

Heartland Collegiate Athletic Conference Office

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--October 29, 2007-- HCAC Women's Basketball Pre-Season Poll

Manchester Favored to Repeat as HCAC Women's Basketball Champs

GREENWOOD, IN – Manchester College has been voted the favorite to capture the 2007-08 Heartland Collegiate Athletic Conference women's basketball championship. The Spartans received five of the nine first-place votes in the HCAC Coaches Preseason Poll and collected 77 points in all. Transylvania finished a distant second in the preseason voting with 65 total points and three first place votes.

Anderson finished third in the voting with 55 points and was followed by Franklin which claimed 53 points. Defiance College (44 pts.), Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology (37, 1 first-place vote), Hanover College (34), College of Mount St. Joseph (26) and Bluffton University (14) rounded out the poll.

Manchester earned the school's first ever women's basketball championship last winter, finishing the 2006-07 campaign with a record of 21-7, 15-1 HCAC. The Spartans knocked off Transylvania to claim the HCAC tournament title for the second straight season, but then fell in the first round of the NCAA Division-III tournament to No. 9 Washington-St. Louis.

Manchester returns two All-HCAC selections, including last year's HCAC Tournament MVP **Sarah Bose (Indianapolis, Ind./Perry Meridian)**. Bose averaged 7.6 points per game as a sophomore and also chipped in with 3.1 rebounds, 3.1 steals, and 2.9 assists per game. The other returning all-conference player for the Spartans is junior forward **Kelley Meiklejohn (Ft. Wayne, Ind./Carroll)**. Last year as a sophomore, Meiklejohn averaged 10.8 points and 5.4 rebounds per game for the black and gold. One other player to watch this winter will be senior center **Jessica Henn (Huntington, Ind./North)**. Henn averaged 6.4 points and 4.1 rebounds per game, earning honorable mention all-conference honors as a junior.

Transylvania University finished third in the standings last winter, finishing with a 19-9 overall record and 12-4 conference mark before falling to Manchester in the conference tournament final. The Pioneers earned an at-large bid to the NCAA Division III tournament and fell to eventual national champion DePauw in the first round. The Pioneers have lost the nucleus of last year's very successful squad. Julie Leach received the conference's Most Valuable Player award as a sophomore last season and has decided to transfer from TU for personal reasons. Leach led the conference with 19.2 points and 10.8 rebounds per game last season. The Pioneers also graduated Cindy Beavin from last year's team. Beavin averaged 10.0 points and 5.4 assists in her senior All-HCAC campaign. The key returning players for TU this winter will be sophomore guard **Brittany Henderlight (Versailles, Ky./Woodford Co.)** and senior forward **Jessica Gilbert (Louisville, Ky./Assumption)**. Last season, Henderlight earned honorable mention all-conference honors after averaging 9.3 points per game as a freshman, while Gilbert averaged 9.1 points and 4.5 rebounds per game.

The Anderson women's team is coming off a 16-10 regular season, finishing 11-5 in conference play. The Ravens return two individuals that could help AU contend for a conference championship. **Kayla Martin (Bedford, Ind./Bedford North Lawrence)** and **Melenda Hawthorne (Indianapolis, Ind./Perry Meridian)** return after successful seasons in 2006-07. Martin averaged 12.7 points and 7.4 rebounds per game at the forward position for AU, earning All-HCAC honors. Hawthorne averaged 12.2 points and 7.0 rebounds per game as a sophomore, also earning a spot on the All-Conference team. **-MORE-**



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

2007-08 Women's Basketball Preseason Coaches Poll

<u>Team</u>	<u>Points (first place votes)</u>
1. Manchester	77 (5)
2. Transylvania	65 (3)
3. Anderson	55
4. Franklin	53
5. Defiance	44
6. Rose-Hulman	37 (1)
7. Hanover	34
8. Mount St. Joseph	26
9. Bluffton	14

2007-08 Women's Basketball Players to Watch

Anderson: Kayla Martin (Jr., F, 5-10, Bedford, Ind./North Lawrence), Melenda Hawthorne (Jr., F, 5-10, Indianapolis, Ind./Perry Meridian)

Bluffton: Angie Lee (Sr., G, 5-5, Mt. Blanchard, Ohio/Vanlue), Lindsay Bush (Sr., F, 5-11, Howard, Ohio/East Knox), Amanda Bell (Sr., G, 5-4, Napoleon, Ohio/Liberty Center)

Defiance: Mandy White (So., F, 5-11, Ottawa-Glandorf, Ohio/H.S.), Sarah Bird (Sr., G, 5-7, Fayette, Ohio/Gorman-Fayette)

Franklin: Courtney Swain (Sr., G, 5-7, Zionsville, Ind./H.S.), Jennifer Redicker (Sr., F, 5-9, Vallonia, Ind./Brownstown Central), Kelly Snider (Sr., G, 5-11, Fishers, Ind./Hamilton Southeastern), Heather Harper (So., C, 5-11, Mooresville, Ind./H.S.)

Hanover: Rachel Walters (Jr., F, 5-7, Ladoga, Ind./Southmont), Molly Martin (Fr., C, 6-1, Terre Haute, Ind./North)

Manchester: Jessica Henn (Sr., C, 5-10, Huntington, Ind./North), Kelley Meiklejohn (Jr., F, 5-9, Ft. Wayne, Ind./Carroll), Sarah Conwell (Sr., G, 5-3, Kokomo, Ind./Northwestern), Sarah Bose (Jr., G, 5-1, Indianapolis, Ind./Perry Meridian)

Mount St. Joseph: Maria Eichhold (Sr., C, 6-2, Greenwood, Ind./Centre Grove), Ashleigh Stallkamp (Sr., F, 5-10, Paulding, Ohio/H.S.), Shanika Logan (Sr. G, 5-5, Cincinnati, Ohio/Winton Woods)

Rose-Hulman: Katie Tharp (Sr., F, 5-11, Linton, Ind./Linton-Stockton), Brittany Moline (Sr., G, 5-6, Indianapolis, Ind./Perry Meridian), Jill Floyd (Sr., G, 5-6, Bloomington, Ill./Olympia), Candace Procter (Sr., G, 5-6, Southfield, Mich./Groves), Liz Ridgway (Jr., C, 5-11, Grosse Point, Mich./South)

Transylvania: Brittany Henderlight (So., G, 5-6, Versailles, Ky./Woodford Co.), Jessica Gilbert (Sr., F, 5-11, Louisville, Ky./Assumption), Jackie Distler (Jr., 5-9, Louisville, Ky./Sacred Heart), Amber Morrison (Fr., G, 5-9, Shelbyville, Ky./Shelby Co.)

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