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HCAC Men's Basketball Preseason Poll

Transylvania Selected to Repeat as HCAC Men's Basketball Champions

GREENWOOD, IN – Transylvania University has been voted as the frontrunner in the 2009-10 Heartland Collegiate Athletic Conference men's basketball championship race. The Pioneers, who earned the conference title last winter, received four first place votes in the Coaches Preseason Poll. They garnered 70 points overall in the poll holding off Defiance who finished with 59 points and two first place votes.

Anderson University has been forecasted as the third place team by receiving 56 points and the final three first place votes in the poll. Hanover College's 52 points placed the Pioneers fourth and was followed by Franklin College (48 pts) in fifth position. Manchester College (43), Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology (34), Bluffton University (26), and the College of Mount St. Joseph (17) round out the poll.

Transylvania will be looking to capture its second consecutive HCAC Championship and tournament title this season. The Pioneers shared the title with Franklin last winter, posting a 21-6 overall record and a 13-3 mark in the HCAC. TU defeated the Grizzlies for the conference tournament title and ended its season with a 71-67 overtime loss to Guilford in the NCAA Division III tournament.

Transy will look to replace their top three scorers from a year ago, including the conference's MVP Joey Verax. The Pioneers do return three starters from last year's championship team. Senior guard **Tim Tierney (Ft. Wright, Ky./Covington Catholic)** earned a spot on the All-HCAC honorable mention team last season, averaging 8.8 points and 4.0 rebounds per game as a junior. **Matthew Parton (Knoxville, Tenn./Knox. Catholic)** and **Blake McCowan (W. Liberty, Ky./Morgan Co.)** also return as starters for the 2009-10 season. Parton is the leading returning scorer for Transylvania after averaging 9.0 points per game last winter. McCowan will look to increase his 8.3 point, 5.6 rebound average from last season.

Defiance will be looking to knock Transylvania from the top of the conference standings this winter. The Jackets lost to Franklin in the HCAC tournament semifinals last winter after defeating Hanover in the opening round. Defiance completed the 2008-09 season with a 12-4 conference record and an 18-9 overall mark.

Leading the way for the Yellow Jackets will be senior guard **Mike Floyd (Toledo, Ohio/St. John's)** and senior forward **Nick Sales (Barberton, Ohio/H.S.)** who return after earning All-HCAC honors a year ago. Sales averaged 16.1 points per game, 8.7 rebounds per game, and led the HCAC with a 63.8% field goal percentage last season. Floyd led the conference with 178 assists last winter and added 7.7 points per game for the Jackets.

Anderson will look to make a run at the title this winter after earning a spot in the HCAC Tournament last season. The Ravens lost their leading scorer from last year's team as Mike Russell averaged 18.0 points per game for Anderson. The trio of **Andrew Jones (Noblesville, Ind./H.S.)**, **Rodney Holliday (Indianapolis, Ind./Pike)**, and **Gabe Miller (Hope, Ind./Hauser)** return after being named honorable mention All-HCAC. Jones is the leading returning scorer for AU after averaging 11.1 points per game during 2008-09. Anderson finished 15-12 overall and 7-9 during HCAC play last year.

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The first full weekend of play will take place on Nov. 20-21 with the first conference games scheduled for Dec. 2.

2009-10 Men's Basketball Preseason Coaches Poll

<u>Team</u>	<u>Points (first place votes)</u>
1. Transylvania	70 (4)
2. Defiance	59 (2)
3. Anderson	56 (3)
4. Hanover	52
5. Franklin	48
6. Manchester	43
7. Rose-Hulman	34
8. Bluffton	26
9. Mount St. Joseph	17

2009-10 Men's Basketball Players to Watch

Anderson: Rodney Holliday (Sr., F, 6-4, Indianapolis, Ind./Pike), Ty Riddle (Jr., G, 5-11, Pendleton, Ind./Muncie Central), Kyle Morgan (Fr., F, 6-3, Rushville, Ind./H.S.), Gabe Miller (Jr., G, 6-3, Hope, Ind./Hauser), Andrew Jones (Jr., F, 6-6, Noblesville, Ind./H.S.)

Bluffton: Josh Eichar (Sr., G, 6-0, North Baltimore, Ohio/H.S.), Brent Farley (So., F, 6-6, Lima, Ohio/Shawnee), Mychal Hill (So., G, 5-11, London, Ohio/Jonathan Alder), Nick Lee (So., G, 6-0, Vanlue, Ohio/H.S.)

Defiance: Michael Floyd (Sr., G, 5-11, Toledo, Ohio/St. John's), Nick Sales (Sr., F, 6-4, Barberton, Ohio/H.S.), Heath Armstrong (Sr., G, 6-2, Fayette, Ohio/H.S.), Anthony Brown (So., G, 6-2, Glenview, Ill./Glenbrook South)

Franklin: Will Conoley (So., C, 6-6, Franklin, Ind./H.S.), Clay Starrett (So., G, 5-9, Salem, Ind./Eastern-Pekin)

Hanover: Mitchell Meyer (Jr., F, 6-6, New Albany, Ind./H.S.), Jake Inman (Sr., G, 5-10, North Vernon, Ind./Jennings Co.)

Manchester: Joe Smith (Sr., G, 6-0, Burlington, Ind./Carroll), J.T. Hooks (Sr., F, 6-5, Lake Village, Ind./North Newton), Tyler Henn (Jr., F, 6-5, Huntington, Ind./North), Jason Spindler (So., C, 6-10, Harlan, Ind./Woodlan)

Mount St. Joseph: Travis Huffman (Sr., G, 6-0, Hebron, Ky./Conner), Michael Romes (Sr., F, 6-4, Villa Hills, Ky./Beechwood), Kyle McCord (Sr., F, 6-5, Covington, Ky./Scott), Mike Mechler (Sr., G, 6-1, Hamilton, Ohio/Ross)

Rose-Hulman: Jason Haslag (So., F, 6-5, Linn, Mo./Helias), Spencer Harlan (So., C, 6-6, Terre Haute, Ind./South), Jeff McCartney (Sr., G, 6-1, Wooster, Ohio/Tri-Way), Blake Knotts (So., G, 5-10, Louisville, Ky./Christian Academy)

Transylvania: Tim Tierney (Sr., G, 5-11, Ft. Wright, Ky./Covington Catholic), Blake McCowan (Sr., F, 6-5, W. Liberty, Ky./Morgan Co.), Matthew Parton (Sr., G, 5-10, Knoxville, Tenn./Knox. Catholic), Chris Owens (So., G, 6-3, Maysville, Ky./St. Patrick)

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