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MOUNTAIN WEST ANNOUNCES 2020-21 PRESEASON WOMEN’S BASKETBALL

ALL-CONFERENCE TEAM

 **COLORADO SPRINGS, Colo. –** With the upcoming basketball season just around the corner, the Mountain West released its 2020-21 Women’s Basketball Preseason All-Conference Team as voted on by the league’s head coaches and media Thursday morning.

The preseason team is made up of two seniors, two juniors and a sophomore. Of the seven preseason honorees, four earned all-conference accolades at the end of 2019-20.

Fresno State senior **Maddi Utti** was named the Mountain West Preseason Player of the Year, while New Mexico’s **LaTascya Duff** was selected as the MW Preseason Newcomer of the Year and San Diego State’s **Asia Avinger** was picked the MW Preseason Freshman of the Year.

Utti, a 2020 All-MW pick, became the sixth Bulldog to be named conference player of the year at the end of the 2019-20 season. Last year, she was one of five players in the NCAA to average at least 15 points, eight rebounds and two steals per game. Utti led the MW in field goals (212) and steals (73), while finishing her junior campaign third in the league in scoring (15.9).

Duff, a junior from Samson, Alabama, joins New Mexico after two seasons at Shelton State Community College. Duff started every game as a sophomore, averaging a team-best 17 points per game, while adding 4.6 rebounds and 3.1 assists per contest.

Avinger, one of the nation's best combo guards according to espnW, comes to SDSU from Rosary High School in Cerritos, California, as the highest ranked recruit under head coach **Stacie Terry-Hutson**. The Trinity League MVP and Orange County Player of the Year, Avinger averaged 13.8 points, 6.3 rebounds and 4.0 assists per game as a senior.

Joining Utti on the preseason All-MW team are Boise State’s **Mallory McGwire**, Fresno State’s **Haley Cavinder**, San Diego State’s **Sophia Ramos** and San José State’s **Ayzhiana Basallo**,

McGwire appeared in every game last season for the Broncos, averaging 11.4 points and 8.1 boards per game. She finished the 2019-20 season with 50 blocks and 266 rebounds, which is the second-most in a single season in Boise State history.

At the conclusion of her rookie season, Cavinder was selected as the 2020 MW Freshman of the Year. She started 31 of the Bulldogs’ 32 games last season, averaging 16 points and 7.3 rebounds per game. Cavinder, a 2020 All-MW honoree, broke Fresno State’s freshman records for points (512) and rebounds (233) in a season.

A 2020 All-Mountain West selection, Ramos started all 31 games during her sophomore campaign. The junior averaged 14.3 points, 6.5 rebounds and 3.8 assists per game, while shooting 39.7 percent from the floor. Ramos became the first Aztec guard to lead the team in rebounding since 2013.

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2020 All-MW selection and MW Newcomer of the Year, Basallo averaged a team-best 18.5 points per game and connected on 44.7 percent of shots from the floor. Basallo, a 2020 All-MW selection, enters the 2020-21 season as one of 25 student-athletes across the country to be named to the Becky Hammon Mid-Major Player of the Year Watch List.

**2020-21 PRESEASON ALL-MOUNTAIN WEST TEAM**

**Pos. Name Yr. Team**

C Mallory McGwire Sr. Boise State

G Haley Cavinder So. Fresno State

F Maddi Utti Sr. Fresno State

G Sophia Ramos Jr. San Diego State

G Ayzhiana Basallo Jr. San José State

**Preseason Player of the Year**

Maddi Utti, Sr., F, Fresno State

**Preseason Newcomer of the Year**

LaTascya Duff, Jr., G, New Mexico

**Preseason Freshman of the Year**

Asia Avinger, G, San Diego State

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