GONZAGA BASKETBALL:

A SAGA OF SUCCESS

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Since men’s basketball coach Mark Few came to Gonzaga, in Spokane, Washington, in 1999, men’s basketball entered a golden age. They have risen from an unknown Cinderella team in those first 2 years, to a national powerhouse, playing for the NCAA championship in 2016-2017. This presentation will document this success story over these years.

Gonzaga has dominated the West Coast conference since Coach Few’s arrival. Here are their yearly wins totals:

X: 26,26,29,24,28,26,29,23,25,28,27,25,26,32,29, 35,28,37,32,33,31.

Your students could have fun calculating Mean, Median, Mode, Range and SD, while also calculating the Outlier test.

Each year, since Few’s arrival, Gonzaga has made it to the NCAA basketball tournament, often advancing as a low seed, but gradually moving up to higher seeds. What follows is a chart showing how they did in the tourney:

CHART #1: HOW FAR GONZAGA ADVANCED:

1ST Round Rd of 32 SW16 Elite 8 FF Runner-up

3 8 6 2 1 1

What this means is that they lost 3 times in the first round, 8 times in the 2nd round, 6 times in the Sweet 16, 2 times in the Elite 8, reached the Final 4 once, and lost in the Championship game once, to North Carolina, in 2017.

3 of their Sweet 16 appearances came as low seeds, namely, seeded 10, 11 and 12, which is a nice achievement! They were seeded 10 in ’99-00, and 12 in 00-01, reaching the Sweet 16 in each of Few’s first 2 years!

Both Elite 8 appearances were as 1 seeds, and their FF/NCAA runner-up finish was as a 1 seed. They were 37-2 in 2017, in their lone FF appearance. Due to the onset of the COVID, there was no tourney in 2020.

From 2014-2015 through 2018-2019, they enjoyed a special amount of success, as the following chart will show:

CHART #2: TOURNEY RESULTS IN 5 YEARS

RECORD SEED SEASON TOURNEY RESULT

35-3 2 14-15 ELITE 8

28-8 11 15-16 SW 16

37-2 1 16-17 RUNNER-UP

32-5 4 17-18 SW 16

33-4 1 18-19 ELITE 8

They were 31-2 in 19-20, but we won’t know how far they would have advanced, had there been a tourney.

Gonzaga has held every seed, 1 through 12, over the years, but 5. The lower the number, the higher the seed, which advantages the stronger teams. They have been a 4 seed or higher 9 times, reaching the 1 seed 3 times.

Prior to Coach Few’s arrival, Gonzaga went 28-7, under coach Dan Monson, reaching the Elite 8 as a 10 seed!

Gonzaga has had some memorable players over the years, including : John Stockton, Dan Dickau, Blake Stepp, Adam Morrison, and Kevin Pangos. It’s been a remarkable run, which should continue in the future!

REFERENCES:

1. 2016-2017 Gonzaga Bulldogs men’s basketball record book.
2. 2014-2015 Big Sky Conference men’s basketball record book.
3. Sports Reference College Basketball Reference site (SRCBB).
4. Wikipedia.







