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Falcons Take Share Of Lead Into 2nd Half

Hot-shooting SPU Visits Vikings; Cato Coming On Strong

North to Western. Claiming a share of first place going into the second half of the conference campaign, Seattle Pacific University sets out on a rough stretch of road the next couple weeks. The Falcons (7-2, 11-7), winners in five of their last six, venture north to face Western Washington (5-4, 11-7) Saturday night (Feb. 8). Next week they leave the lower 48 for a couple Great Northwest Athletic Conference bouts in Alaska.

Last time, a turning point. Seattle Pacific will likely need to win two of its next three in order to stay near or atop the cramped GNAC standings, but Bellingham is a tough place to play. Western Washington has beaten SPU in its last two visits and it also dealt the Falcons their only home league defeat Jan. 11, 83-76. Since that time, the two clubs have gone in different directions. First-year Coach **Jeff Hironaka** has righted his ship, thanks to some sharp shooting. Seattle Pacific is likely to leapfrog Western in the regional rankings later this week, moving into the top eight. The Vikings, meanwhile, have slumped, losing three of their last five games. Eight teams from the West Region will qualify for the NCAA Division II tournament next month.

Shoot for first. The Falcons were mired in a shooting (and losing) slump when they last met Western. Since then, Hironaka has tweaked the offense, resulting in better ball movement and sizzling shooting. Seattle Pacific has hit 56 percent from the field in the past six games (all at 50 percent or higher), including 48 percent from three-point range. In the five victories, they have averaged 88.8 points. The sole setback was a road loss to nationally-ranked Humboldt State, yet last week SPU bounced back with home wins over Seattle University (80-66) and Northwest Nazarene (95-58) to tie Humboldt and Alaska Fairbanks for first in the GNAC.

Mo, as in momentum. If the Falcons' recent progress was plotted on a graph it would bear a strong resemblance to the personal chart of point guard **Maurice Cato** (Sr., 6-0, Fairfield, Ca.). Cato's season hit bottom during the first meeting with Western, his third straight game under 10 points. Since that time, his hair-trigger has fired mostly bulls-eyes. In the last six games, Cato has connected on 60 percent of his shots, including 10-19 treys. His best game of the season was saved for Seattle U. He got things rolling early, making four of his first five shots and scoring 13 points in the first 14 minutes. In the second half, he dished five of his season-high seven assists and finished with a season-high 20 points. Cato is the team's leader in three-pointers (27), steals (1.88) and is No. 2 in scoring (11.4) and assists (2.6).

Beyond the numbers. It remains to be seen whether he will earn the league's player of the year award, but certainly no individual has made a better case for MVP than **Yusef Aziz** (Sr., 6-4, Seattle, Wa./Foster). Game in, game out, Aziz has supplied not only the points but many of the intangibles needed for the Falcons to win ballgames. He has finished as the scoring leader in 13, the assist leader in nine and rebounds eight, and is the only GNAC player to rank among the top 11 of all three categories. In the last six games, Aziz has averaged 19.5 points while shooting 58 percent. He totaled 20 points, seven boards and four steals vs. the Redhawks before getting a virtual breather (23 minutes, 12 points) against NNU.

2002-03 MEN'S BASKETBALL

SPU Quick Facts

2002-03 Record—11-7 (GNAC 7-2)

Coach—Jeff Hironaka, 1st year

Coach's Career Record— 11-7

This Week

Sat., Feb. 8, 7 p.m.

vs. Western Washington (5-4, 11-7)

Carver Gym, Bellingham, Wa.

Last Week's Results

at SPU 80, Seattle University 66

at SPU 95, Northwest Nazarene 58

Streaks & Such

The Falcons have shot 50 percent from the field in each of the last six games, winning five and have made 56 percent over that span

Stat de jour

Seattle Pacific is 11-0 when leading at halftime and 11-1 when shooting at least 49 percent from the field

GNAC Standings

	W	L	W	L
Humboldt State	7	2	16	2
Alaska Fairbanks	7	2	14	4
Seattle Pacific	7	2	11	7
Seattle University	6	3	13	5
Western Washington	5	4	11	7
Central Washington	5	4	11	7
Alaska Anchorage	5	4	8	10
Western Oregon	2	7	10	9
Northwest Nazarene	1	8	3	14
Saint Martin's	0	9	0	19

NCAA West Region Poll

1. Humboldt State
2. Cal State San Bernardino
3. Hawaii Hilo
4. BYU Hawaii
5. Cal State Bakersfield
6. Seattle University
7. Western Washington
8. Cal Poly Pomona
9. Alaska Fairbanks
10. **Seattle Pacific**

Mixin' it up. Western is the top rebounding team in the conference but in the first meeting SPU actually owned an edge on the boards. Last week, SPU was a plus-10 in rebounding, thanks in large part to the unsung efforts of interior players like center **Jason Chivers** (So., 6-8, Palmdale, Ca./Highland-L.A. Trade Tech), his backup, **Chris Cohen** (Jr., 6-8, Saint Helens, Or.), and utilityman forward **Gene Woodard** (Sr., 6-4, Edmonds, Wa./O'Dea). Chivers used his long arms and soft hands to snatch 16 rebounds—seven off the offensive glass—and score 21 points. He also passed for six assists vs. SU. Minute-for-minute, Cohen was just as effective, with 16 points and eight rebounds in 24 minutes. That included a career-high 12 points vs. NNU. Woodard, always scrappy underneath, totaled 15 points and eight caroms in 31 minutes off the bench.

Put-backs. **Daniel Sandrin** (Sr., 6-7, Bothell, Wa./Bothell) has quietly raised his performance level in the past three weeks, averaging 10.3 points in the last six outings...**Tony Binetti** (Fr., 6-2, Enumclaw, Wa./Enumclaw) saw 29 minutes of action vs. NNU and responded with a season-high eight assists (no turnovers) and nine points (3-4 3-pointers)...**Jordan Lee** (So., 6-0, University Place, Wa./Life Christian) scored 10 points and had three assists vs. the Crusaders, his best totals since opening night...SPU is 11-0 when leading at halftime and 11-1 when shooting at least 49 percent from the field...SPU is No. 1 in both GNAC 3-point (.426) and overall (.505) field goal accuracy. Oddly, it is still No. 10 at the foul line (.657)...**Adam Harris** (Sr., 6-0, Fox Island, Wa./Gig Harbor) leads the conference in trey accuracy (.520/26-50) while **Jeff Knudson** (Fr., 6-7, Mukilteo, wa./Kamiak) is third (.488/21-43). Aziz ranks No. 6 in GNAC scoring (17.7) and assists (3.7), 10th in steals (1.56) and 11th in rebounding (6.1). Cato is No. 5 in steals and 10th in three-point shooting (.409). Chivers is No. 6 in rebounding (6.6) and eighth in shooting (.544).

Opponent & series notes. Western Washington has proven to be vulnerable at home of late, losing two of its last three there to fall two games off the pace in the standings. Center Mike Palm is among the GNAC top five in scoring (17.9), rebounding (9.3), blocks (1.94) and shooting (.569) and the Vikings rate as the best rebounding team in the league (+7.2). They have won four of the last five meetings with SPU. Over a longer haul, the Falcons have won 20 of 27 and lead the series 59-39.

Missing links. For the latest and best information on Seattle Pacific University athletics, click on the Falcons Online (www.spu.edu/falconsonline). For updated standings and statistics, see the Great Northwest Athletic Conference web site at www.gnacsports.com. Saturday's game will be broadcast live on the internet at www.vikings.com.

SPU Coaches. The longest-serving assistant in program history, **Jeff Hironaka** was selected to succeed Ken Bone as head coach Apr. 30, 2002. A former aide at Idaho State and The Master's, Hironaka joined Bone in 1991 and from there the Falcons won 236 of 253 games, claimed five outright or shared conference championships and qualified for the NCAA tournament eight of the last nine years, including a Final Four advancement in 2000. Hironaka is the second Japanese-American head coach of a four-year collegiate program. **Keith Cooper**, an alumnus of Seattle Pacific, is the staff's top assistant. Cooper previously was an assistant at Central Washington and Pacific Lutheran, and head coach at Federal Way's Decatur High School.

2002-03 Men's Basketball Roster

No.	Name	Pos	Hgt	Yr	Exp	Hometown (High School/Last Coll.)
1	Jordan Lee	G	6-2	So	1V	Tacoma, Wa. (Life Christian)
3	Maurice Cato	G	6-0	Sr	1V	Fairfield, Ca (Fairfield/Skyline)
4	Mike Bushmaker	F	6-7	Fr	RS	Yakima, Wa (Eisenhower)
10	Adam Harris	G	6-0	Sr	3V	Fox Island, Wa. (Gig Harbor)
11	Tony Binetti	G	6-1	Fr	HS	Enumclaw, Wa. (Enumclaw)
15	Jeff Knudson	F	6-7	Fr	RS	Mukilteo, Wa (Kamiak)
21	Yusef Aziz	F	6-4	Sr	1V	Seattle, Wa (Foster/Highline)
22	Jesse Keely	F/C	6-7	Sr	2V	Fircrest, Wa. (Bellarmine/Portland)
30	Gene Woodard	F	6-4	Sr	3V	Edmonds, Wa. (O'Dea)
34	Jason Chivers	C	6-8	So	TR	Palmdale, Ca. (Highland/LA Trade)
40	Daniel Sandrin	F	6-7	Sr	2V	Bothell, Wa. (Bothell/Portland)
50	Chris Cohen	C	6-8	Jr	2V	Saint Helens, Or. (Saint Helens)

√ projected starter

Head Coach: Jeff Hironaka

Assistant Coaches: Keith Cooper, George Parker, Rich King, Michael Johnson

2002-03 Schedule/Results

Date	Opponent	Time
Nov. 8	NW ALL-STARS (Ex.)	W, 108-77
Nov. 15	BLUE ANGELS (Ex.)	W, 117-96
Nov. 22-23	VITAMILK TIP-OFF CLASSIC	
Nov. 22	MINN. DULUTH	W, 80-70
Nov. 23	CENTRAL WASH.	W, 84-81
Nov. 25	WARNER PACIFIC	W, 71-66
Nov. 30	SEATTLE UNIVERSITY	L, 64-70
Dec. 5	at Central Washington*	W, 81-71
Dec. 7	at Saint Martin's*	W, 79-56
Dec. 16-17	River City Shootout (at San Antonio)	
Dec. 16	Missouri Western	L, 65-70
Dec. 17	Pittsburg State	L, 64-70
Dec. 19	at Nevada	L, 80-89
Jan. 3-4	OAK HARBOR FREIGHTLINES CL.	
Jan. 3	UC SANTA CRUZ	W, 95-60
Jan. 4	ROCKY MOUNTAIN	L, 67-83
Jan. 11	WESTERN WASH.*	L, 76-83
Jan. 16	ALASKA ANCHORAGE*W	86-68
Jan. 18	ALASKA FAIRBANKS*W	95-71
Jan. 23	at Western Oregon*	W, 88-77
Jan. 25	at Humboldt State*	L, 70-80
Jan. 30	SEATTLE UNIVERSITY*W	80-66
Feb. 1	N'WEST NAZARENE*W	95-58
Feb. 8	at Western Washington*	7:00
Feb. 13	at Alaska Fairbanks*	8:00
Feb. 15	at Alaska Anchorage*	9:05
Feb. 20	HUMBOLDT STATE*	7:30
Feb. 22	WESTERN OREGON*	7:00
Feb. 27	at Northwest Nazarene*	6:00
Mar. 1	at Seattle University*	7:00
Mar. 6	SAINT MARTIN'S*	7:30
Mar. 8	CENTRAL WASHINGTON*	7:00
Mar. 14-17	NCAA West Regional	
Mar. 28-31	NCAA Elite Eight (at Lakeland, Fl.)	

*Great Northwest Athletic Conference games
All times are Pacific

2002-03 Season Leaders

Scoring

Yusef Aziz	17.7
Maurice Cato	11.4
Jason Chivers	7.8
Daniel Sandrin	7.6
Jesse Keely	7.2
Adam Harris	7.1

Rebounds

Jason Chivers	6.6
Yusef Aziz	6.1

Assists

Yusef Aziz	3.8
Maurice Cato	2.6

Steals

Maurice Cato	1.88
Yusef Aziz	1.56

Blocked Shots

Daniel Sandrin	0.60
Jason Chivers	0.60

Field Goal Percentage

Jason Chivers	.544
Yusef Aziz	.515

Three Point Percentage

Adam Harris	(26-50) .520
Jeff Knudson	(21-43) .488

Free Throw Percentage

Adam Harris	(28-35) .800
Jesse Keely	(26-34) .765

Team	Pts.	Reb	FG%	FT%	3P%
SPU	78.9	35.0	.505	.657	.426
Opp.	71.6	32.7	.449	.683	.349

Seattle Pacific University
2002-03 Men's Basketball Statistics
Record: 11-7/ 7-2 GNAC

Date	Opponent	Score	Site	Attend	Record	Leading Scorer	Leading Rebounder
11/22	Minn.-Duluth	W 80- 70	H Seattle, Wa.	1075	1- 0	15- Lee/Knudson	8- Chris Cohen
11/23	Central Washington	W 84- 81	H Seattle, Wa.	875	2- 0	32- Yusef Aziz	8- Jason Chivers
11/25	Warner Pacific	W 71- 66	H Seattle, Wa.	415	3- 0	19- Yusef Aziz	8- Jesse Keely
11/30	Seattle University	64- 70 L	H Seattle, Wa.	575	3- 1	21- Yusef Aziz	11- Yusef Aziz
12/ 5 *	Central Washington	W 81- 71	H Ellensburg, Wa.	1328	4- 1	22- Jason Chivers	12- Jason Chivers
12/ 7 *	Saint Martin's	W 79- 56	H Lacey, Wa.	253	5- 1	18- Yusef Aziz	7- Jason Chivers
12/16	Missouri Western St.	65- 70 L	N San Antonio, Tx.	24	5- 2	17- Yusef Aziz	6- Daniel Sandrin
12/17	Pittsburgh St.	64- 70 L	N San Antonio, Tx.	105	5- 3	15- Maurice Cato	10- Jason Chivers
12/19	Nevada	80- 89 L	A Reno, Nv.	4801	5- 4	21- Yusef Aziz	9- Yusef Aziz
1/ 3	UC Santa Cruz	W 95- 60	H Seattle, Wa.	425	6- 4	13- Gene Woodard	6-Aziz/B'maker/W'dard
1/ 4	Rocky Mountain	67- 83 L	H Seattle, Wa.	725	6- 5	19- Yusef Aziz	6- Aziz/Chivers
1/1 *	Western Washington	76- 83 L	H Seattle, Wa.	1625	6- 6	16- Yusef Aziz	7- Yusef Aziz
1/16 *	Alaska Anchorage	W 86- 68	H Seattle, Wa.	425	7- 6	20- Yusef Aziz	9- Sandrin/Chivers
1/18 *	Alaska Fairbanks	W 95- 71	H Seattle, Wa.	575	8- 6	16- Daniel Sandrin	9- Yusef Aziz
1/23 *	Western Oregon	W 88- 77	A Monmouth, Or.	625	9- 6	27- Yusef Aziz	6- Yusef Aziz
1/25 *	Humboldt State	70- 80 L	A Arcata, Ca.	1468	9- 7	24- Yusef Aziz	9- Yusef Aziz
1/31 *	Seattle University	W 80- 66	H Seattle, Wa.	890	10- 7	20- Cato/Aziz	9- Jason Chivers
2/ 1 *	N'west Nazarene	W 95- 58	H Seattle, Wa.	2225	11- 7	12- Aziz/Cohen	7- Jason Chivers

* - GNAC Game

— All FG — — 3 Pt FG — — FT — — Rebounds —

	GP-GS	M- A	Pct	M- A	Pct	M- A	Pct	Off	Def	Tot	Avg	A	T	B	L	K	S	T	P	F	D	Min-	Avg	Pts	Avg
Seattle Pacific	18-18	126-	245	51.4	10-	32	31.2	56-	87	64.4	32	78	110	6.1	66	46	9	28	42-	1	572-	31.8	318	17.7	
Yusef Aziz	18- 1	28-	66	42.4	12-	37	32.4	7-	13	53.8	7	24	31	1.7	33	19	4	12	34-	0	259-	14.4	75	4.2	
Tony Binetti	11- 0	4-	10	40.0	0-	0	0.0	0-	3	0.0	8	9	17	1.5	2	7	0	2	6-	0	54-	4.9	8	0.7	
Mike Bushmaker	17-17	72-	149	48.3	27-	66	40.9	23-	33	69.7	7	22	29	1.7	49	45	1	32	41-	0	443-	26.1	194	11.4	
Maurice Cato	18-18	62-	114	54.4	0-	0	0.0	16-	30	53.3	45	73	118	6.6	20	17	11	10	41-	1	362-	20.1	140	7.8	
Jason Chivers	16- 0	33-	62	53.2	1-	2	50.0	10-	20	50.0	20	29	49	3.1	4	16	0	4	23-	0	159-	9.9	77	4.8	
Chris Cohen	18-18	37-	73	50.7	26-	50	52.0	28-	35	80.0	9	28	37	2.1	43	27	0	22	37-	1	429-	23.8	128	7.1	
Adam Harris	18- 4	49-	80	61.2	6-	8	75.0	26-	34	76.5	16	38	54	3.0	31	26	6	12	50-	1	278-	15.4	130	7.2	
Jesse Keely	16- 0	26-	53	49.1	21-	43	48.8	2-	3	66.7	9	19	28	1.8	14	10	1	6	19-	0	189-	11.8	75	4.7	
Jeff Knudson	18- 0	28-	66	42.4	10-	26	38.5	8-	10	80.0	11	7	18	1.0	21	10	0	7	12-	0	266-	14.8	74	4.1	
Daniel Sandrin	17-13	49-	99	49.5	6-	14	42.9	26-	35	74.3	15	48	63	3.7	33	33	10	15	40-	1	363-	21.4	130	7.6	
Gene Woodard	18- 0	29-	59	49.2	2-	6	33.3	11-	21	52.4	14	32	46	2.6	20	18	3	16	16-	0	226-	12.6	71	3.9	
Team											16	15	31		0									0	
Seattle Pacific	18-18	543-	1076	50.5	121-	284	42.6	213-	324	65.7	209	422	631	35.1	336	274	45	166	361-	5			1420	78.9	
Opponents	18-18	464-	1033	44.9	102-	292	34.9	259-	379	68.3	211	377	588	32.7	254	289	56	134	320-	6			1289	71.6	

— First Half — — Second Half — — Game —

All FG	279-	534	52.2%	264-	542	48.7%	543-	1076	50.5%
3 Pt FG	64-	135	47.4%	57-	149	38.3%	121-	284	42.6%
FT	84-	136	61.8%	129-	188	68.6%	213-	324	65.7%

Deadball Rebounds: Seattle Pacific 54, Opponents 60
Opponent Team Rebounds: 37 — (Offense: 20 Defense: 17)
Technical Fouls: Seattle Pacific 0; ; Opponents 2