

Heartland Collegiate Athletic Conference Office

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--October 27, 2009 HCAC Women's Basketball Preseason Poll

Hanover Narrowly Favored for HCAC Women's Basketball Title

GREENWOOD, IN – Hanover College has been voted the favorite to capture the 2009-10 Heartland Collegiate Athletic Conference women's basketball championship. The Panthers received three of the nine first-place votes in the HCAC Coaches Preseason Poll and collected 72 points in all. Franklin and Transylvania each finished a close second in the preseason voting with Franklin posting 71 total points and two first place votes and Transylvania earning 71 points and the remaining four first place votes.

Bluffton University finished fourth in the voting with 52 points and was followed by Manchester College which claimed 37 points. Anderson University (35 pts.), Defiance College (30), Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology (21), and the College of Mount St. Joseph (16) rounded out the poll.

Hanover finished third in the women's basketball race last winter, finishing the 2008-09 campaign with a record of 18-9, 10-6 HCAC. The Panthers fell to Transylvania in the HCAC tournament title game 79-69 to end the season.

Hanover returns one All-HCAC selection, including last year's conference leading scorer **Molly Martin (Terre Haute, Ind./North)**. Martin averaged 18.5 points per game as a sophomore and also added a conference-best 9.9 rebounds per contest. One other player to watch this winter will be junior **Torin Franz (Bloomington, Ind./South)**. Franz was named to the All-HCAC honorable mention team last season after averaging 11.2 points and 5.2 rebounds per game.

Transylvania will look to repeat as conference champions after earning the regular season and tournament title a year ago. The Pioneers posted a 23-6 overall record and a 14-2 mark in conference play. Transy defeated Hanover in the HCAC Tournament championship game and defeated Howard Payne 65-52 in the opening round of the NCAA Division III playoffs before falling to Washington (Mo.) in the second round. The Pioneers return All-HCAC selection **Brittany Henderlight (Versailles, Ky./Woodford Co.)** to this year's squad. Henderlight averaged 12.0 points and 4.6 rebounds per game during her junior season. **Olivia Akridge (Eddyville, Ky./Lyon Co.)** returns after being an honorable mention All-HCAC selection last winter. The senior chipped in 9.9 points and 4.3 rebounds per game.

The Franklin women's team is coming off a 15-11 regular season, finishing 10-6 in conference play. The Grizzlies return two All-HCAC members that could help FC contend for a conference championship. **Heather Harper (Mooresville, Ind./H.S.)** and **Traci Lippold (Greenwood, Ind./Centre Grove)** return after successful junior seasons. Harper averaged 16.4 points and 7.3 rebounds per game, while Lippold added 14.8 points and 5.1 rebounds to lead the Franklin offense.

The opening weekend for all teams is November 20-21 with the first conference games scheduled for Dec. 2.

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2009-10 Women's Basketball Preseason Coaches Poll

<u>Team</u>	<u>Points (first place votes)</u>
1. Hanover	72 (3)
2. Franklin	71 (2)
Transylvania	71 (4)
4. Bluffton	52
5. Manchester	37
6. Anderson	35
7. Defiance	30
8. Rose-Hulman	21
9. Mount St. Joseph	16

2009-10 Women's Basketball Players to Watch

Anderson: Tiffany Bowsher (Sr., F, 5-9, Harrod, Ohio/Allen East), Ellen Thompson (Jr., F, 5-9, Seymour, Ind./H.S.), Lauren Leisure (Jr., G, 5-6, Frankton, Ind./H.S.)

Bluffton: Kim Miller (Jr., F, 5-9, Delphos, Ohio/St. John's), Ginny Buckingham (Sr., F, 5-8, Bluffton, Ohio/H.S.), Vicki Auer (Sr., G, 5-5, Cincinnati, Ohio/Roger Bacon), Emily Shellabarger (So., C, 5-11, St. Marys, Ohio/Memorial)

Defiance: Mandy White (Sr., F, 5-11, Ottawa, Ohio/Ottawa-Glandorf), Shavonda Price (So., G, 5-9, Ft. Wayne, Ind./Southside), Tasha Stucke (Jr., PG, 5-6, Coldwater, Ohio/H.S.)

Franklin: Monica Planalp (Jr., G, 5-5, Tipton, Ind./H.S.), Traci Lippold (Sr., G, 5-7, Greenwood, Ind./Center Grove), Heather Harper (Sr., C, 5-11, Mooresville, Ind./H.S.)

Hanover: Molly Martin (Jr., C, 6-1, Terre Haute, Ind./North), Torin Franz (Jr., G, 5-10, Bloomington, Ind./South), Chelle Bentz (Jr., F, 5-8, Brookville, Ind./Franklin Co.), Holly Vogel (Jr., F, 5-11, North Manchester, Ind./Manchester), Micah Whitted (Jr., G, 5-4, Bedford, Ind./North Lawrence)

Mount St. Joseph: Kat O'Neill (Jr., G, 5-8, Burlington, Ky./Conner), Carolyn Holt (Jr., F, 5-10, Cincinnati, Ohio/Colerain)

Rose-Hulman: Donna Marsh (Jr., C, 6-1, Mobile, Ala./Baker), Alisa Dickerson (So., F, 5-10, Elizabethtown, Ky./H.S.)

Transylvania: Brittany Henderlight (Sr., G, 5-5, Versailles, Ky./Woodford Co.), Ashley Pait (Sr., G, 5-6, Jeffersonville, Ind./H.S.), Holly Milburn (Jr., C, 6-0, Georgetown, Ky./Scott Co.), Olivia Akridge (Jr., G, 5-4, Eddyville, Ky./Lyon Co.)

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