

Griner, Diggins headline Preseason All-Americans

Written by Yolande Y. Lezine, Sports Editor
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Baylor's Brittney Griner and Notre Dame's Skylar Diggins headline the list of the Associated Press women's basketball preseason All-American team.

Griner, who keeps piling up accolades became only the third player to be a two-time unanimous choice on the team. She joined former UConn star Maya Moore and Duke great Alana Beard as having accomplished that feat.

"It's definitely an honor," Griner stated. "I'm humbled just to be a part of that group. That's just awesome."

Griner, Diggins and Delaware senior Elena Delle Donne were the only three players who received all 40 ballots. Stanford's Chiney Ogwumike (23 votes), Maryland's Alyssa Thomas (19) and Baylor's Odyssey Sims (19) rounded out the squad. It's the first time there's been a tie for the final spot since the team began in 1995-96.

Only five other players have been unanimous selections-Courtney Paris-Oklahoma, Chamique Holdsclaw-Tennessee, Diana Taurasi-UConn, Seimone Augustus-LSU, and Candace Parker-Tennessee.

Griner and Sims are the sixth set of teammates to be on the preseason team. They helped Baylor go undefeated last season en route to the school's second national championship. The

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pair have the Lady Bears back at No. 1 in the preseason AP Top 25 poll.

“Winning the championship validated without question Griner’s impact on the women’s game,” Baylor coach Kim Mulkey said. “She’s still hungry and wants to win another one. I don’t know that we’ll ever see the likes of a Brittney Griner again.”

Griner is coming off a great season where she collected every national award out there plus some! She averaged 23.2 points and averaged five blocked shots a game. Sims had a strong year also averaging 14.9 points and 4.4 assists to go along with three steals.

The All-American duo helped Baylor knock off Diggins and Notre Dame in the title game in April in Denver. Diggins led the Irish to the past two NCAA championship games and last season she helped them to their first regular season Big East Championship. She averaged 16.8 points and 5.7 assists while shooting 50 percent from the field.

Diggins, who was on the preseason team last year as well, is the first Irish player ever to make the squad twice.

“It means a lot, because we’ve had a lot of great players come through here,” Diggins said. “There are a lot of great players in the country and it’s truly an honor to be considered an AP All-American. This is truly a dynamic team.”

Delle Donne became the first player from a non-BCS conference to earn preseason All-America honors since Amanda Wilson (Louisiana Tech) in 1998-99. She led the nation in scoring last season, averaging 28.1 points and helped the Blue Hens to the second round of the NCAA tournament.