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Taycee Wedin's assault on the record books

By Jon Kingdon



Taycee Wedin Photo provided

With a minute and a half left in the Gaels' last home game this season against the University of Pacific, Taycee Wedin broke a record that may have seemed inevitable when she stepped onto the Saint Mary's campus four years ago. When she sank her sixth 3-point shot that evening, the 299th of her college career, she became the most prolific 3-point shooter in West Coast Conference history, surpassing Gonzaga's Jessica Malone who had owned the record since 2002.

This was not the first time Wedin has set such a record. Prior to Saint Mary's, Wedin owned the same record in high school in the state of Oregon, having connected on 359 3-point shots during her high school career at LaSalle Prep in Milwaukie, Oregon.

Setting 3-point shooting records was something that Wedin seemed destined to break going back to her days growing up in Milwaukie, where she was trained by her mother Kelli, herself a top player, a good shooter and

her eventual coach in high school. "Before high school, I worked my whole life to get those shots. My mom was a big reason for that, always getting me in the gym even when I didn't want to go. She would push me to go, and she would set up shots with me every single day. And it was having a love for the game. It became a muscle memory for me, getting those reps up and going into the gym every single day."

While conceding that the Bay Area is "a little different" from Milwaukie, Oregon, it was the Saint Mary's environment and the unceasing efforts of the Gaels head coach Paul Thomas that drew Wedin to Moraga. "The atmosphere and the people and Saint Mary's are very similar to my high school," Wedin said. "When I came here on my visit, I really bonded with Coach Thomas and the team. Coach was one of the few coaches that stayed in contact with me after I tore my ACL and I really appreciated that."

Besides Wedin's character, Thomas had to have been impressed with Wedin's high school accomplishments on the court - four straight Northwest Oregon Championships, never having lost a league game, two state championships, first team all-state selections in 2017 and 2018 and second team in 2015 and 2016.

Thomas was prescient about Wedin's future success when he first saw her in high school. "I don't remember exactly when I said this to Taycee during the recruitment process, but we had talked about her setting the record here. The other special thing about Taycee, in all the games that she has played here over the last four years, she has never had an extended slump and she has had teammates that have obviously helped her along. She's been extremely consistent in her craft and that speaks volumes for what she has been able to do because everyone in the country knows what she is capable of. Everyone talks about doing the work, but she goes out there and does it."

Wedin, who was just named second team all WCC, will graduate with a degree in kinesiology and sports management and will be returning for a fifth year, as so many other college student-athletes were able to, due to the pandemic. It's obviously been a positive experience for Wedin as her sister Addison followed in her footsteps, having entered Saint Mary's this year but redshirted due to an injury. Playing alongside her sister was another inducement for Wedin to return for her fifth year.

"I'm very close with my family and they know how I feel about Saint Mary's. Addison has obviously been following me since I first came here. She knew all my ups and downs at Saint Mary's. Ultimately, she bonded with the coaches the same way that I did."

Jontelle Smith, the Saint Mary's Gael whose 3-point record of 268 Wedin broke against Santa Clara on Feb. 7 graduated in 2010 and was coached by Thomas. She bore no ill will toward Wedin. "Everybody feels a certain way when someone breaks their record," Thomas said, "but Jontelle is super proud of Taycee and happy for her, having watched her enough to know that she earned this."

The all-time NCAA record for 3-point shots is 497, which is held by Kelsey Mitchell who graduated from Ohio State in 2018. After Mitchell, the list of 3-point shooters in the record books drops down to 350, with only 32 players having made that list. Wedin only needs 49 more 3-point field goals to make that exalted list.

Wedin has evolved as a player into far more than just a shooter. "The coaches have done an amazing job of developing me," Wedin said. "They've worked with me every year and I believe that I have grown a lot as a player. I know that people see me as a shooter, but I have to do more than that to produce for my team."

Thomas concurs with Wedin's assessment of overall talents on the court: "Beyond adjectives that I have in my vocabulary as to what type of teammate she is, she does everything. She is a Gael and understands our way and our relationship has grown since the time we began recruiting her and she is a great extension of all our coaches. She understands what we want and that's what leaders do."

Reach the reporter at: sportsdesk@lamorindaweekly.com

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