

# Northeast Conference

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## NEC Regular Season Champ Rider Claims Three Major Field Hockey Awards *Broncs Enjoy League-high Five All-Northeast Conference Selections*

**Somerset, NJ** -- Rider saw its first Northeast Conference (NEC) regular season field hockey crown in four years translate into a league-high five all-NEC selections and three major postseason awards. The Broncs' **Virginia Egusquiza (Getxo, Spain)** won the NEC Player of the Year award while her freshman teammate **Marlaine Schneider (Feasterville, PA/Neshaminy)** claimed NEC Rookie of the Year accolades. Rider head coach **Lori Hussong** garnered her third NEC Coach of the Year award, and first since 2005, after guiding the Broncs' to a perfect conference record for the second time in program history.

The postseason honors were announced at an awards banquet on the eve of the 11<sup>th</sup> annual Northeast Conference Field Hockey Championship, which is slated for November 6 & 7 in West Windsor, New Jersey.

Northeast Conference runner-up Lock Haven, which is eyeing its fourth consecutive NEC Tournament crown, accounted for two major awards. The Haven's junior forward **Amy Hordendorf (Topton, PA/Brandywine Heights)** is the NEC Offensive Player of the Year while senior teammate **Alanna Lewis (Trinidad & Tobago)** repeats as the NEC Defensive Player of the Year. Quinnipiac senior **Jenna Grossman (Flanders, NJ/Mt. Olive)** takes home her second NEC Goalkeeper of the Year award in as many seasons.

Representatives from eight of the league's nine members comprise the 2009 All-Northeast Conference First & Second Teams. Following Rider, Monmouth (4) and Quinnipiac (4) are tied for the second-highest number of honorees. Lock Haven, which has posted a 21-1 NEC regular season record over the past three seasons, is home to three all-NEC student-athletes. NEC newcomer Bryant, which is not yet eligible for postseason play, claimed two honors as did Sacred Heart. Saint Francis (PA) and Siena each placed one onto the All-NEC Second Team.

One season removed from the NEC Rookie of the Year honor she received as a freshman, Egusquiza became only the second individual in Rider's history to achieve NEC Player of the Year status. The sophomore midfielder joins the likes of Christina Ang who won the award in back-to-back seasons (2003, 2004). Egusquiza, a high midfielder, ranked amongst the Northeast Conference's top-three leaders in seven statistical categories. Known as a great distributor who can provide an offensive spark at any second, Egusquiza led the NEC in assists (17). Her 37 points rank third amongst the conference's scoring leaders and her 81 shots in 18 games are second-highest. Five of her 10 goals served as game-winners. A member of Spain's U21 National Team, Egusquiza is now a two-time all-NEC first team honoree.

Hordendorf has received all-NEC honors in each of her three seasons competing for the Lady Eagles, who had won 31 consecutive matches against NEC opponents until falling to Rider in the 2009 regular season finale. The 2007 NEC Rookie of the Year was a first-team all-NEC selection at forward in 2008. On her way to another major award and second straight all-NEC first team honor, Hordendorf was the top offensive producer in the league this season. She led all players in both goals (22) and points (48). Her strong, aggressive style led to five game-winning goals and yielded an average of 4.30 shots per contest (3<sup>rd</sup> in NEC).

Lewis is now the NEC Defensive Player of the Year for three years running. The only repeat winner in the history of the award, Lewis has anchored a Lock Haven defense that has surrendered a combined 12 goals against NEC opponents in three seasons. Lewis, who has been described as a composed defender who distributes the ball well, started all 20 games in Lock Haven's backfield this season. The 5-foot-6 Lewis is skilled in the offensive end as well, evidenced by her four goals and six assists.

(2009 NEC Field Hockey All-Conference Release; 1-of-4)

Bryant University (2012-13) • Central Connecticut State University • Fairleigh Dickinson University  
Long Island University • Monmouth University • Mount St. Mary's University  
Quinnipiac University • Robert Morris University • Sacred Heart University  
St. Francis (NY) College • Saint Francis (PA) University • Wagner College

Grossman is the lone four-time all-NEC honoree in the group. She burst onto the scene as the 2006 NEC Rookie of the Year, earning first team all-NEC honors for her freshman campaign. After a second team all-NEC selection in 2007, Grossman has captured the NEC Goalkeeper of the Year award along with first team accolades in back-to-back seasons. The goalie of record in each of Quinnipiac's five conference victories, Grossman posted an .810 save percentage and 1.06 goals-against average (GAA) in eight conference games. Keeping the Bobcats within striking distance in nearly every one of her starts, including a 1-0 setback to Rider (Oct. 11), Grossman needed to make at least 10 saves on 11 different occasions this season.

Following in Egusquiza's footsteps, Schneider brings the NEC rookie award back to Rider for a second straight season while also earning a spot in the second team all-conference midfield. The 5-foot-7 forward tallied 18 points in 18 games, an average that led all NEC freshmen. Schneider put 41 of her 56 shots on net and scored six goals, two of which served as game-winning tallies. The tenacious right wing was a five-time recipient of the NEC Rookie of the Week award.

Rider has posted a winning record in each of Hussong's nine seasons at the helm with the lone exception being her rookie campaign. The three-time NEC Coach of the Year, who signed on at Rider for the 2000 season, has guided her team to three tournament crowns during the decade. Looking for a fourth, the Broncos are coming off their best regular season showing in program history. Rider's 17-1 overall record is the best the NEC has seen since Lock Haven went 19-1 in 2004.

Lock Haven senior **Suzann Hobart (Lewisberry, PA/Red Land)**, Monmouth senior **Enza Mazza (Oceanport, NJ/Shore Regional)**, and Rider sophomore **Megan Pisani (Plainsboro, NJ/West Windsor, Plainsboro)** join Hordendorf up front of the All-NEC First Team.

Hobart, a three-time first team selection, was one of three Lady Eagle field players to start all 20 games. For the third consecutive season, Hobart ranked amongst the NEC's top-five leaders in both goals and points. Her 10 tallies, which included a trio of game-winners, tied Egusquiza for fourth while her 27 points ranked fifth.

Hawks' head coach Carli Figlio called Mazza "the best leader I've coached here." The 5-foot-5 veteran forward was critical in ending Monmouth's postseason drought. The Jersey Shore native was the NEC's third-leading goal scorer (11) and her 29 points were fourth best in the league rankings.

Pisani went from being a freshman reserve to the league's second-leading goal scorer. Her 21 tallies include a NEC-high nine game-winners. No goal was bigger than the one she scored in double-overtime to sink Lock Haven in the regular season finale. The two-time NEC Player of the Week selection added four assists in her sophomore campaign.

In addition to the NEC Player of the Year, the first team midfield is home to Quinnipiac junior **Megan McCreedy (White River, South Africa)** and Monmouth sophomore **Ashley McPeck (Hazlet, NJ/St. John Vianney)**. Their selections mark the second straight season during which both the Hawks and Bobcats have boasted a first team all-NEC middle. McCreedy's defensive prowess helped the Bobcats to their fourth postseason berth in five years. Although she took only seven shots all season, the QU veteran contributed seven assists in the offensive end. McPeck spent most of her time in the midfield, but Figlio was comfortable in playing her at any position on the field. Starting all 19 of Monmouth's games, she totaled four goals, including a game-winner against Sacred Heart, and two assists.

Rider junior **Margaret Ecke (New Egypt, NJ/New Egypt)** moves up to the first team defense after earning second team honors last season. She was the key piece of a backfield that allowed a league-low 11 goals in 18 games this season, including only one during the entire eight-game league schedule. In addition to a pair of defensive saves, Ecke contributed four goals and three assists.

Quinnipiac senior back **Brandy Longacre (Bethlehem, PA/Freedom)** rounds the All-NEC First Team. The 5-foot-8 left back is a pure defender whose offensive activity is scarce. With Longacre leading the way, the Bobcats allowed only eight goals in eight conference games.

Monmouth forward **Michelle Pieczynski (Doylestown, PA/Central Bucks West)** is one of two freshmen on the All-NEC Second Team, joining Schneider. Pieczynski led all NEC freshmen in goals (8) and tied the aforementioned NEC Rookie of the Year in points (18). Labeled by her head coach as a main reason the Hawks qualified for postseason play, she scored two goals in a 5-1 win over Siena that guaranteed Monmouth the last remaining spot in the NEC Tournament.

Bryant sophomore **Courtney Landi (Kingston, NY/Kingston)** completes an all-underclassmen second team attack. Lauded for her great defensive ability, Landi isn't shy to shoot either. The 5-foot-7 forward registered 32 shots on net, eight goals, and two assists during Bryant's first season playing a full league schedule. The other Bulldog to garner all-NEC honors, senior goalkeeper **Kundayi Mawema (Harare, Zimbabwe)** kept Bryant in a lot of games. Mawema made 17 starts in goal and earned the decision in each of Bryant's seven victories. Her 1.85 overall GAA shrunk to 1.25 in NEC play.

The four-person all-NEC second team midfield contains three players from the NEC's two Connecticut-based institutions along with Siena's lone all-NEC honoree. Senior **Bonnie Shea (Walpole, MA/Walpole)** did not miss a single start for Quinnipiac, finishing its 17-game regular season with four goals and four assists. Sacred Heart is twice represented at midfielder thanks to junior **Dana Luhrs (Milford, PA/Delaware Valley)** and senior **Whitney Russo (Waterville, ME/Waterville)**. The former played in the center of the Pioneers' formation, providing intense defense while adding four goals and three assists. Like her previously-noted teammate, Russo started in all of SHU's 19 games. She was less active in the offensive end, but still tallied a pair of goals, including a game-winner, and an assist. Siena senior **Kristin McGorty (Wappingers Falls, NY/John Jay)** put the Saints on the cusp of a NEC Tournament berth by notching an overtime goal in a late-season victory over Sacred Heart (Oct. 25) that set up a win-and-in situation against Monmouth. The hard-nosed midfielder totaled three goals and a team-high six assists.

Two of the three members of the all-NEC second team backfield will be on opposite sides of the Garden State rivalry when tournament play begins while the third party accounts for the Red Flash's lone all-NEC representation. Monmouth senior **Sarah Keppel (Northampton, PA/Northampton)** and Rider junior **Lindsay Rajeski (New Egypt, NJ/New Egypt)** are set to square off in the NEC semifinal. Keppel, who totaled two goals and one defensive save, has the ability to create an attack from her left back position. Rajeski is also somewhat offensive-minded, having registered 31 shots, two goals, and two assists. Saint Francis (PA) junior **Caitlin Brown (Hamburg, PA/Hamburg)** made 15 starts for second-year head coach Stacey Bean and logged a pair of defensive saves.

## 2009 Northeast Conference Postseason Awards

### Player of the Year

Virginia Egusquiza Rider M So. Getxo, Spain/Extracto del Expediente

### Offensive Player of the Year

Amy Hordendorf Lock Haven Jr. Topton, PA/Brandywine Heights

### Defensive Player of the Year

Alanna Lewis Lock Haven D Sr. Trinidad & Tobago/Southeast Port-of-Spain

### Goalkeeper of the Year

Jenna Grossman Quinnipiac GK Sr. Flanders, NJ/Mt. Olive

### Rookie of the Year

Marlaine Schneider Rider F Fr. Feasterville, PA/Neshaminy

### Coach of the Year

Lori Hussong Rider

## 2009 All-Northeast Conference Field Hockey First Team

### Forwards

Suzann Hobart Lock Haven Sr. Lewisberry, PA/Red Land  
Amy Hordendorf Lock Haven Jr. Topton, PA/Brandywine Heights  
Enza Mazza Monmouth Sr. Oceanport, NJ/Shore Regional  
Megan Pisani Rider So. Plainsboro, NJ/West Windsor-Plainsboro

### Midfielders

Virginia Egusquiza Rider So. Getxo, Spain/Extracto del Expediente  
Megan McCreehy Quinnipiac Jr. White River, South Africa/Uplands College  
Ashley McPeck Monmouth So. Hazlet, NJ/St. John Vianney

### Defenders

Margaret Ecke Rider Jr. New Egypt, NJ/New Egypt  
Alanna Lewis Lock Haven Sr. Trinidad & Tobago/Southeast Port-of-Spain  
Brandy Longacre Quinnipiac Sr. Bethlehem, PA/Freedom

### Goalkeeper

Jenna Grossman Quinnipiac Sr. Flanders, NJ/Mt. Olive

## 2009 All-Northeast Conference Field Hockey Second Team

### Forwards

Courtney Landi Bryant So. Kingston, NY/Kingston  
Michelle Pieczynski Monmouth Fr. Doylestown, PA/Central Bucks West  
Marlaine Schneider Rider Fr. Feasterville, PA/Neshaminy

### Midfielders

Dana Luhrs Sacred Heart Jr. Milford, PA/Delaware Valley  
Kristin McGorty Siena Sr. Wappingers Falls, NY/John Jay  
Whitney Russo Sacred Heart Sr. Waterville, ME/Waterville  
Bonnie Shea Quinnipiac Sr. Walpole, MA/Walpole

### Defenders

Caitlin Brown Saint Francis (PA) Jr. Hamburg, PA/Hamburg  
Sarah Keppel Monmouth Sr. Northampton, PA/Northampton  
Lindsay Rajeski Rider Jr. New Egypt, NJ/New Egypt

### Goalkeeper

Kundayi Mawema Bryant Sr. Harare, Zimbabwe/Dominican Convent