



# Dell BCA Classic Tournament Preview

Princeton, NJ (November 14, 2003) - The Dell BCA Classic begins this Saturday, November 15th on the campus of Xavier University at the Cintas Center in Cincinnati, Ohio. Eight teams will participate over the course of this three-day event with the champion being crowned on Monday, November 17th in a game that will be televised on Fox Sports Ohio (8:00 p.m. EST). Listed below are brief outlines of the eight participating teams:

## **Xavier University - Head Coach Thad Matta**

Musketeer senior Romain Sato enters the 2003-2004 season as one of the most highly touted seniors in the country. As Xavier's leading scorer (18.1 ppg) and rebounder (7.1 rpg), this Atlantic-10 All-Defensive and First-team honoree will be the focus of a Musketeer program that is looking to take their postseason success of 2003 one step further to the Final Four.

## **Coppin State College - Head Coach Fang Mitchell**

Coppin State returns seven lettermen and three starters from a 2002-2003 squad that led the MEAC in scoring defense. Although the Eagles do not have the experience of some of their conference counterparts, a difficult non-conference schedule will give Coach Mitchell's squad ample opportunity to mature and improve early in their season. Look for shooting guard Jimmy Boykin to assume a large part of the offensive load once he returns from an early season injury.

## **Mercer University - Head Coach Mark Slonaker**

The 2002-2003 campaign marked the largest single-season turnaround in Division I history as Mercer improved from a 6-23 team to a 23-6 conference champion in the Atlantic Sun. They will look to build upon that success in their new campus arena, and to do so, they must rely on the play of senior Scott Emerson. Emerson is the 7th all-time leading scorer in Mercer history and was a first-team all-conference selection the past two seasons.

## **Ohio University - Head Coach Tim O'Shea**

Ohio will benefit from the experience of three returning starters from the 2002-2003 squad, but there is no doubt that Coach O'Shea and his staff need to find someone to fill the large shoes of NBA Draft pick Brandon Hunter, Ohio's all-time leading rebounder (1103 rebs) and second-leading scorer (2012 points). Look for Jaivon Harris, who led last year's team in assists and was second in three-pointers, to take on a larger role as Ohio tips off their season.

**University of Illinois-Chicago - Head Coach Jimmy Collins**

2003-2004 could be a breakout season for UIC. They are garnering attention across the nation as one of the fastest rising mid-majors in the country, and that reputation is well-deserved as the Flames return all five starters from a program that has posted back-to-back 20 win seasons and post-season berths. UIC is led by Cedrick Banks, a two-time All-Horizon League honoree and the team's leading scorer the past two seasons.

**University of California-Irvine - Head Coach Pat Douglass**

UC-Irvine is coming off three straight 20-win seasons for the first time in school history, and while they return three talented starters from the 2003 team, their early season schedule poses quite a formidable challenge. With non-league games at Pepperdine, Stanford, Sacramento State, and Cal and a full slate of Big West Conference opponents, Coach Douglass' squad will have to be prepared right out of the gate. Look for pre-season Big West Player of the Year candidate, Adam Parada, to excel on both ends of the floor as he is UC-Irvine's career blocks leader and has been their second leading scorer since 2002.

**University of San Diego - Head Coach Brad Holland**

Coach Holland and his staff lost a great class - and 73% of their scoring - to graduation in 2003, but USD must forge ahead if they want to repeat their NCAA appearance from 2003. Defensive stopper Corey Belser is their only returning starter, and his ability to shut down opponents' toughest match-ups could be a huge factor in USD's first round game against Mercer and the nation's leading scorer, Mike Helms.

**Oakland University - Head Coach Greg Kampe**

Offensive prowess is the name of the game for Oakland's Mike Helms. With an average of 26.9 ppg, Helms is the most prolific scorer in the country and an All-America honorable mention. Helms, however, is far from the lone bright spot on this Oakland squad. Coach Kampe's team also returns the top rebounder and defender from the Mid-Continent Conference, providing him with a nucleus of players that could make his 20th year with the team one of his best.

The Dell BCA Classic was created to raise funds and awareness for the Black Coaches Association in support of its mission: 1) Address significant issues pertaining to the participation and employment of minorities in sport in general and intercollegiate athletics in particular; 2) Assist minorities aspiring to have a career in athletics through educational and professional development programming and scholarships; 3) Provide youth and diverse communities the opportunity to interact positively with the BCA as a corporate citizen and community builder through a variety of alliances.

Dell is proud to support this mission through its funding of two BCA Post-Graduate Ethnic Minority Scholarships totaling \$10,000 for the 2004-2005 academic year.

For more information on the BCA visit [www.bcasports.org](http://www.bcasports.org) or call 1-877-789-1BCA

(1222).

Single game tickets to the 2003 Dell BCA Classic are available at the Cintas Center Box Office, through Ticketmaster charge-by-phone at (513) 562-4949, or online at [www.ticketmaster.com](http://www.ticketmaster.com). The Dell BCA Classic is produced by the Gazelle Group. For more information about the Dell BCA Classic, please visit [www.dellbcaclassic.com](http://www.dellbcaclassic.com) or contact Bill Dunigan at (609) 921-1300 or [wdunigan@gazellegroup.com](mailto:wdunigan@gazellegroup.com).



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