

Heartland Collegiate Athletic Conference Office

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--August 24, 2009-- HCAC Men's Cross Country Preseason Poll

Manchester Selected by Coaches as HCAC Men's Cross Country Champs

GREENWOOD, IN – Manchester College's men's cross country team has been selected as the front runner to win the 2009 Heartland Collegiate Athletic Conference championship. In a poll of the nine HCAC head coaches, the Spartans received 77 total points and six first place votes.

Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology will strive for its first title in school history, as the Engineers totaled 71 points and two first place votes. Anderson University placed third in the poll with 62 points and defending champion Franklin College finished fourth with 60 points and the final first place vote. Hanover College finished fifth with 40 points and was followed by Defiance College (39 points), College of Mount St. Joseph (25), Bluffton University (16), and Transylvania University (15).

Manchester finished third at last fall's HCAC Championship, but return HCAC MVP **Andy Williams (Middlebury, Ind./Northridge)** and All-HCAC first team member **Kyle Pletcher (Walkerton, Ind./John Glenn)** this season. Williams was the top finisher at the meet, while Pletcher marked a fourth place finish. Sophomore **Braden Nelson (Angola, Ind./H.S.)** earned honorable mention All-HCAC a year ago with his 13th place finish at the championship meet.

2009 HCAC Preseason Poll		
	Team	Points
1.	Manchester	77 (6)
2.	Rose-Hulman	71 (2)
3.	Anderson	62
4.	Franklin	60 (1)
5.	Hanover	40
6.	Defiance	39
7.	Mount St. Joseph	25
8.	Bluffton	16
9.	Transylvania	15

Rose-Hulman narrowly claimed the conference championship last fall, but fell two points shy of conference champion Franklin. The Engineers lost key runners to graduation, but will rely on the legs of **David Caldwell (Plymouth, Ind./H.S.)** to carry the torch for the men's squad this season. Caldwell is Rose's only returning All-HCAC first team runner from last fall after placing eighth at the 2008 meet. Sophomore **Micah Aldrich (Indianapolis, Ind./Warren Central)** and junior **Tyler Kreipke (Zionsville, Ind./H.S.)** earned honorable mention all-conference last fall after placing 16th and 19th at the championships.

Anderson's run of nine consecutive conference titles ended last fall. The Ravens placed fourth at the meet and will look for redemption in late October. Anderson's key returnees feature two sophomores and a freshman to pace the squad in 2009. Sophomore's **Taylor Holmes (Monticello, Ind./Twin Lakes)** and **Bill Digman (Muncie, Ind./Delta)** and freshman **Kirk Saunders (Bloomington, Ill./University)** will try and bring the Ravens back to the top of the league standings.

The 2009 HCAC Men's Cross Country Championship is set for Saturday, October 31. The event will be hosted by College of Mount St. Joseph.

The 2009 men's cross country season is set to begin on September 1.

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Runners to Watch

Anderson 	Taylor Holmes Bill Digman Kirk Saunders	Sophomore Sophomore Freshman	Monticello, Ind./Twin Lakes Muncie, Ind./Delta Bloomington, Ill./University
Bluffton 	Andy Chaffee Ben Siebert Ben Althaus	Sophomore Senior Junior	Clarkston, Mich./H.S. Celina, Ohio/H.S. Delhi, NY./H.S.
Defiance 	Justin Perkins Seth Bidlack Hayden Krick	Sophomore Junior Freshman	Bryan, Ohio/Fairview Oakwood, Ohio/Paulding Hicksville, Ohio/Antwerp
Franklin 	Jake Hojnacki Kevin Martin Scotch Swango	Junior Junior Senior	LaPorte, Ind./H.S. Mitchell, Ind./H.S. North Salem, Ind./Tri-West
Hanover 	Andrew Kinman Shawn VanHoose	Sophomore Sophomore	Greenwood, Ind./Centre Grove Floyds Knobs, Ind./St. Xavier
Manchester 	Andy Williams Kyle Pletcher Braden Nelson Alec Womboldt	Senior Senior Sophomore Sophomore	Middlebury, Ind./Northridge Walkerton, Ind./John Glenn Angola, Ind./H.S. Dewitt, Mich./H.S.
Mt. St. Joseph 	Jeff Schroer Ben Weidner Alex Shields	Senior Senior Senior	Cincinnati, Ohio/Elder Cincinnati, Ohio/Elder Cincinnati, Ohio/LaSalle
Rose-Hulman 	David Caldwell Tyler Kreipke Clark Moser Micah Aldrich	Junior Junior Junior Sophomore	Plymouth, Ind./H.S. Zionsville, Ind./H.S. Elwood, Ind./H.S. Indianapolis, Ind./Warren Central
Transylvania 	Daniel Chartier Johnny Bush Daniel Rouse	Sophomore Freshman Freshman	Lexington, Ky./Lexington Catholic Ashland, Ky./Rose Hill Christian Lexington, Ky./Dunbar

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