

Big Ten Men's Basketball Season in Review

4/24/2014 12:00:00 AM



April 24, 2014

The Big Ten's Highest Honor:

Ohio State's Aaron Craft was named the school's male recipient of the Big Ten Medal of Honor. This year, the Big Ten is celebrating 100 years of the Big Ten Medal of Honor. The conference's most prestigious award, the Big Ten Medal of Honor was first awarded in 1915 to one student-athlete from the graduating class of each university who had "attained the greatest proficiency in athletics and scholastic work." In the 99 years of the Medal of Honor, over 1,300 student-athletes have earned this distinction, including 175 men's basketball players. Schools will continue announcing their Big Ten Medal of Honor winners through June.

All-America Group:

Four Big Ten standouts were named All-Americans by the National Association of Basketball Coaches (NABC), Associated Press (AP), John R. Wooden Award, Sporting News and/or USA Today. Michigan's Nik Stauskas was named to the 10-member Wooden team, was a first-team NABC All-American, collected second-team AP All-America honors, was a Sporting News second-team All-American and collected third-team All-America honors from USA Today. Michigan State's Gary Harris and Adreian Payne were both named named AP All-America honorable mention selections, with Harris also collecting honorable mention honors from USA Today, along with Wisconsin's Sam Dekker.

Gettin' Defensive:

Ohio State's Aaron Craft was tabbed the NABC National Defensive Player of the Year. He ended his career as the Big Ten's all-time leader in steals with 337. Craft became the third Big Ten player, and second straight, to win the Defensive Player of the Year award after Indiana's Victor Oladipo claimed the honor last year. Ohio State's Greg Oden also won the NABC Defensive Player of the Year award in 2007. Craft is just the third point guard to garner the honor since the award's inception in 1987.

Craft and Crawford Named Academic All-Americans:

Northwestern's Drew Crawford and Ohio State's Aaron Craft were named first team Capital One Academic All-Americans. In addition, Craft became just the third student-athlete to repeat as Division I men's basketball Academic All-America of the Year. Craft was named the 2013 Capital One Academic All-America of the Year and was a first-team Academic All-American in 2012 and 2013. He became the fourth Big Ten student-athlete to earn first team honors three times.

An NCAA to Remember:

Six Big Ten teams were selected to the NCAA Tournament, marking the seventh time in the last nine years that the conference has had six or more teams in the bracket and the sixth straight year the Big Ten has had five or more teams advance to the NCAA Tournament. Michigan State received the conference's automatic bid after winning the Big Ten Tournament, while Iowa, Michigan, Nebraska, Ohio State and Wisconsin received at-large berths.

Final Four Mettle:

Wisconsin's Bo Ryan became the fifth active Big Ten coach to guide a team to the Final Four, joining Indiana's Tom Crean, Michigan's John Beilein, Michigan State's Tom Izzo and Ohio State's Thad Matta.

Big Ten Final Four History:

With Wisconsin's berth in the national semifinals, Big Ten programs have now combined for 44 Final Four appearances, including five in the last six seasons and eight in the last 10 years. The Badgers' berth in the national semifinals came on the heels of Michigan's 2013 appearance in the Final Four, Ohio State's run to the Final Four in 2012, and Michigan State's back-to-back national semifinal appearances in 2009 and 2010. Nine of the conference's 12 teams have made at least one Final Four appearance.

Big Ten Standouts Earn All-Region Honors:

Michigan, Michigan State and Wisconsin were all well-represented on the respective Regional All-Tournament Teams. Michigan's Nik Stauskas and Caris LeVert were named to the Midwest Regional All-Tournament team, Michigan State's Gary Harris and Adreian Payne were members of the East Regional All-Tournament team and Wisconsin's Frank Kaminsky and Trvon Jackson were recognized in the West Region, with Kaminsky earning Most Outstanding Player honors. Stauskas earned his second straight All-Regional honor after being recognized in 2013.

Big Ten Elite:

Michigan, Michigan State and Wisconsin all made regional final appearances, marking the third time in the last 15 years that three conference teams advanced to the Elite Eight. The last time the feat was accomplished was in 2005, when Illinois, Michigan State and Wisconsin all appeared in the regional finals, with the Fighting Illini and Spartans advancing to the Final Four.

How Sweet It Is:

For the third straight year, the Big Ten sent at least three teams to the Sweet 16, as Michigan, Michigan State and Wisconsin all competed in the regional semifinals. Indiana, Michigan, Michigan State and Ohio State advanced to the Sweet 16 in 2013, while the Hoosiers, Spartans, Buckeyes and Wisconsin all made a run to the regional semifinals in 2012. The Big Ten has seen at least one team advance to the Sweet 16 in each of the last eight years.

Minnesota Captures NIT Championship:

Minnesota secured the Big Ten's 10th NIT Championship, defeating SMU in the title game at Madison Square Garden. Under the leadership of first-year head coach Richard Pitino, Minnesota set a school record for overall wins with 25 triumphs. Penn State was the most recent Big Ten squad to capture the NIT championship, having won the crown in 2009.

Big Ten Champions:

Michigan finished the Big Ten season with a 15-3 record, clinching its first outright Big Ten Championship since the 1985-86 season. The Wolverines have won 14 Big Ten Championships, including two in the last three seasons after earning a share of the title in 2012. Michigan also earned the top seed in the Big Ten Tournament for the first time in program history.

Michigan State Wins Tournament Title:

Third-seeded Michigan State captured the Big Ten Tournament title in Indianapolis, defeating Northwestern in the quarterfinals. Wisconsin in the semifinal round and Michigan in the championship game. It marked the Spartans' fourth Big Ten Tournament Championship and their second in the past three years.

Final Rankings:

The Big Ten was well-represented in the final USA Today Coaches Top 25 poll with three teams among the top 10, the most among all conferences. Wisconsin finished the season ranked No. 4 in the poll, followed by No. 6 Michigan and No. 8 Michigan State. Ohio State and Minnesota also received votes in the final ballot.

Crossing Through the Turnstiles:

For the fifth consecutive year, the Big Ten saw an increase in average attendance with 13,389 patrons per contest, the highest average since at least the 1999-2000 season. The Big Ten's average attendance ranks third since at least 1971-72, trailing only the 1989-90 (13,455) and 1999-2000 (13,443) campaigns. In addition, for the first time since 2000-01 and 2001-02, the Big Ten drew an average of at least 13,000 fans per home game in back-to-back seasons. During Big Ten play, the conference eclipsed 1.5 million fans (1,513,266) for the first time in conference history, and averaged more than 14,000 fans per conference home game (14,012) for just the third time since at least the 1962-63 season. Heading into the 2013-14 season, the Big Ten had led the nation in men's basketball attendance in each of the last 37 years.

Piling up the Wins:

After reaching the national semifinals, Wisconsin finished the year with 30 victories, marking the third time the Badgers have reached the milestone under head coach Bo Ryan. In addition, Michigan State finished the season with 29 wins, while Michigan won 28 games. The Big Ten was the only conference in the country to have three teams finish the season with 28 or more triumphs. Last season, the Big Ten was the only conference to have three teams win at least 29 contests.

Seven Big Ten Teams Boast 20 or More Triumphs:

Seven Big Ten teams ended the 2013-14 season with 20 or more wins - Wisconsin (30), Michigan State (29), Michigan (28), Minnesota (25), Ohio State (25), Illinois (20) and Iowa (20). In addition, Nebraska finished the campaign with 19 victories. The Big Ten has seen at least seven teams collect 20 or more wins in each of the last three seasons, including eight squads during the 2012-13 campaign.

A Season of Top-25 Matchups:

Seven Big Ten teams made at least one appearance in either the Associated Press (AP) or USA Today Coaches top 25 polls throughout the 2013-14 campaign. The Big Ten saw 16 matchups between ranked foes during the conference season. Iowa played in a conference-high seven top-25 games during Big Ten play, while Michigan, Michigan State and Wisconsin each played six games against ranked opponents in conference action. The Badgers went 5-1 versus top 25 foes during the Big Ten season.

700 Wins for Beilein and Ryan:

Michigan's John Beilein and Wisconsin's Bo Ryan both achieved a significant milestone by recording their 700th head coaching win. Beilein collected his 700th victory in the third round NCAA Tournament victory over Texas, while Ryan eclipsed the 700-win plateau against Minnesota in the quarterfinals of the Big Ten Tournament. Beilein and Ryan became the fifth and sixth active NCAA Division I coaches to reach 700 wins, joining Duke's Mike Krzyzewski, Syracuse's Jim Boheim, North Carolina's Roy Williams and West Virginia's Bob Huggins.

Beilein Collects District Coach of the Year Honors:

Michigan's John Beilein was named NABC District 7 and USBWA District V Coach of the Year. Beilein guided Michigan to its first outright Big Ten title since 1986, the top seed in the Big Ten Tournament and into the NCAA Tournament Elite Eight for the second straight year. Beilein was also named Big Ten Coach of the Year by the media.

Big Ten Standouts Garner All-District Honors:

Thirteen Big Ten players were named All-District performers by the NABC and USBWA:

NABC

District 7 First Team

Yogi Ferrell, Indiana
Roy Devyn Marble, Iowa
Nik Stauskas, Michigan
Gary Harris, Michigan State
Terran Petteway, Nebraska

District 7 Second Team

Keith Appling, Michigan State
Adreian Payne, Michigan State
Drew Crawford, Northwestern
Aaron Craft, Ohio State
D.J. Newbill, Penn State

USBWA - District V

PLAYER OF THE YEAR: Nik Stauskas, Michigan
COACH OF THE YEAR: John Beilein, Michigan

District V Team

Yogi Ferrell, Indiana
Caris LeVert, Michigan
Nik Stauskas, Michigan
Gary Harris, Michigan State
Adreian Payne, Michigan State
Aaron Craft, Ohio State
Sam Dekker, Wisconsin
Frank Kaminsky, Wisconsin

Filling it Up:

Big Ten teams posted 105 games scoring at least 80 points this season. Eight conference teams averaged at least 70 points per game on the year: Iowa (81.5), Michigan State (75.5), Michigan (73.9), Wisconsin (73.5), Indiana (72.2), Purdue (72.2), Minnesota (71.4) and Penn State (70.9). The Hawkeyes ended the season ranked ninth in the nation in scoring offense.

Big Ten Standouts:

The 2013-14 All-Big Ten teams and individual award winners were announced in advance of the Big Ten Tournament. Michigan's Nik Stauskas earned Big Ten Player of the Year honors from the conference's coaches and a media panel. Michigan head coach John Beilein claimed Coach of the Year laurels from the media while Nebraska head coach Tim Miles was named Coach of the Year by his peers. Indiana's Noah Vonleh picked up Freshman of the Year accolades from the coaches and media. Ohio State's Aaron Craft was named the Defensive Player of the Year while Wisconsin's Nigel Hayes was voted the Sixth Man of the Year by the coaches.

We Are the (Stat) Champions:

Several standouts secured statistical titles in Big Ten conference games only during the 2013-14 season:

- Nebraska's Terran Petteway became the first Cornhusker to lead the Big Ten in scoring (18.6 ppg).
- Indiana's Noah Vonleh became the first freshman since Ohio State's Greg Oden in 2006-07 to lead the conference in rebounding (8.8 rpg) and the first Hoosier to lead the Big Ten in caroms since D.J. White in 2007-08.
- Minnesota's Maurice Walker led the Big Ten in field goal percentage (.626), becoming the first Gopher to accomplish the feat since Spencer Tollackson in 2005-06. • Ohio State's Aaron Craft became the second Big Ten player in the past three years to lead the conference in both assists (4.6 apg) and steals (2.7 spg), joining Tim Frazier in 2011-12.
- Craft also became the second Big Ten player since at least 1982-83 to lead the conference in steals in three different seasons, a feat also accomplished by Illinois' Bruce Douglas from 1984-86.
- Purdue's A.J. Hammons led the conference in blocks (2.6 bpg) for the second straight season.
- Wisconsin's Josh Gasser paced the Big Ten in three-point field goal percentage (.492), becoming the first Badger to accomplish the feat since Kirk Penney in 2000-01.
- Indiana's Yogi Ferrell led the conference in three-point field goals (51), becoming the first Hoosier to do so since Robert Vaden in 2005-06.

Good Work:

Michigan's Jordan Morgan and Ohio State's Aaron Craft were named to the 2014 Allstate Good Works Team, a community service honor that recognizes college basketball players who have made a commitment to improving their communities and the lives of others. The Good Works Teams is comprised of 10 student-athletes; five from the NCAA Division I and five from NCAA Divisions II, III and the NAIA.

Stay CLASS-y:

Ohio State's Aaron Craft was named a Senior CLASS Award First-Team All-American in men's basketball. Craft was named one of 10 finalists for the Senior CLASS Award in mid-February along with Penn State's Tim Frazier. An acronym for Celebrating Loyalty and Achievement for Staying in School, the Senior CLASS Award focuses on the total student-athlete and encourages students to use their platform in athletics to make a positive impact as leaders in their communities.

Among the Nation's Best:

Big Ten teams finished the season ranked among the top 10 in the nation in several statistical categories. Iowa ranked ninth in the nation in scoring offense with 81.5 points per game. Michigan was fourth in three-point field goal percentage (.402), Ohio State ranked seventh in three-point field goal defense (.293), Michigan was eighth in free throw percentage (.763), Indiana ranked sixth in the nation in rebound margin (7.6), Michigan State was sixth in assists per game (16.8), Wisconsin ranked sixth in the country in assist/turnover ratio (1.52) while Michigan (1.52) was eighth, the Badgers led the nation in fewest turnovers per game (8.1), while Michigan was seventh (9.3), and the Wolverines led the country in fewest personal fouls per game (14.2), while Wisconsin was second (15.1).