

Heartland Collegiate Athletic Conference Office

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Preseason Baseball Coaches Poll

Rose-Hulman Chosen as Preseason HCAC Baseball Favorite

GREENWOOD, IN – The Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology baseball team has been selected as the favorite to claim the 2010 Heartland Collegiate Athletic Conference baseball championship. The No. 27 ranked Engineers received 76 total points and seven first place votes in the annual HCAC Preseason Coaches Poll.

The poll collects votes from all nine head coaches in the HCAC. No. 29 ranked Franklin College collected the second most votes in the poll and finished with 68 total points and two first place votes. No. 28 ranked Anderson University finished third in the poll with 65 points and was followed by the College of Mount St. Joseph which claimed 57 points. Transylvania University (45 points), Manchester College (39), Bluffton University (23), Hanover College (21), and Defiance College (11) rounded out the poll.

Rose-Hulman will be looking for its first HCAC baseball title as the Engineers enter the 2010 season. RHIT enters the campaign ranked No. 27 in the *Collegiate Baseball Newspaper Preseason Poll* and will look for the school's third straight HCAC Tournament appearance. The Engineers finished second during the 2009 season with a 16-6 conference mark, standing a game and a half behind conference champion Franklin. Rose was 32-14 overall and defeated Franklin in the HCAC Tournament championship game to earn a bid into the NCAA tournament. RHIT fell to Adrian and Marietta in the Mideast Regional.

Rose returns a host of key components from last season's team including Mideast Region Player of the Year **Tim Tepe (Cincinnati, Ohio/Elder)**. The senior shortstop ranked among the conference leaders, slugging .764 last season with 58 RBI, six triples, 21 doubles, 87 hits, 57 runs scored, a .522 on-base percentage, and a .489 batting average. Also returning to set the table for the heart of the Engineers' order is senior catcher **Keenan Long (Chicago, Ill./Notre Dame)**. The senior hit .356 a year ago with 45 runs scored, 60 RBI, 10 doubles, and 11 home runs.

On the mound, Rose-Hulman will be led by All-HCAC first team selection **Derek Eitel (Marshall, Ill./H.S.)**. The senior right handed pitcher was 10-1 on the hill last year with a 4.03 earned run average. Eitel ranked first in the conference with 81 strikeouts, 82.2 innings pitched, and a .213 opponent batting average.

Franklin will be looking for the school's second straight baseball title in 2010. The Grizzlies also enter the season ranked in the *Collegiate Baseball Newspaper Preseason Poll* (No. 29) and will look for a return trip to the HCAC Tournament. Franklin was the runner-up in the HCAC tournament last season, falling to Rose-Hulman 17-10 in the final. Three All-HCAC first-team selections return to lead the Grizzlies this spring.

Junior second baseman **Ian Sanders (Decatur, Ind./Bellmont)** returns looking to pick up where he left off last spring. Sanders had a solid sophomore season batting .408 with 52 runs scored, 17 doubles, 10 home runs, 59 RBI, and a .710 slugging percentage. Senior pitcher **Luke Mehringer (Jasper, Ind./H.S.)** and junior pitcher **Derrick Patterson (Greencastle, Ind./H.S.)** each return to the mound after All-HCAC seasons last spring. Mehringer posted an 8-1 record, 59 strikeouts, and a 4.67 ERA, while Patterson notched a 9-2 mark, 42 strikeouts, and a 5.15 ERA. Franklin finished 31-11 last season with a 17-4 mark in the HCAC standings.

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Anderson University is predicted to finish third and make a strong push for their second HCAC title. The Ravens finished with a 22-18 mark last season and posted a 12-9 conference record for fourth place. Anderson will have key members returning from last year's HCAC tournament team. Senior third baseman **Jeremy Hazen (Anderson, Ind./Highland)** and senior center fielder **Chris Jarrett (Hagerstown, Ind./H.S.)** will be looked upon to lead the preseason No. 28 ranked team in Division III. Hazen ranked second in the HCAC last spring with 13 home runs and a .785 slugging percentage, while leading the team with a .436 batting average and 49 RBI. Jarrett led the conference with 58 runs scored and ranked among the HCAC leaders with 23 stolen bases and 17 doubles.

The 2010 baseball season opens on February 27. The HCAC portion of the schedule will begin on March 23 with the HCAC Tournament slated for May 13-15.

2010 HCAC Baseball Coaches Preseason Poll

<u>Team</u>	<u>Points (first place votes)</u>
1. Rose-Hulman	76 (7)
2. Franklin	68 (2)
3. Anderson	65
4. Mount St. Joseph	57
5. Transylvania	45
6. Manchester	39
7. Bluffton	23
8. Hanover	21
9. Defiance	11

2010 Baseball Players to Watch

Anderson: Jeremy Hazen – 3B (Sr., Anderson, Ind./Highland), Chris Jarrett – CF (Sr., Hagerstown, Ind./H.S.), Cody Young – RF (Sr., Muncie, Ind./Delta), Brad Schnepf – P/1B (Sr., Pendleton, Ind./Pendleton Heights), Kyle Dillon – P (Jr., Kokomo, Ind./Taylor)

Bluffton: Cody McPherson – DH/P (Sr., Northwood, Ohio/Lake), Adrian Fritch – P (Jr., Edon, Ohio/H.S.), Stephen Torres – C (Sr., Lima, Ohio/Juan Diego), Nick Broyles – OF (So., Toledo, Ohio/Whitmer), Tyler Stephenson – 3B/P (So., Springfield, Ohio/Northwest)

Defiance: Kirk Jesse – OF (Sr., Ney, Ohio/Fairview), Tim Pitro – IF (Sr., Gahanna, Ohio/Lincoln), Keith Wade – IF (Sr., Wixom, Mich./Walled Lake Western), Casey Kahsen – C (Sr., Temperance, Mich./Emmanuel Christian)

Franklin: Ian Sanders – 2B (Jr., Decatur, Ind./Bellmont), Alex Boone – 3B (Jr., Carmel, Ind./H.S.), Luke Mehringer – P (Sr., Jasper, Ind./H.S.), Derrik Patterson – P (Jr., Greencastle, Ind./H.S.), Paul Strack – OF (Sr., Indianapolis, Ind./Perry Meridian)

Hanover: Kyle Barnett – P/1B (Sr., Sellersburg, Ind./Silver Creek), Jake Schwartz – P/OF (Sr., Russiaville, Ind./Western), Will Pappano – OF (Sr., Tell City, Ind./H.S.), Jared Gluff – C (Sr., Kokomo, Ind./Western)

Manchester: Josh Atkinson – P (Sr., Portland, Ind./Jay Co.), Ty Foster – 1B (Jr., Danville, Ind./H.S.), John Smolinski – C (South Bend, Ind./St. Joseph's)

Mount St. Joseph: Steve Matre – P (Sr., Cincinnati, Ohio/Purcell Marian), Matt Flamm – 2B (Sr., Cincinnati, Ohio/LaSalle), Mark Lakas – 1B (Sr., Mason, Ohio/H.S.), Trace Norton – OF (Jr., Reading, Ohio/H.S.), Ryan Rodriguez – OF (Jr., Mason, Ohio/Moeller)

Rose-Hulman: Tim Tepe – SS (Sr., Cincinnati, Ohio/Elder), Keenan Long – C (Sr., Chicago, Ill./Notre Dame), Derek Eitel – P (Sr., Marshall, Ill./H.S.), Andrew Bilse – RF (Sr., Munster, Ind./H.S.), Chandler Kent – 3B (Sr., Antioch, Ill./H.S.)

Transylvania: Phil Blakely – OF (Sr., Louisville, Ky./St. Xavier), Thomas Tolliver – OF/IF (Jr., Wurlant, Ky./Raceland), Adam Clark – IF (Sr., Ashland, Ky./Paul Blazer), Corey Colyer – P (Sr., Lexington, Ky./Lexington Christian Academy), Ben Kuebbing – OF (Jr., Burlington, Ky./St. Henry)

