

Heartland Collegiate Athletic Conference Office

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Preseason Softball Coaches Poll

Transylvania Tops HCAC Preseason Softball Poll

GREENWOOD, IN – The Transylvania University softball team has been selected as the favorite to win the 2010 Heartland Collegiate Athletic Conference softball title in a vote of league coaches. The Pioneers claimed 79 total points and eight first-place votes in the Coaches Preseason Poll.

Bluffton University placed second in the poll with 70 total points and the final first-place vote. Defiance College, winner of the 2009 HCAC Tournament, finished third in the poll with 60 total points and was followed by Anderson University with 49 points. Manchester College (41), Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology (38), College of Mount St. Joseph (37), Franklin College (18), and Hanover College (13) rounded out the poll.

Transylvania finished the 2009 season as the conference champion and will be looking for the school's sixth conference title this spring. The Pioneers were 27-12 overall and 13-3 in conference play. Transy was eliminated from the conference tournament in the championship game, falling to Defiance 7-0.

The Pioneers return a key pitcher and a key bat from last season's team. HCAC Pitcher of the Year **Kendra DeArk (Jeffersonville, Ind./H.S.)** and All-HCAC first team member **Kaitlyn Kallenborn (Marshallville, Ohio/Smithville)** will look to pick up where they left off a year ago. DeArk finished 14-7 last year with a league-best 1.17 earned run average. The junior pitched 15 complete games and struck out 87 batters in 144.0 innings of work.

Transy will look for Kallenborn to carry the offense in 2010. Kallenborn, a sophomore catcher, hit .253 last season with six home runs and 18 RBI.

Bluffton finished second in the conference standings last season with a 12-4 record. The Beavers were 30-13 overall last spring and fell to Transylvania 1-0 in the HCAC tournament semifinals. Key players for Bluffton this season will be first team All-HCAC members **Brooke Babcock (Findlay, Ohio/H.S.)** and **Jayme Marbaugh (Ohio City, Ohio/Parkway)**. Babcock, a senior pitcher, ranked second in the HCAC last spring with 15 wins and 137 strikeouts. She also ranked among the leaders with a 1.89 ERA and 14 complete games. Marbaugh batted .382 with 39 runs scored, 10 doubles, two home runs, 26 RBI, and 11 stolen bases last season.

Defiance finished along side Bluffton in the conference standings with a 12-4 record. The Yellow Jackets were 30-16 overall and earned the conference tournament championship and AQ berth into the NCAA Division III softball tournament. DC returns a second team All-HCAC and an honorable mention All-HCAC member to their lineup. Junior catcher **Mallory Faling (Clark Lake, Mich./Columbia Central)** was a second team selection, batting .305 with 16 runs scored, four home runs, and 28 RBI. Junior shortstop **Tasha Stucke (Coldwater, Ohio/H.S.)** hit .294 with 29 runs, 10 doubles, and 30 RBI to earn honorable mention.

The 2010 softball season opens on March 5. The HCAC portion of the schedule will begin on March 20 with the HCAC Tournament slated for May 7-8.

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2010 HCAC Softball Coaches Preseason Poll

<u>Team</u>	<u>Points (first place votes)</u>
1. Transylvania	79 (8)
2. Bluffton	70 (1)
3. Defiance	60
4. Anderson	49
5. Manchester	41
6. Rose-Hulman	38
7. Mount St. Joseph	37
8. Franklin	18
9. Hanover	13

2010 Softball Players to Watch

Anderson: Lys Hess – OF/3B (So., Auburn, Ind./Lakewood Park), Monica Crowe – P (So., Muncie, Ind./Wes Del), Johnna Rebenack – SS (So., Anderson, Ind./H.S.)

Bluffton: Brooke Babcock – P (Sr., Findlay, Ohio/H.S.), Emily Manahan – 1B (So., Columbus, Ohio/Bishop Watterson), Shelby Wade – OF (Fr., Delaware, Ohio/Buckeye Valley), Jayme Marbaugh – 3B (Sr., Ohio City, Ohio/Parkway)

Defiance: Aarika Davis – 3B (Sr., Canton, Ohio/McKinley), Mallory Faling – C (Jr., Clark Lake, Mich./Columbia Central), Marah Robinson – OF (Jr., New Philadelphia, Ohio/H.S.), Kelly Schnipke – P (Jr., Kalida, Ohio/H.S.), Tasha Stucke – SS (Jr., Coldwater, Ohio/H.S.)

Franklin: Tracey Smith – OF/P (Sr., Monrovia, Ind./H.S.), Brittany Pullen – C/1B (Sr., Franklin, Ind./H.S.), Alli Mitchell – P/Util. (Fr.)

Hanover: Blakli Nading – OF (So., North Vernon, Ind./Jennings Co.), Lauren Kreinest – SS (So., Harrison, Ohio/William Henry Harrison), Emily Merrill – P/IF (Sr., Milton, Ky./Trimble Co.)

Manchester: Kristi Brown – P (Sr., Veersburg, Ind./Attica), Rosie Bond – IF (Sr., St. Charles, Mo./Ritenour), Erica Bush – P (Jr., Greenwood, Ind./H.S.), Brittney Miller – OF (Jr., Goshen, Ind./Fairfield)

Mount St. Joseph: Casey Brookbank – P (Jr., Cincinnati, Ohio/Deer Park), Casey Waldman – OF (Sr., Cincinnati, Ohio/Clermont Northeastern), Danielle Wilson – C (Fr., Ross, Ohio/H.S.), Kim McElhinny – P (Fr., Crestwood, Ky./Oldham Co.)

Rose-Hulman: Jordan Goslee – P/1B (Sr., St. Joseph, Mich./H.S.), Brittany Bernthold – OF (Sr., Fisherville, Ky./Eastern), Meghan Canary – SS (So., Coatesville, Ind./South Putnam), Kristin Greer – 3B (Sr., Batavia, Ohio/H.S.), Kyla Lutz – P/IF (Jr., Tennyson, Ind./Boonville)

Transylvania: Kendra DeArk – P/OF (Jr., Jeffersonville, Ind./H.S.), Olivia Wall – P (Jr., El Campo, Tex./H.S.), Kaitlyn Kallenborn – C (So., Marshallville, Ohio/Smithville)

***For more information on the Heartland Collegiate Athletic Conference and up to date standings, schedules, statistics, and more, log on to the HCAC website at www.heartlandconf.org.

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