Diego, Calif.



27 Janae Portugal
Fr • IF • 5-8 • R/R
San Diego, Calif.



39 Brittany Knudsen
Fr • OF • 5-5 • L/R
San Diego, Calif.



44 Erin Floros
So • C • 5-7 • R/R
San Diego, Calif.



Kathy Van Wyk
Head Coach - 11th Year
CS Fullerton - 1983



Sara Hayes
Assistant Coach - First Year
Notre Dame - 1995



Miranda Bleisch
Assistant Coach - Second Year
Point Loma Nazarene - 2004

How does one team rebound from its first losing campaign in six seasons and a last-place finish in the Mountain West Conference? Easy. You win the conference for the third time in five seasons, advance to the NCAA tournament for the third time in six years and finish with the best record in school history.

That's exactly what the San Diego State softball team did in 2006, finishing 34-15, including a 15-3 record in MWC play. It also advanced to the NCAA Region 1 championship game before falling to eventual NCAA Women's College World Series participant UCLA on the Bruins' home field.

The Aztecs won't rest on their laurels, though, and are looking for bigger and better things in 2007.

"We were very pleased with our season last year," said 11th-year head coach Kathy Van Wyk of SDSU, which set 18 school records and saw Erin Floros become the program's first All-American, "We won't accept anything less than last year. Before we wanted to just get to NCAAs and we'd be happy. Now it's get to NCAA Super Regionals and on to the Women's College World Series. I really think it's in (the players') grasps."

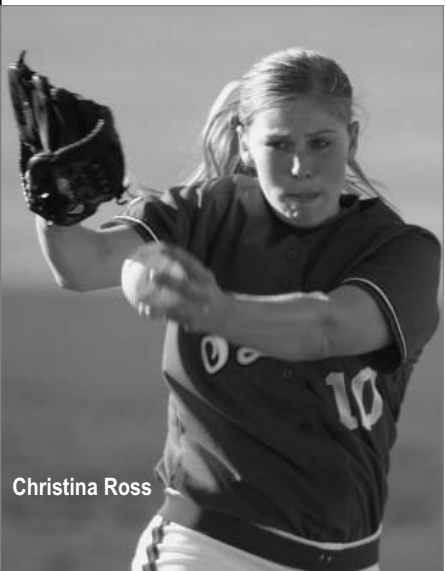
San Diego State returns six starters from last season, led by sophomore All-American Erin Floros and junior MWC Pitcher of the Year Christina Ross. Throw in sophomore all-MWC selection Monica Alnes and one can see why the sky is the limit for the 2007 Aztecs.

Pitchers

The pitching staff should once again be the focal point of this year's squad thanks to Ross and a pair of sophomores who logged plenty of innings in the fall.

"The pitchers will be as strong as ever this season," Van Wyk said. "We've got three really strong pitchers who can go deep into the game and I think that is a real advantage for us, especially late in the season."

Ross, a lefthander who will be in her second year at SDSU after transferring from the University of Kansas, will most likely be the ace of this year's staff



Christina Ross

after her remarkable year in 2006.

In 2006, Ross went 17-10 with a league-low 1.82 ERA en route to winning conference's pitcher of the year honors, the fifth time in the last six seasons an Aztec has won the award. Ross also earned NFCA all-West Region second-team honors and was an all-league selection and MWC all-tournament pick.

"Christina will have the weight of the team on her shoulders, and I think that is something she will embrace," Van Wyk said. "She is a bulldog and is a real competitor. I expect everything she gave us last season and more. I'm excited to see how she does."

What might be the most intriguing storyline of the 2007 Aztecs is how sophomores Melissa Owens and Monica Alnes adjust to the increased workload in the circle now that four-time all-MWC selection Celena Velasquez has graduated.

"It will be interesting to see how (Melissa and Monica) do," Van Wyk said. "We counted on (Christina) Ross and Celena for most of the pitching duties in pressure situations. Now that Celena is gone, somebody is going to have to step up and I think either (Melissa or Monica) will do a fine job when given a chance."

Owens saw action in nine games in 2006, going 3-0 with a team-low 1.75 ERA. She struck out 37 batters and walked only five for an impressive 7.4 strike-out-to-walk ratio. She showed flashes of brilliance including a complete game, one-hit shutout with eight strikeouts over San Diego on March 1.

"Mel has unlimited potential," Van Wyk said. "She did a great job pitching for us in the fall and gained a lot of confidence. Once we get her to settle down and really focus, she is going to be a force for us."

Alnes appeared in five contests for the Aztecs last year and was 3-0 with a 2.27 ERA. In 12 1/3 innings, she allowed only two extra base hits, while striking out seven and walking two.

"Monica had a good fall as well," Van Wyk said. "Her ability to keep batters off-balance with a lot of off-speed stuff will add another dimension to the pitching staff."

Junior Tamani Wells could also see some time in the circle for San Diego State.

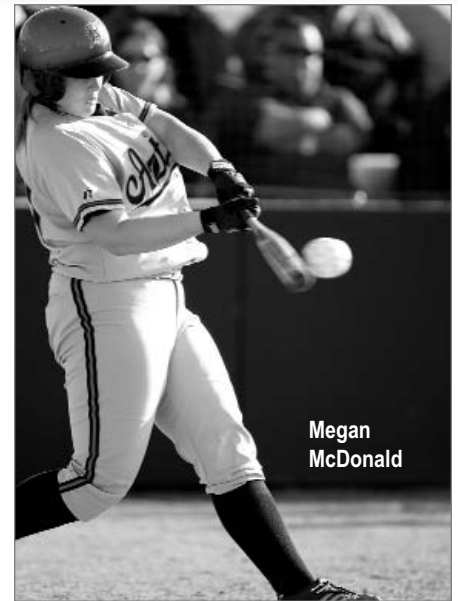
Catchers

The catching position will be one of the strengths for the Aztecs in 2006, led by Floros and junior power hitter Megan McDonald.

Floros returns for her sophomore season after a year that might arguably be the best all-around in school history. Floros set school records in slugging percentage (.558) and on-base percentage (.467) as a freshman, and was among the all-time SDSU top 10 in batting average (second, .388), doubles (tied for fourth, 13), home runs (tied for seventh, four) and in total bases (tied for eighth, 82).

She was rewarded at the end of the season with numerous accolades, including first-team Easton-Bell Sports All-American, Louisville Slugger/NFCA third-team All-American, NFCA all-West Region first team, MWC Freshman of the Year and all-MWC.

"Erin is a low-key, hard worker who leads by example," Van Wyk said. "I don't think she is the type



Megan McDonald

who will succumb to any type of pressure of trying to outdo what she did last year. She will be just fine."

McDonald should also see playing time in front of the backstop, but will see the majority of action as the team's designated player. McDonald battled injuries last season and struggled down the stretch, yet still slugged six home runs, second-most in a single season, trailing only Erryn Gutjahr's seven homers in 1999. In fact, McDonald needs seven home runs to tie Gutjahr's career-leading 17.

"Megan struggled with injuries all of last year," Van Wyk said, "A lot of people don't know how serious her back injury really was. She is feeling much stronger now and looks fantastic in practice."

Sydney Fleming could also see playing time for SDSU after redshirting her first year on The Mesa, while freshman Lindsey Marquez has seen some playing time there in high school and could be used in a pinch.

Infielders

Last season, the infielders were young and fairly inexperienced. And although the Aztecs lost both of its middle infielders in the offseason, there is reason to be excited about the returnees. Nothing is set in stone, however, and Van Wyk will use the non-conference schedule to sort all the positions out.

Owens and fellow sophomore Kasey Mytinger will do the bulk of the playing time at first base in 2007.

Owens batted .283 as a freshman and possessed an on-base percentage of .410, which would have been the ninth-highest in school history if she had one more at-bat to qualify. A patient, but powerful hitter, Owens tied for the team lead with 21 walks and had two home runs and 16 RBI.

"Mel did a great job hitting for us in the fall," Van Wyk said. "I don't think she even realizes how good she can be. She has worked harder this year and I expect great things from her."

Mytinger will most likely see time at first base when Owens is pitching. Although she appeared in

only 14 games with six starts, Mytinger is instant offense. She batted .389 with a home run and six RBI in only 18 at-bats in 2006. Her average of .389 would have been the highest on the team to tie Kellie Nordhagen's 2000 school record if she had enough at-bats.

"Kasey made some huge improvements hitting wise even throughout last year," Van Wyk said. "It was just hard to find a place for her defensively. That's one of the reasons we moved her to first base. She's got power and has learned to stay inside the ball and use the entire field."



Monica Alnes

The middle infield is still up in the air as SDSU gets ready to start play, but will most likely land in the hands of Alnes and a much-improved Amanda Beasley.

Alnes, who played first base last season after never playing in the infield in high school, has performed nicely at her new position and has to be the slight favorite because of her offensive skills. In her freshman season, Alnes had a season to remember, ranking among the Aztec single-season top 10 in slugging percentage (third, .557), batting average (third, .379), on-base percentage (fifth, .447), doubles (tied-sixth, six), RBI (seventh, 32) and runs (eighth, 33). She received all-MWC accolades and was named to the MWC all-tournament team.

"Monica looked great (at shortstop) considering she never played there before," Van Wyk said. "She is the type of individual who will work hard to learn anything. We need to keep her bat in the lineup, whether that is at second base, shortstop and pitcher."

Beasley was one of the surprises of the fall and has a good chance to earn the starting job at second if she gains some confidence in her play, a year after driving in five runs in 17 at-bats.

"If I'd have to choose the most improved player from last year, it would be Amanda Beasley," Van Wyk said. "She has been her own worst enemy up to now, but is really starting to swing the bat well. If she can settle down and really get her nerves under control,

she could become a very good second baseman for us."

Marquez improved as the fall went on and could see significant playing time in the infield as well.

Junior Taryin Casillas seems to be the favorite for third base after increasing her batting average 31 percentage points to .285 last season. She earned MWC all-tournament honors after batting .556 with a homer and eight RBI in leading the Aztecs to the championship game.

"Taryin plays the game hard and that's what we need at third (base)," Van Wyk said. "She plays the game with confidence and I think that rubs off on the team. We need her bat in the lineup."

Sophomore Iowa State transfer Christine Kulick, and freshman Janae Portugal will add depth to the infield.

Outfielders

The only thing for sure about the outfielders is that they are going to be young after losing starters Bree Boyer and two-time all-MWC selection Meagan Hartung to graduation. Defensively, however, the 2007 Aztec outfield could be the most exciting in a long time.

Junior Tamani Wells makes the switch to center after starting most of the year in left last season. She showed drastic improvement in her second season on The Mesa, improving in almost every offensive category, including batting average, runs, hits, sacrifice hits, stolen bases and fielding percentage. In fact, Wells was the 16th-hardest to strikeout in the nation last season, fanning only six times or once every 20.2 at-bats.

"Tamani made great progress last year and I expect more of the same this season," Van Wyk said. "She is always a threat to steal when she gets on base and her defensive skills have improved tremendously."

Joining Wells in the outfield will most likely be freshmen Brittany Knudsen and Marquez, which could be the fastest outfield trio on the entire West



Amanda Beasley

Coast.

"Brittany is a great athlete who will wear opponents down with her speed," Van Wyk said. "She is a smart player and doesn't play like a freshman. Lindsey is a good contact hitter who can play a variety of positions for us, something every team needs."

Sophomore Dani Sidoti returns after redshirting last season because of a knee injury. She started 22 times in 2005 and batted .200.

Other Aztecs who could log some valuable innings in the outfield include Mytinger, and freshmen Katy Erickson and Stephanie Frasca.

Utility

Senior Christy Hollinghead will add some power off the bench for the Aztecs. In 2006, she would have been third on the team in batting with a .385 average if she had enough at-bats to qualify. In addition, had she had enough at-bats, her .615 slugging percentage would have been tops on the team and the highest in a season in school history.

"Christy swings the bat very well," Van Wyk said. "She will be a nice weapon off the bench to pinch-hit."

Freshman Stefanie Quichocho-Rosario will see some time as a pinch-runner.

Schedule

The saying goes to be the best, you've got to beat the best. That's how San Diego State is going to have to approach its 2007 schedule. The Aztecs will face 15 opponents who made the 2006 NCAA tournament, including NCAA runner-up Northwestern and two other teams - Oregon State and Texas - who advanced to the Women's College World Series.

"We have a top-notch schedule again," said Van Wyk. "Our first six games (Oregon State, UC Santa Barbara, California, Kansas, Massachusetts and Oregon State) in the Campbell-Cartier are all against teams who made (the NCAA tournament) last year. It will be a great opportunity to test ourselves against some of the best teams in the country early in the season. Hopefully, we'll find out what we need to work on and we'll grow as a team."

SDSU also plays host to two other tournaments - the Aztec Invitational (Feb. 23-25) and the Aztec Classic (March 16-18) - as well as non-conference opponents Fairfield (March 13), 2006 NCAA participant Georgia Tech (March 21), Brown (March 28) and city-rival San Diego (April 18).

The Aztecs will get their fair share on the road, with trips around the country to participate in the Texas Invitational (Feb. 16-18), the CS Fullerton Worth Invitational (March 2-4) and the Stanford Invitational (March 9-11).

SDSU will look to defend its conference title when it begins the MWC season at home with two games against Brigham Young (April 5) and Utah (April 6-7), respectively.

"This year is probably going to be the Mountain West Conference's toughest yet," Van Wyk said. "Three conference teams received NCAA bids last year. It's a dog fight every time you go out there."



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