



# STANFORD ATHLETICS

## **MEDIA RELATIONS**

Arrillaga Family Sports Center  
Stanford University  
Stanford, CA 94305  
(650) 723-4418 • FAX (650) 725-2957

**Website:** [gostanford.com](http://gostanford.com)

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### **Cardinal Makes History with First-Ever NCAA Tournament Bid Stanford becomes the first team west of the Mississippi invited to the elite field.**

The Stanford women's lacrosse team is headed where no other west coast team has ever gone before: the NCAA Women's Lacrosse Championships. The No. 15 Cardinal earned its first-ever bid to the NCAA Tournament today and is set to play the fourth-seeded Northwestern Wildcats next weekend in Evanston, Ill.

The berth is just one in a long line of historical firsts reached by head coach Michele Uhlfelder. In 2001, Uhlfelder's first season as head coach, the Baltimore native led the program to its first-ever national ranking. In 2004, she led her team to a No.14 ranking, the highest ever for a west coast team. She also was the first west coast coach to have players selected to the U.S. Team Program and an All-Region team. This season, Uhlfelder has continued to add to the list of firsts. On April 30, she led the program to its first victory over a top-10 opponent, edging No. 10 Cornell, 5-4. Today, Uhlfelder became the first to lead a west coast team into the elite NCAA Tournament.

Stanford boasted one of the toughest schedules in the nation this season, highlighted by top-ranked Northwestern, No.5 North Carolina and three members of the elite Ivy League. In all, 11 of the squad's 17 games were against opponents who were either ranked or received votes at some point this year. The Cardinal's impressive 12-5 (.706) record, along with its late season performance, won national attention and culminated in today's historical NCAA Tournament bid.

The 16-team field consists of seven automatic qualifiers, one play-in qualifier and eight at-large selections. Stanford, one of those eight at-large teams, was selected based on its Rating Percentage Index (RPI), overall winning percentage and strength of schedule among other factors. Duke was awarded with the tournament's first seed, followed by Virginia and Georgetown.

Stanford enters next weekend's first round with the momentum of seven-straight wins, the second longest streak in school history. Yesterday, the squad defeated Denver to capture its second consecutive MPSF Championship. Michele Uhlfelder enters her first NCAA Tournament game as a head coach with a 72-35 (.673) overall record.

The Cardinal will meet defending national champion Northwestern in the first round, and have a chance to avenge a 19-8 midseason loss to the Wildcats. The top-ranked team, an automatic qualifier from the American Lacrosse Conference, carries 16-1 overall record this season. The match is scheduled for next Sunday, March 14, at 2 p.m. (CT) at Lakeside Field in Evanston, Ill.