

**2005 Pac-10 Women's Basketball Media Day  
Press Conference Quotes**

**California's Ben Braun**

**General Remarks:** "The good news is that Leon Powe is back. It's a welcome addition to have him back, but the bad news is that we have had other injuries. We do anticipate getting those guys back from injury and we are excited about the new guys in our program. It's great to have Richard Midgley back. He has lost about 15 pounds and is quicker and is moving really well. He's back and healthy. We had a tour in Italy this summer and it was a great chance for our guys to play together and get some experience."

**On Leon Powe:** "I don't see anything that indicates any fear in Leon. He is playing without a brace, that's a strong sign. He's probably the healthiest you can have a guy. He played in Italy and showed no signs of backing down. He is very durable and his attitude and performance has been phenomenal. Nobody has worked harder in his rehab than Leon and that's about as much as you can ask from a guy. He has rigorous practices and games and I'm excited for him."

He used to sit next to me and coach last year. He's a lot better as a player. He has had a chance to work on his shooting, he's able to knock shots down. His passing skills have really picked up. He is creating off the dribble and his understanding of the game is better. Leon makes our team better in so many ways."

**USC's Tim Floyd**

**General Remarks:** I'm looking forward to being back in college basketball. Practices have been fun. I feel like I am at USC at a great time right now, especially with football. The association has helped us in recruiting. We are excited about the new facility. The university has stepped up and made a commitment to our program. We will go through a growth process, returning only four players from last year's squad. Those four guys are probably going to start for us. We have five total years of Division I experience on our team. I really like the guys we have recruited, they are going to be great players in our league. We don't have a lot of depth on the perimeter or inside. Another problem with our team will be our ability to drive the ball; we have very good shooters who need to get better at driving the lane. Those are our real challenges, but with that being said, I am looking forward to this season."

**On Lodrick Stewart:** "I really like Lodrick. He has had three coaches in two years. We had a long talk in the spring about my expectations for him. I told him it would be very important how he carried himself in terms of class, coaching and being at USC. He has embraced this. He has been accountable, respectful and I have enjoyed him. I've heard he might have a strong personality, but I haven't seen that, he has been absolutely terrific. He plays with spirit and he's a good talent."

**Oregon's Ernie Kent**

**General Remarks:** "We're probably one of the few schools who can say we have had at least 10 players able to play in practice, we are healthy. We have a tough preseason but we are anxious to get started. Malik Hairston and Aaron Brooks are going to be leaders on this team."

**On Hairston:** "His range has really increased. He is a much better scorer from all over the floor. He has always been good at attacking the basket, but he is showing a lot of consistency from all over. He knows what to expect and his confidence level is up. I think if he has a good enough year, this might be the last year we will have him."

**On Brooks:** "His stats were great last year, but he has a better understanding of our system now, we need more of a point guard and he has taken that upon himself to learn that role. We have great scorers on our team and his job is to get them the ball and he is understanding that."

### **Arizona State's Rob Evans**

**General Remarks:** "We have an exhibition game tonight that we are really looking forward to. Our guys are a bit banged up because our practices have been so intense. We are excited about putting a group together to play against someone else. We have five newcomers, to go along with our returning guys that we have. It's going to take some time to get these five guys accustomed to how we play. Jeff Pendergraph has yet to work out with us. We found out that he has a cancerous mass around his knee and had it operated on, so he will be back in about two weeks. He has got tremendous potential. Antwi Atuahene is one of the best players I have coached in 37 years. When you have a point guard like him, he allows other kids to be great around him. I'm excited about this team because they are balanced on both ends of the court. All in all, I am pleased and looking forward to the challenge."

**On being picked last:** "We were picked last year with Ike, so that doesn't concern me. When I was at Mississippi they picked us last and we won the league. I have never in my life worried about that. I look forward to the challenge."

### **Washington State's Dick Bennett**

**General Remarks:** "We are in the process of trying to build the Washington State program. It has taken shape in the way I envisioned it. We are going to be playing with a lot of young kids this year. They shoot the ball well offensively, but they are a long way from being where they need to be defensively. Part of that is mental and part of that is physical. This third year is more of a concern for me than the first two."

**On his son being named the future head coach:** "It was very important to establish that because any recruiting done, will be his name. It made his mother happy, so it made my life easier. It's still an open-end on my future. I will make a decision at the end of this year and who knows, you might be stuck with me for longer. I didn't want to see a young kid step into a program like WSU, without knowing the future of the coaching staff."

### **Oregon State's Jay John**

**General Remarks:** "We have been going about two and a half weeks now and its been the best two and a half weeks since I've been there. We have a core group of returners and its great because the older guys are communicating how things should be to the younger guys. So far, our practices have been competitive and I'm excited to get the season started."

**On young guys breaking into the lineup:** "Guys right now that are playing really well are Wesley Washington, Marcel Jones, Calvin Hampton and others. They know that they have to come up and compete so its been good for our team."

### **Stanford's Trent Johnson**

**General Remarks:** "We're excited about this upcoming season. I like to start the season with 13 guys, which is always a good thing. We are going to be a solid basketball team. Much has been said about our team and the adversity we went through, but we are ready to adjust to anything thrown our way this year. Dan Grunfeld is playing as well as can be expected with his injury. We are going to be very careful with him. We have one freshman point guard in the program. We are as healthy as we've been since I've been at Stanford. We are only as strong as the sum of our parts, but we have developed some depth and we have the opportunity to play well in our Conference."

**On Grunfeld:** "What we are limiting him in is full-court. We are playing half-court with him. He wants to get up and down and go. We are bringing him along slowly though. His game is one that he can play on the ground, he understands how to play, he understands angles. His stamina is excellent. This type of injury just takes time so we will be careful and bring him along at the right pace."

**On Chris Hernandez as player of the year candidate:** "I try to stay away from that, but its hard to deny Chris. As vital as Chris is to our program, we need others to step up as well. We know how hard it is to

win in this league. We have a lot of respect for the other teams and players in the Pac-10. There is not going to be a weak team in this Conference this year.”

#### **UCLA’s Ben Howland**

**General Remarks:** “We have had some injuries which has only given us seven scholarship players and nine total players to practice with. Once we get everybody back and we are healthy, we will be in a good place. We have better depth than we’ve ever had since I’ve been there. I’m looking forward to getting healthy and we’ll be on our way. The big key for us is our health. Josh Shipp is a big player for us. His rehab is coming along well. We are hoping he will be back in time for our Conference-opener. It will just take time for him to get back, practicing, and in the shape he needs to be in. Guys have worked hard this summer to get bigger and stronger.”

**On the Pac-10:** “The Conference this year is very balanced. All the NCAA teams are going to be good again. There is a lot of tough teams and truly, any team can beat another team on any given night.”

#### **Washington’s Lorenzo Romar**

**General Remarks:** “Glad the season is finally here, we are excited, practices are spirited and going well. We lost some pretty important players from last season and it is difficult to replace a group like that. We grew together and now we have to move on and I like the team that we have right now. We have six new faces that we hope will come in and contribute right away. Brandon Roy is playing at the highest level we have seen him play at. Last season, before his injury, he was averaging about 22-23 points per game. When he came back after the injury, he provided us what he needed to and played unselfishly. When the game was on the line, the ball was in Brandon Roy’s hands. He is one of the most underrated players in the country. Another guy who is going to step up for us is Bobby Jones. He is going to play more out on the perimeter. He has worked on his range and ball-handling skills. He has elevated his game. Jon Brockman approaches each practice as if he does not have a scholarship. He approaches every drill as if he doesn’t have a scholarship. He has a great, great work ethic. His teammates love him. You will see him out on the floor a lot this season.”

**On Joel Smith:** “Joel is a great athlete. Last year he came into the game as the only freshman able to contribute. He made big shots, made good defensive plays and continues to pick up where he left off.”

#### **Arizona’s Lute Olson**

**General Remarks:** “We lost two really good seniors in Salim Stoudamire and Channing Frye so we have a couple places to fill. We will have to do that by committee because we don’t have anyone who can shoot like Salim or do all the things that Channing did. Our other 10 letterwinners are back, along with three freshman coming in who can contribute immediately. We have the best depth that we’ve ever had. We have a number of really good perimeter players. Hassan Adams is the guy that the team looks too for leadership. He plays with a lot of intensity. Isaiah Fox has come back in the best shape of his life. He is down about 20 pounds and that puts a lot less stress on his knees. Chris Rodgers has played very well for us. We have our Red-Blue game tonight and McKale Madness on opening night. We will play the underclassmen against the upperclassmen and that adds a little spice.”

**On being picked first in the media poll:** “As you look at the teams in the league, Stanford probably has the strongest group of returners. But we’re always up for a challenge.”

**On Marcus Williams:** “He’s 6-8, long and a quick learner. He is one of our best shooters, takes it to the basket very well. He has done a great job for us, he is a great athlete. He has better lateral quickness than I thought. He is for real. We have our players evaluate our team and he was voted one of the top five guys on the team. He is a freshman so he has to learn a lot, but I like his coachability and work ethic.”