

Wildcats Make 14th Consecutive College World Series Appearance

Cats Back in Oklahoma

The University of Arizona softball team, 61-4 overall and the No 1-ranked team the last half of the season, collides with seven other outstanding teams -- three from its own Pacific-10 Conference -- in the 20th annual Women's College World Series May 24-28 at Don Porter Hall of Fame Stadium in Oklahoma City.

Arizona makes its 14th consecutive appearance in the Series and played in the title game every year from 1991-1998. Arizona won the national championship five times -- in 1991, 1993, 1994, 1996 and 1997.

UA, seed No. 1, plays its series opener 10 a.m. (Central Daylight Time) Thursday, May 24, against the California Golden Bears (53-18), seed No. 8. The winner of that contest faces the winner of the following game (12:30 p.m. CDT) featuring Michigan (43-15-1) and defending national champion Oklahoma (49-7). The Arizona-California loser plays the Michigan-Oklahoma loser at 11 a.m. (CDT) Saturday, May 26.

Arizona was 19-2 in Pac-10 play, winning its sixth league championship in the past 10 years.

Only seven teams ever have won the NCAA title -- UCLA (9), Arizona (5), Texas A&M (2) Cal State Fullerton (1), Fresno State (1) and Oklahoma (1).

ESPN/ESPN2 To Carry Nearly All Games

Arizona's opening game in the Series against California will be cablecast live on ESPN2. That network will televise Game 1-5 and 10-12. ESPN will televise Games 7 and 9 live. Games 6 and 8 (loser's bracket matchups on Saturday) will not be carried by cable networks.

Ranked Field

Arizona enjoys a nation-best string of appearances in the College World Series, and joins a strong field. All eight teams were ranked in the final regular-season National Fastpitch Coaches Association poll, including the top six: No. 1 Arizona, No. 2 UCLA, No. 3 LSU, No. 4 Stanford, No. 5 Oklahoma, No. 6 California, No. 15 Iowa and No. 21 Michigan.

Arizona versus the College World Series Field

Arizona played to a 10-1 record this year against the teams in the Series. UA was 3-0 against California and Stanford, 2-1 against UCLA and had victories over Oklahoma and Louisiana State.

Against teams in this year's series, Arizona has previous College World Series action against UCLA (7 wins, 4 losses), California (3-0), Oklahoma (0-1) and Iowa (2-0). Most notable are championship games against UCLA (3-2). Arizona has a 3-0 NCAA Regional record against Michigan

(See page 24 of the Arizona Softball media guide for a complete list of UA's previous 14 tournament appearances.)

Wildcats 4-0 in 2001 NCAA Action

Arizona won its NCAA Region 1 playoff at home in Tucson, outscoring opponents 23-8 in four games. UA beat St. Peter's 4-2, beat Texas Tech 8-0 in six innings, beat Cal State Fullerton 5-4 and beat Southwest Texas State 6-2. Freshman pitcher Jenny Gladding struck out a season-high 15 batters against St. Peters, Jennie Finch and Becky Lemke combined for the 40th shutout of the year against Texas Tech. Arizona weathered one of Finch's least dominant outings (10 hits, four strikeouts) of the year against Cal State Fullerton. Lemke struck out a season-high 14 batters against Southwest Texas State and Arizona smacked four home runs including two by All-Region Most Outstanding Player Toni Mascarenas. Arizona hit .352 in the four games with 38 hits, including 14 for extra bases. Five Wildcats earned All-Tournament honors including third baseman Mascarenas, Finch, and its starting outfield of Nicole Giordano, Lauren Bauer and Mackenzie Vandergeest.

***Arizona outscored its regional opponents 23-8**

***Arizona's batting average was .352 while opponents hit .192**

***Arizona hit six home runs in four games to bring the season total to 121, extending its NCAA record**

*Toni Mascarenas hit .667 in Region play, while Lauren Bauer collected a team high 9 hits to bat .562

Regional Champs Mark

UA has won 14 consecutive NCAA Regionals to advance to the CWS, the longest active streak of appearances. UCLA has the overall high consecutive mark, 15, which ended in 1998 when the Bruins were on probation.

Cats' First Foe In Oklahoma City

Arizona will play a first-round game against fellow Pac-10 member California (53-18). The Golden Bears were 4-1 and won the Region 8 playoff in Tallahassee, Fla., beating host team Florida State, 3-2 in 10 innings after losing 2-1 to the Seminoles in the semi-final to force a second game Sunday. The Bears are making their sixth WCWS appearance and third consecutive trip to Oklahoma City. In Tallahassee, Cal beat Connecticut 2-0, Florida Atlantic 2-0, and 1-0 over region top seed FSU to make it to the championship round. Arizona beat California in all three of its league games this season -- a pair of narrow 2-1 victories on April 21 and 22 in Tucson and a 5-0 shutout (Jennie Finch) in Berkeley on May 4. California was ranked No. 6 in the final National Fastpitch Coaches Association poll. Cal set a school record with a 32-0 start and finished 6-14 in Pac-10 play for seventh place.

World Series Field

Eight teams won Regionals to advance to Oklahoma City. The teams and their CWS seedings (set prior to the beginning of regional play) are: No. 1 Arizona (61-4), No. 2 UCLA (59-5), No. 3 LSU (57-9), No. 4 Michigan (43-15-1), No. 5 Oklahoma (49-7), No. 6 Stanford (52-14-1), No. 7 Iowa (49-12) and No. 8 California (53-18). Some quick addition shows the combined records of the teams is 423-84, a winning percentage of .833. Arizona, UCLA, LSU, Oklahoma, Stanford and Iowa played in regional action on their home fields, while two teams won on the road. Michigan was sent to Tuscaloosa, Ala., and California emerged from a regional at Tallahassee, Fla.

Pac-10 Flavor

Seven conference teams played in the NCAA tournament, and four advanced to the College World Series, testimony to the strength of the conference. All league teams but the Oregon Ducks were ranked throughout the season.

Final 2001 Conference Standings

1. Arizona	19-2
2. UCLA	16-5
3. Stanford	11-10
4. Washington	11-10
5. Oregon State	10-10
6. Arizona State	9-12
7. California	6-14
8. Oregon	1-20

(USC and Washington state do not play softball)

All NCAA Region 1 Honors

UA placed five players on the All-Region 1 Team – Most Outstanding Player Toni Mascarenas, Lauren Bauer, Mackenzie Vandergeest, Jennie Finch and Nicole Giordano.

College World Series Habit

Arizona is appearing in its 14th consecutive College World Series and 15th consecutive NCAA tournament under coach Mike Candrea, one of the top Division I winning coaches in history. The Cats enter 2001 CWS action as winners of five of the past nine national titles (the '95 UCLA title was officially vacated by the NCAA). Additionally, Arizona also played in the 1974 and 1975 College World Series of the former Association of Intercollegiate Athletics for Women under coach Judy Spray and in 1977 and 1979 under coach Ginny Parrish. Candrea's last 14 teams have been regional champions and won the NCAA title in 1991, 1993, 1994, 1996 and 1997. Arizona was a regional host in 1988, 1990, 1992-95, 1997, 1998, 1999, 2000 and this year. The Cats have played near the top of the game since Candrea took the job in 1986.

Arizona's Record in NCAA Play

Arizona has a 78-22 overall record in NCAA Tournament games.

Arizona is 42-5 in NCAA Regional games.

Arizona is 36-17 in NCAA College World Series games.

Arizona has played in Regionals in the state of Arizona all but one year in its 15 tournament appearances.

Strength of Schedule

In all, Arizona played 34 games this year against teams picked for the NCAA Tournament and was 31-3. The Cats were 17-2 in league play and 14-1 in non-conference play against NCAA teams. Against ranked teams, Arizona posted a 21-2 record. The losses came to No. 14 Washington (0-1) and No. 2 UCLA (0-3). Both losses were on the road.

College World Series History

Arizona or UCLA have won 11 of the last 13 NCAA titles. In 1987 Texas A&M won after the first year Arizona began play in the Pac-10 Conference. In 1998 Fresno State of the Big West beat UA to break the Pac-10's grip on the crown. In 2000 Oklahoma of the Big 12 took it all. Arizona has won five titles in the 19-year history of the Women's College World Series (1991, 1993, 1994, 1996, 1997). UCLA won the title eight times since softball became a Division I championships sport in 1982 (1982, 1984, 1985, 1988, 1989, 1990, 1992, 1999). Texas A&M won twice (1983, 1987). Cal State Fullerton won once (1986). UCLA was made to vacate its 1995 championship because of NCAA violations.

Arizona in the National Fastpitch Coaches Association/USA Today poll

Arizona was in the top three slots all year in the NFCA poll and was No. 1 in the final poll. The Cats have been ranked steadily since 1988.

Winning Streaks

Arizona was undefeated at home in Hillenbrand Stadium this year, with a 36-0 record. The Cats have a 48-game home winning streak dating to a loss to Stanford on April 9, 2000. Arizona brings a current 22-game winning streak to Oklahoma City. The Cats started the year 31-0 before their first loss to Louisiana-Lafayette in Fullerton, Calif., then won three before a second loss at that Kia Classic tournament, to Texas. UA then won five games before its conference losses on the road at UCLA and Washington.

All-Pacific-10 Conference

Arizona placed eight players on the 2001 All-Pacific-10 Conference Softball Team. Junior pitcher Jennie Finch was named Pitcher of the year. First-team selections were senior outfielder Lauren Bauer and senior third baseman Toni Mascarenas. Second-team picks were senior outfielder Nicole Giordano, senior pitcher Becky Lemke, and freshman first baseman Leneah Manuma and outfielder/catcher Mackenzie Vandergeest. Honorable mention honors went to senior catcher Lindsey Collins. Mike Candrea was named Co-Coach of the Year along with John Rittman of Stanford. Arizona oddly had only two **Pac-10 Weekly** honors -- Leneah Manuma (3/2) and pitcher of the week Jennie Finch (4/9). Manuma also was named NFCA player of the week (3/2).

All Pacific Region

Arizona had five players earn All-Pacific Region honors in 2001. First-team selections were pitcher Jennie Finch, third baseman Toni Mascarenas, designated player/first baseman Leneah Manuma and outfielder Lauren Bauer. Outfielder Nicole Giordano earned second-team all-region honors. Bauer (1998-1st team, 1999-2nd team, 2000-2nd), Giordano (1999-2nd team, 2000-1st) and Mascarenas (1998-1st team, 2000-1st) were repeat selections.

College World Series Veterans

Because of the Wildcats' tradition of making it to the classic with regularity, Arizona has a group of players with College World Series playing experience. One has earned All-CWS honors -- senior third baseman Toni Mascarenas. Others with starting experience in the Series include Arizona outfielders Lauren Bauer and Nicole Giordano, catcher Lindsey Collins, pitchers Jennie Finch and Becky Lemke, shortstop Allison

Andrade and then first baseman Erika Hanson. Infielder Lisha Ribellia also has seen WCWS action.

College World Series Experience

Arizona brings a team with a combined total of 58 games played in CWS action.

Here's a rundown of how current players have fared:

Player	G	AB	R	H	RBI	Notes
Mascarenas	11	27	5	10	8	2 HRs, 2 doubles, 2-2 SB, sac
Giordano	11	31	6	8	0	2 sac hit, 2-3 SB
Bauer	11	31	3	9	0	six-game CWS hitting streak, 1998/1999; 3-3 SB
Collins	11	16	2	4	3	two home runs in one game vs. Cal, 1999; 2 sac
Hanson	7	13	0	2	0	2 sac hits
Finch	7	19	1	1	0	
Pitching:						
Lemke	6	31.2 innings, 20 hits, 32 strikeouts, 1-4 record				
Finch	2	10.1 innings, 9 hits, 4 earned runs, 7 strikeouts, 1-1 record				

Probable Arizona Lineup:

24 Lauren Bauer	cf
4 Nicole Giordano	lf
32 Toni Mascarenas	3b
9 Leneah Manuma	dh/1b
27 Jennie Finch	1b/p
42 Lindsey Collins	c
52 Mackenzie Vandergeest	rf
25 Allison Andrade	ss
9 Lisha Ribellia	2b
00 Becky Lemke	p

Pronunciation

bow-er (as in pow)
gee-or-dah-no
mas-car-eh-nuss
la-nay-uh ma-nu-ma
on-drah-day
lee-sha ra-bell-ya
lem-kee

Off-the bench: Jenny Gladding-p/dp, Erika Hanson-dp/of -- also may bat in ninth hole if Finch is pitching; Kim Balkan-rf/dp, Teresa Demeter, p/ph. Freshman Candace Abrams is redshirting 2001.

Arizona Home Softball Attendance

For its four NCAA Regional dates May 17-20, Arizona drew crowds of 1,640 on Thursday, 2,312 on Friday, 2,286 on Saturday and 2,431 on Sunday for a total of 10,309. Arizona's 26 home dates in 2001 drew 37,933, an average of 1,458 a game. A seated capacity is about 2,750. The Cats broke their single-game attendance record this season with 3,004 fans for the UCLA game on May 11.

Arizona 2001 Softball Notes...

Hitting Streaks... Lauren Bauer brings a 16-game hitting streak to Oklahoma City and had a CWS hitting streak of six games... Here are the Cats' current/longest hitting streaks this year: Bauer (16/16), Giordano (8/14), Mascarenas (5/1), Collins (0/7), Finch (1/11), Andrade (0/4), Manuma (1/5), Vandergeest (1/11)..

Home Runs... Second baseman Lisha Ribellia, who typically is the defo in many lineups and does not bat, hit her first career home run against Southwest Texas State in the NCAA Regional. All but lefty slapper Erika Hanson have a home run for UA. And Arizona's 121 home runs is an NCAA single-season record. Toni Mascarenas hit two in the regional title game to give her 22, a team best and sixth-highest season total in Arizona history. Freshmen sluggers Leneah Manuma (19) and Mackenzie Vandergeest (19) also hit the single-season chart this year, tied for No. 10. The latter two pushed a handful of sluggers off the Top 10 chart -- Leah Braatz (18 in 1994) and four players with 16 single-season homers -- Leticia Pineda (1997), Jenny Dalton (1995), Jennie Finch (2000) and Lindsey Collins (2000)... Seven different players had 10 or more home runs this year...

...**Arizona hit .352 in Regional play**, which gives Arizona a .346 mark on the season. Toni Mascarenas led the Cats during Regionals hitting .667 with eight hits, including two doubles and two home runs...

...All the home runs, 91 doubles and seven triples give the team a .610 **slugging percentage**, which would be a school record, breaking the mark of .608 set by the 1995 team that clouted the previous NCAA record 100 round trippers and the school-record 111 doubles... Freshman pitcher Jenny Gladding, with nine home runs in 55 at bats, has the team's highest slugging percentage at .927, while every-day starter Toni Mascarenas checks in at .826

...Becky Lemke and Jennie Finch combined for Arizona's 40th **shutout** of the season against Texas Tech. The school record in Division I play is 41 by the 1992 team before the advent of the lively ball and the high-tech bats now used... Finch checked in with 18 solo and one combined shutouts, while Lemke had seven solo shutouts and one combined...

...The team **earned run average** of 0.73 would be the fourth best season mark in Arizona history if it held up and is the Wildcats' best mark since the 1991 club checked in with a 0.63 mark. The 1992 team has the school record of 0.35... Jennie Finch led the way with a mark of 0.38, which would be the No. 2 single-season mark in UA history. Freshman Jenny Gladding was next at 0.92 and Becky Lemke put up a 1.07 mark, her best earned run average in her four years as a top 1-2 pitcher...

...With one additional **pitching victory**, junior pitcher Jennie Finch could hit the UA single-season chart. She takes a 29-0 mark to Oklahoma City. No. 10 on the list is Debby Day's 30-8 mark from 1991. No Arizona pitcher on the chart has gone undefeated. Nancy Evans was 17-0 as a freshman in 1994, the last UA hurler to go undefeated with 15 or more decisions... Becky Lemke's career record of 102-19 puts her at No. 3 on Arizona's career victories chart behind Evans (124-8 from 1994-98) and Carrie Dolan (103-13 from 1994 to 1997). She passed UA's 1994 Honda Award Winner Susie Parra (101-9 from 1991 to 1994) in the last weeks of the season... **Call 911**: Lemke owns Arizona's all-time strikeouts record with a career total of 911. She broke the record of 874 held by Parra...

...The team's **fielding percentage** of .981 would be a school record if it held up. Catcher Lindsey Collins' 1.000 rate gives her a chance to break the school career record of .995 set by first baseman Amy Chellevoid from 1992-95...

...Lauren Bauer became the seventh player in Arizona history to eclipse the single-season **100-hits** barrier last weekend. She has 104, No. 5 on the chart behind All-Americans Alison McCutcheon (132 in 1997 and 117 in 1994) and Amy Chellevoid (122 in 1994 and 112 in 1995)... Nicole Giordano's 355 career hits put her at No. 3 on the UA chart behind McCutcheon (405) and Chellevoid (371)...

2001 Arizona Player Capsules (by batting order)

Lauren Bauer 24

Senior

Center fielder

...Named First team All-Pac-10 and first-team All-Pacific Region... Also named to the Region 1 All-Tournament team... Hit .562 in Regional play with 9 hits, 5 runs and 1 RBI... Goes into the CWS with a 16 game hitting streak... Leads the team in batting average at .450... Hit two homers in successive games against Cal and Stanford on May 4 and May 5... Leads the conference in batting average and runs scored... Left-handed slap or power hitter... Team-high 37 stolen bases in 42 attempts... Leaves Arizona with the number two spot on the career stolen bases record with 132... Moved to leadoff spot in April of last year and the switch brought her short-game skills more into play... Leads the team in runs with 76... Leads the team in hits with 104... Career batting average of .417, which would be No. 3 on Arizona's all-time chart... Had 12 games with multiple RBI... 33 multiple-hit games, including 15 games with three hits...

Nicole Giordano 4

Senior

Left fielder

...Was named second-team All-Pac-10, second-team All-Pacific Region... Also named to the Region 1 All-Tournament team... A left-handed slap hitter with gap power, Giordano typically is the set-up hitter for the big guns behind her... Batted in the No. 2 spot all year and moved runners with outstanding frequency, hitting a team-high .451 with runners on base... Arizona's No. 3 leader in career hits with 355... Had a home run in the last game of the season against Washington... Had a season batting average of .400... She was second on the team in hits with 80... Career batting average of .413 would be No. 5 on Arizona's chart behind multiple All-Americans Leah O'Brien, Alison McCutcheon and Bauer... Hit .400 in the NCAA regionals... Giordano had 27 multiple-hit games including a team-high 18 with two hits... Had a 13-game hitting streak after the opening game, then a 14-game streak during early March...

Toni Mascarenas 32

Senior

Third baseman

...Was named first-team All-Pac-10, first-team All-Pacific Region... Earned Most Outstanding Player honors in NCAA Region 1 and punctuated the award with two home runs in the championship game against Southwest Texas State... Prolific gap-power hitter but also the team leader with six sacrifice bunts and six sacrifice flies... Leads the team in home runs with 22, including the back-to-back blasts in the Regional game... Leads the team in runs batted in with 77... Leads the team in multiple RBI games with 23... Mascarenas earned All-WCWS honors last year when she hit .455... Her 238 career RBI are No. 5 on Arizona's all-time chart behind four big home run hitters -- Jenny Dalton (328), Leah Braatz (322), Laura Espinoza (314) and Leticia Pineda (240)... By contrast, Mascarenas "only" has 40 career homers -- which puts her at No. 5 behind that crew...

Leneah Manuma 9

Freshman

First base/designated player

...Was named second-team All-Pac-10, first-team All-Pacific Region... Redshirted last year after knee surgery following fall 2000 ball... She has 19 home runs to break the freshman home run record set by Leah Braatz (18) in 1994... She was named NFCA and Pac-10 player of the week on March 5 after a 9-for-16 week when she hit three homers, drove in seven runs and scored eight times... Likely to be one of the all-time home run hitters in Arizona history... Routinely knocks balls against a building 40 feet beyond Arizona's fences in center and right fields... Enters the CWS with a .364 batting average... Had 14 multiple-RBI games and five twice... On the season she had 46 runs and 67 hits... Team-high 31 walks, often on purpose if not intentionally... Intentionally walked four times... When not playing first base she is usually the designated player...

Jennie Finch 27

Junior

Pitcher/first baseman

...Earned Pac-10 Pitcher of the Year honors... Perfect 29-0 record entering the WCWS... Also a first-team All-Pacific Region selection... Named to the Region 1 All-Tournament team... She was named Pac-10 pitcher of the week once, after a 12-strikeout, 11-inning two-hitter against Arizona State and a victory over ASU in relief... Threw a no-hitter at Oregon State April 1, her fifth career no-hitter... Her ERA of 0.38 is among national leaders and would be UA's No. 2 figure in history... She held batters to a .132 combined average... Had 18 shutouts and combined for another with Becky Lemke during Regional action against Texas Tech... Allowed only 10 earned runs all year... Averaged 9.6 strikeouts per seven innings... Struck out 253 batters on the season... Finch had a season-high 14 strikeouts twice, and 13 three other times... She hit 11 home runs and drove in 57 runs... Finished the season with three grand slams among her 11 homers... Plays first when not pitching and takes a .323 average to Oklahoma City... Tied for team lead with two triples... Eight sac hits is No. 2 on the team...

Lindsey Collins 42

Senior

Catcher

...Right-handed power-hitting catcher whose special contribution is outstanding defense... Has not committed an error this year and together with last season has made one error in 1,105 chances... Threw out seven runners on 28 steal attempts... She received All-Pac-10 honorable mention honors... Collins' 10 home runs this year gives her a career total of 40, tying her with Toni Mascarenas for the No. 5 spot on UA's all-time chart... Her 10th homer of the year came in NCAA Region 1 play against Texas Tech... Had a seven-game hitting streak, 11 multiple-RBI games and 13 multiple-hit games... Collins' longest hitting streak of the season was seven games...

Mackenzie Vandergeest 53

Freshman

Right fielder/catcher

...Vandergeest made a bid for newcomer of the year honors, cementing a role as the starting Right fielder a month into the season... Earned second-team All-Pac-10 honors... Named to the Region 1 All-Tournament team... Had two home runs and five RBI in Regional play... Hit .353 on the season... Set a UA freshman home run record (with Manuma) at 19... Had 17 multiple-hit games and 16-multiple RBI games... Home run at UCLA April 7 broke the game open and helped give UA a 4-0 victory. Her home run at Arizona State April 25 broke open the game and helped give UA a 5-0 victory... Longest hitting streak of the season was 11 games... Arizona's catcher of the future... Started 10 games behind the plate, once at third, once in left field, six times as DP and 39 times in rightfield...

Allison Andrade 25

Senior

Shortstop

...Arizona played 65 games and Andrade started every single game at short... Committed only seven errors in 166 chances at a critical position, for a .958 mark... Candrea recruited Andrade out of junior college and she's been the starting shortstop for every game since... Had a number of clutch hitting games including a doubleheader sweep against Fresno State April 18, when she hit three homers in a five-for-six evening, with four RBI... Also had two homers against Baylor... Overall, chipped in 12 home runs in UA's record-setting onslaught... Added five doubles... A very dangerous hitter for the eighth spot in the order... On-base percentage of .345, with 32 walks, second only to Mascarenas... Had 8 multiple hit games and eight games with two or more RBI..

Erika Hanson 7

Senior - First baseman/DP

...One of UA's eight seniors, Hanson has been an all-purpose utility player who's seen action at first base, in left field, right field, as the designated player and pinch-hitter or pinch-runner... Her 19 starts in 40 games played all came in the nine spot as a lefty slapper... Hit .478 when leading off an inning, in 23 opportunities... Also has a .472 mark for advancing runners to bring the top of the order to the plate with runners in scoring position... Turned in a good year at .270, her best season... Has played in 193 games...

Lisha Ribellia 8

Sophomore - Second baseman

...A sophomore coming off a year of role playing, Ribellia took over the second baseman role with a firm grip, starting all 65 games... Batted in the ninth spot in the order 23 times, otherwise serves as the defo for Manuma, Hanson or Balkan... Frequently runs for the DP in crunch situations... Had 12 hits and scored 18 runs... Hit her first home run against Southwest Texas State in the Region 1 Championship game... Able to hit as a right-handed gap hitter, but was taught to be a lefty slapper this year as well...

Jenny Gladding 15

Freshman - Right-handed Pitcher

... Gladding finished an outstanding freshman season in the circle with a 14-2 record and 0.92 ERA, and gave Candrea a very reliable third option... Threw her first no-hitter against Creighton in March... Struck out 148 batters and held opponents to a 1.39 batting average... Averages 10.4 strikeouts per seven innings... Clearly an all-around player of the future, she has a .927 slugging percentage and hit .364... Nine home runs and 15 RBI in 55 at bats... One of UA's top 2001 recruits, she'll blossom next year with 30 pitching starts and action possibly at first base... Hit two homers vs. Indiana State... Pitching losses came at UCLA and to Texas... Lefty hitter, right-handed pitcher

Kim Balkan 31

Freshman - Right fielder

... Balkan could be one of UA's four-five-six hitters of the future, batting somewhere in the order where her right-handed power will come into play... Played in 42 games, with 29 starts -- 18 in rightfield and 11 as the designated player.... Candrea runs a lineup switch involving Balkan and Manuma at times, to create the temporary DP, turning in a lineup with Balkan listed as the starting first baseman and Manuma as the DP, then switching... Had four home runs and hit .286, driving in 18 runs.. Against Arizona State on April 14 with the game in extra innings, Balkan hit the game-winning home run...

Becky Lemke 00

Senior - Right-handed Pitcher

...Lemke threw a three-hitter and struck out 14 against Southwest Texas State in the NCAA Regional title game... She earned second-team All-Pacific-10 honors... Enters the WCWS with an 18-2 record in 2001, giving her 102 career victories and making her one of only four Arizona pitchers to eclipse the century mark... Earlier this year she became Arizona's new career strikeouts leader and now has 911. She surpassed 1994 National Player of the Year Susie's Parra's 872 strikeouts as a Wildcat from 1991 to 1994... Does not have a career at-bat but nearly had one in NCAA Region 1 play when Candrea threw Lemke in relief and had to put her in the eight hole. She was on deck when the last out of the inning was made... Threw a 7-inning no-hitter against Florida Atlantic to open the season, then combined with Teresa Demeter to no-hit Bowling Green on Feb. 16, and no-hit the University of San Diego on March 13... Including the combined effort, Lemke has six career no-hitters... She also threw three consecutive one-hitters in late February/early March... Went 18-2 on the season with 199 strikeouts and seven shutouts and two combined shutouts... Averages 10 K per 7 IP...

Teresa Demeter - Candace Abrams

Senior - PH/P

Freshman Catcher

...Demeter combined (1 inning to close) on a no-hitter with Becky Lemke against Bowling Green... Played in two other contests, with a hitless inning against McNeese State... Outstanding team leader without a

big share of playing time... Abrams, a freshman, is redshirting and has been UA's bullpen catcher...

Arizona Coach Mike Candrea

Arizona's mentor is making his 15th consecutive foray into post-season play and brings an Arizona club to the Women's College World Series for the 14th consecutive year. That's in 16 years as UA's head coach.

With 867 victories in those years, the bottom line in his resume is: winning. About 54 games per year and 60 or more victories in five of the past eight years. This year it's 61-4. In Tucson, it's what people have come to expect, but it's still a very remarkable season -- this or any year under his stewardship.

His work this year earned him Pac-10 Coach of the Year honors (shared with Stanford's John Rittman), his 15th conference, regional or national coaching honor.

Blessed with a nucleus of All-Americans in Lauren Bauer, Toni Mascarenas, Nicole Giordano, Lindsey Collins, Jennie Finch and Becky Lemke, Candrea filled in other spots with proven veterans and some new talent to field a team which had winning streaks of 31 games to open the year and a current 22-game streak to complete pre-WCWS action.

It's an annual rite at Arizona: win a bunch of games, win a regional, go to the Women's College World Series. It simply isn't that easy, but Candrea has made it seem so.

He led UA to NCAA Championships five times in the 1990s (1991, '93, '94, '96, '97) and his teams have won six of the past ten Pacific-10 Conference titles (1992, 1994, 1995, 1997, 1998, 2001) and finished second the other four years. This year's club took the league title by beating the big guns down the stretch -- Stanford twice on the road, UCLA (once) and Washington (twice) at home in the closing weeks.

Candrea won his 800th game in 2000, only the eighth NCAA softball coach in history to do so. Now people are looking to the next plateau -- the 1,000th victory.

He was honored last week as Pac-10 Co-Coach of the Year, his seventh league citation since it began play in 1987.

Candrea, 45, carries a UA and career record of 867-172, a winning percentage of .834. It's hard to believe, *but his winning percentage went up four points this year*. It's No. 2 all time and No. 1 among active Division I coaches.

Three times he has been named National Coach of the Year (NFCA '94, '96, '97). He was elected to the National Fastpitch Coaches Association Hall of Fame in 1996. His teams' 67 victories in 1998, 66 victories in 1994 and 64 victories in 1995 are in the top five in the NCAA record book.

His players have earned 54 All-America playing honors and six Academic All-America honors, plus he has coached three players to the Honda Softball Award as the national player of the year.

Arizona Assistant Coaches

Candrea's assistant are Stacy (Engel) Iveson, former UA All-Pac-10 catcher (Arizona '90), who works with catchers and pitchers; and Nancy Evans (Arizona '98), the Honda Softball Award winner in 1998 who works with pitchers. It's a fine staff of young people who combined have 24 years of game or coaching experience at the most opportune of times -- the World Series.

Stacy Iveson was on Candrea's first four Arizona teams (1986-89) and her playing career parallels the Wildcats' rise to national prominence as the team began its string of NCAA appearances in 1987.

Evans, the 1998 Honda Award winner as the National Player of the Year, won 124 games as one of the top pitchers in NCAA history. She owns UA's single-season record with twin 36-2 records in 1999. She's a candidate for the U.S. Olympic team in 2004.