

The #12 Iowa Women's Basketball team has been dominant under their coach Lisa Bluder for 22 years, and they did not disappoint this year. Coach Bluder is the all-time winningest coach in program history (455-239 record at Iowa, 792-363 overall record) and has led the Iowa Women's Basketball program to 19 postseason (15 NCAA and 4 WNIT) appearances. She is currently the NCAA Division I Women's basketball's 14th winningest coach and will continue to climb up the list. She says what sets the Iowa Women's Basketball team apart is being a second family "that's one thing that sets our team apart is that everybody says that they are a family but do you live like a family?" Caitlin Clark also talked about this "We're each other's best friends off the court too." Monika Czinano's face lit up with joy when being asked the same question, she responded with "We're all very close" and "We do everything together" With women's college basketball's best in scoring and assists, sophomore guard Caitlin Clark, one of women's college basketball's top field goal percentage shooters in Monika Czinano and a team ranking of #12 in the nation, the Iowa Women sit once again among the best in the Big Ten and have a projected #4 seed in the NCAA Tournament!

In the 2021-2022 season, the Iowa women have dominated their way into an overall record of 20-7 and Co-Big Ten Regular Season Champions with a Big Ten record of 14-4. Contributing to their outstanding record is the fact that they are first in the nation in field goal percent (50.51%). They are first in the nation in free throw percent (84.58%), second in the nation in scoring offense (85.4 average per game), third in the nation in assists per game (19.4), and eleventh in the nation in assist to turnover ratio (1.28 average per game).

A big part of the team is obviously the players on it. Coach Bluder says "everyone matters, we are a tight circle of women.....everyone matters on the team." It makes sense that they have such a great team because they also have great players like Caitlin Clark and Monika Czinano. Caitlin Clark, who will be the first woman ever in college women's basketball history to lead the nation in scoring and assists per game (averaging 27.5 points and 8.3 assists) in a season, is also a three-time US gold medalist for basketball. This year Caitlin became the fastest Big Ten player to reach 1,000 career points and only the second Division I player to accomplish this feat in 40 games or less. She also became the first Division I player for men or women to score 30+ points with a triple-double in back-to-back games (vs. Nebraska, 31-10-10 and vs. Minnesota, 35-13-11). She has also received academic recognition for her work in the

classroom. When asked about how she excels in school and basketball Caitlin Clark said to "just find a balance and stay on top of your work." Caitlin Clark also stated, "That's just something our program takes pride in is getting good grades." The Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame announced that Monika Czinano has been named to the Lisa Leslie Center of the Year Top-10 Watch List. The list is composed of 10 student-athletes who are front-runners for the award named after the three-time All-American and 1994 National Player of the Year. Monika has been a leader in college basketball for the best field goal percentage for the last three seasons. She was also recognized twice as First Team All Big Ten, Academic All Big Ten, and named to the Big Ten All-Tournament Team. When she was asked about the First Team All Big Ten achievement, she said "hearing that and hearing that other people see the work I put in and are willing to appreciate it is huge." Monika Czinano was ranked number one nationally in field goal percentage the last couple of years and is third this year; when asked if there was any pressure going into this year, she said "Not really, especially not from my teammates or my coaches, they don't really put any pressure on me."

Part of their amazing program is their home-field advantage. The Carver-Hawkeye Arena was built in 1983 and has a capacity of 15,500 people. It is also one of the twenty-five largest university-owned facilities in the nation. Also, while the NCAA home attendance average in 2019 was 1,582, Iowa Women ranked #10 in home attendance with a whopping 7,102 people per game. They finished their regular season Sunday, February 27th, with a home game against #6 Michigan in a game that would determine the Big Ten Regular Season Champion. The game was the first sell-out game since January 31st, 1988. Before their game, they were asked what they felt it would be like playing in front of a sellout crowd. Coach Bluder stated "I think that will bring energy to our players." After being asked the same question, Caitlin Clark responded with "I think that this team and this program really deserves it."

They have a rich history of winning and will again add to that amazing history this year. Iowa has won the Big Ten Tournament three times, the most recent being in 2019, the Big Ten Regular Season ten times, the most recent being this year, 2022, and they have made twenty-seven NCAA Tournament appearances, reaching the Sweet Sixteen eight times, the most recent being 2021, the Elite Eight four times, the most recent being 2019, and the Final Four once (1993).

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