

Heartland Collegiate Athletic Conference Office

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--October 30, 2007-- **HCAC Men's Basketball Pre-Season Poll**

Franklin College Selected as Favorite to Capture HCAC Men's Basketball Title

GREENWOOD, IN – Franklin College has been voted as the frontrunner in the 2007-08 Heartland Collegiate Athletic Conference men's basketball championship race. The Grizzlies, who earned the conference title last winter, received five first place votes in the Coaches Preseason Poll. They garnered 75 points overall in the poll holding off Defiance who finished with 73 points and three first place votes.

Transylvania University has been forecasted as the third place team by receiving 55 points in the poll. Hanover College's 52 points placed the Panthers fourth and was followed by Bluffton University (42 pts) in fifth position. Mount St. Joseph (34), Anderson University (30 points, 1 first place vote), Manchester College (26), and Rose-Hulman (18) round out the poll.

Franklin will be looking to capture its second consecutive HCAC Championship this season. The Grizzlies finished one game ahead of Transylvania and Bluffton last winter, posting a 16-10 overall record and an 11-5 mark in the HCAC.

The Grizzlies return four of their top five scorers from last season, including two All-HCAC selections and one honorable mention selection. Senior forward **Marty Young (Norman, Ind./Brownstown Central)** and junior guard **Jace Redman (Mount Vernon, Ind./H.S.)** return after earning All-HCAC honors a year ago. Young averaged 11.7 points per game and 7.7 rebounds per contest as a junior last season while leading the team in field goal percentage at 61.9%. Redman averaged 12.5 points per game for FC and converted 43.5% of his attempts from behind the arc. Junior guard **Dustin Marshall (Lexington, Ind./Scottsburg)** averaged over 11 points per game for the second straight season, finishing the year with 11.7 points per game and a team best 51 three-point baskets made. Senior guard **Jon Neill (Bloomfield, Ind./H.S.)** looks to contribute after averaging 10.0 points per game as a junior.

A key loss for Franklin will be the loss of last year's leading scorer Luke Tudor. As a senior, Tudor averaged 12.1 points a game, 3.4 rebounds and 1.7 assists.

Defiance will be looking to knock Franklin from the top of the conference standings this winter. The Yellow Jackets advanced to the HCAC tournament championship game last winter after defeating the host Grizzlies in the semi-finals. Defiance completed the 2006-07 season with a 9-7 conference record and a 17-9 overall mark.

Leading the way for the Yellow Jackets will be junior forward **Anthony Pettaway (Toledo, Ohio/Bowsher)**, senior guard **C.J. Johnson (Toledo, Ohio/St. Francis DeSales)**, and sophomore forward **Nick Sales (Barberton, Ohio/H.S.)**. Pettaway was an All-HCAC selection as a sophomore, averaging 16.3 points and 7.4 rebounds per game. Johnson averaged 11.7 points per game and Sales chipped in with 10.4 points and 8.0 rebounds per game. Both were honorable mention all-conference selections last season.

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Transylvania will look to make another run at the title this winter after claiming the HCAC Tournament title last February. The Pioneers lost their two leading scorers from last year's team. Nick Feagan and Joey Searle combined to average 31.0 points and 10.0 rebounds per game for Transy last winter. Junior forward **Joey Verax (Falmouth, Ky./Pendleton Co.)** will look to fill the void of Feagan and Searle after averaging 10.7 points and 4.1 rebounds per game last year. The Pioneers finished tied for second last season with a 10-6 HCAC record and 19-9 mark overall. Transy ended their season in the opening round of the NCAA Division III Tournament, falling at No. 3 Wooster.

The opening weekend is Nov. 16-17 with the first conference games scheduled for Dec. 1.

2007-08 Men's Basketball Preseason Coaches Poll

<u>Team</u>	<u>Points (first place votes)</u>
1. Franklin	75 (5)
2. Defiance	73 (3)
3. Transylvania	55
4. Hanover	52
5. Bluffton	42
6. Mount St. Joseph	34
7. Anderson	30 (1)
8. Manchester	26
9. Rose-Hulman	18

2007-08 Men's Basketball Players to Watch

Anderson: Ryan Fultz (So., F, 6-5, Carthage, Ind./Knightstown), Keith Dabney (Sr., F, 6-4, Indianapolis, Ind./Pike), Tyler Stotter (Sr., G, 6-3, New Castle, Ind./Blue River Valley)

Bluffton: Colt Cunningham (Jr., G, 6-1, Powell, Ohio/Worthington Christian), Nick Wilson (Jr., C, 6-5, Payne, Ohio/Continental), P.J. Juenger (Sr., F, 6-5, Loveland, Ohio/Archbishop Mueller), Nate Overmyer (Sr., G, 6-0, Payne, Ohio/Wayne Trace)

Defiance: Anthony Pettaway (Jr., F, 6-8, Toledo, Oh./Bowsher), C.J. Johnson (Sr., G, 5-10, Toledo, Oh./St. Francis DeSales), Nick Sales (So., F, 6-4, Barberton, Oh./H.S.), Anthony Jackson (So., G, 6-1, Ayersville, Oh./H.S.)

Franklin: Dustin Marshall (Jr., G, 6-0, Lexington, Ind./Scottsburg), Jace Redman (Jr., G, 5-9, Mount Vernon, Ind./H.S.), Jon Neill (Sr., G, 6-5, Bloomfield, Ind./H.S.), Marty Young (Sr., F, 6-3, Norman, Ind./Brownstown Central)

Hanover: Rob Brown (Sr., P, 6-7, Cincinnati, Ohio/Mariemont), Clint Parker (Sr., G, 5-10, Brownstown, Ind./H.S.), Marc O'Leary (Sr., F, 6-3, Terre Haute, Ind./North), Brock Dawson (Sr., F, 6-3, West Lafayette, Ind./Benton Central), Jake Inman (So., G, 5-10, North Vernon, Ind./Jennings Co.)

Manchester: Jamaal Wade (Sr., G, 6-0, Indianapolis, Ind./Bishop Chatard), Jerry Ford (Sr., G, 5-11, Lafayette, Ind./Lafayette Jefferson), Jake Koziel (Sr., G, 6-2, New Carlisle, Ind./New Prairie), James Reed (Jr., F/G, 6-5, Gas City, Ind./Mississinewa), Jeff Grabowski (Jr., F, 6-5, Ft. Wayne, Ind./Homestead)

Mount St. Joseph: Michael Eirons (Sr., F, 6-6, Huron, Ohio/H.S.), Josh Carter (Sr., G, 5-9, Sydney, Ohio/Anna), Michael Romes (So., F, 6-4, Villa Hills, Ky./Beechwood)

Rose-Hulman: Ron George (Sr., F, 6-2, Louisville, Ky./Manual), Jared Moore (Sr., F, 6-3, Indianapolis, Ind./Perry Meridian), Phil Sundling (Sr., G, 6-0, Huntington, Ind./North), Lorenzo Rice (Jr., F, 6-4, Grandview, Mo./H.S.)

Transylvania: Stephen Gabbard (Sr., G, 6-4, Annville, Ky./Jackson Co.), Joey Verax (Jr., F, 6-5, Falmouth, Ky./Pendleton Co.), Aaron Cash (Jr., G, 5-11, Brodhead, Ky./Rockcastle), Tim Tierney (So., G, 5-11, Ft. Wright, Ky./Covington Catholic), Brock Jones (Jr., F, 6-4, Madisonville, Ky./North Hopkins), Blake McCowan (So., F, 6-5, West Liberty, Ky./Morgan Co.), Matthew Parton (So., G, 5-10, Knoxville, Tenn./Knox. Catholic)

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