

AP preseason poll

1. Duke (38)	27-7	918
2. UCLA	25-3	764
3. Notre Dame (1)	23-8	685
4. Louisville	23-7	492
5. Kansas (1)	24-5	429
6. Texas	26-5	390
7. Michigan State	25-5	348
8. Michigan	16-11	342
9. Syracuse	22-6	243
10. Indiana	21-8	210
11. Kentucky	30-2	199
12. N.C. State	21-10	182
13. Southern Cal	14-13	142
14. LSU	18-9	128
15. Rutgers	24-7	108
16. North Carolina	23-8	104
17. San Francisco	23-6	95
18. Marquette	24-4	74
19. Alabama	17-10	72
20. Nevada-Las Vegas	20-8	62

Others receiving votes, listed alphabetically: Arizona, Arkansas, Brigham Young, Dayton, Detroit, Cincinnati, Florida State, Furman, Georgia Tech, Houston, Illinois State, Indiana State, La Salle, Maryland, Minnesota, Mississippi State, Nebraska, Nevada-Reno, New Mexico, New Mexico State, Ohio State, Oregon State, Providence, Purdue, Rhode Island, Rice, South Carolina, Southern Illinois, St. John's, Utah, Virginia, Virginia Tech, Washington State.



Duke's Bill Foster

Pollsters see Duke as tops

But being No. 1 can present some problems, as the Blue Devils and Bill Foster might find out.

by THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

The No. 1 ranking in college basketball can be like holding a double-edged sword—one slip and you cut yourself. Duke coach Bill Foster is painfully aware of that position.

"I'm really proud," says the coach of the nation's top-ranked team, "but on the other hand, everyone will be shooting for us this year. That No. 1 ranking will give a lot of teams incentive to beat us this season."

Foster's Blue Devils find themselves in precisely the same spot that Kentucky was in last season. The Wildcats were ranked No. 1 at the start of the year and had to prove themselves from the beginning. They did—with some difficulty—before winning the NCAA championship by beating this same Duke team in the finals.

"We have no room for slipping," said Foster, "so it's not going to be easy, especially with the schedule we play this year. I think, like any other team, we'll be all right if we stay away from injuries."

"But, honestly, our schedule is so tough that we can't afford to play any game with one of our starters out. Usually, there are a few games during the season when you can get away with less than your full complement of players. Not this year, though."

Foster, in part, is responsible for one of Duke's toughest schedules in recent history. Building up the Duke basketball program in the past four years, it has been part of Foster's philosophy to play a stronger schedule.

By reaching the NCAA finals last season, Duke hit one of the high points in the school's basketball history after years of desultory play. The Blue Devils had—and still have—one of the youngest teams in the country, with only one senior—guard Jim Spanarkel—in the starting lineup.

Duke was made the nation's No. 1 team in The Associated Press preseason poll released early last week, collecting 38 first-place ballots and 918 points. UCLA was a distant second in the voting by the nation's sports writers and broadcasters with 764 points. The Bruins collected eight first-place ballots from the voters.

The voters dropped defending national champion Kentucky to No. 11, obviously on the basis of the Wildcats losing four of their top six players.

Notre Dame, one of the Final Four in last year's championship round in St. Louis, was accorded the No. 3 position on the basis of 685 points. The Fighting Irish received one ballot for No. 1.

Louisville and Kansas, the only other team to collect a first-place vote, followed in the voting. Louisville landed the No. 4 spot with 492 points while Kansas gained No. 5 with 429.

Texas, winner of last year's National Invitational Tournament, was placed in the No. 6 position with 390 points. Michigan State was given 348 points for No. 7 while Big Ten colleague Michigan was close behind in No. 8 with 342.

Syracuse, with 243 points, and Indiana, 210, finished out the Top Ten.

After Kentucky, the remainder of the Top Twenty included No. 12 N.C. State; No. 13 Southern Cal.; No. 14 LSU; No. 15 Rutgers; No. 16 North Carolina; No. 17 San Francisco; No. 18 Marquette; No. 19 Alabama, and No. 20 Nevada-Las Vegas.

Last season's final Top Twenty poll, taken before the NCAA finals: Kentucky, UCLA, DePaul, Michigan State, Arkansas, Notre Dame, Duke, Marquette, Louisville, Kansas, San Francisco, New Mexico, Indiana, Utah, Florida State, North Carolina, Texas, Detroit, Miami Ohio and Penn. ■

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