

Northeast Conference

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Monmouth Selected As NEC Preseason Women's Lacrosse Favorite

Hawks Seek Second Consecutive NEC Title

Somerset, NJ -- Monmouth has been tabbed as the preseason favorite to capture the 2007 Northeast Conference women's lacrosse title in a poll of the league's head coaches. The Hawks received seven first place votes, followed by Quinnipiac, which received one first place vote. Mount St. Mary's and Sacred Heart were picked for third and fourth, respectively, followed in order by Long Island, Wagner, Central Connecticut State (which also received a first place vote), Robert Morris and Saint Francis (PA).

Monmouth nabbed its second NEC title since 2001 last year, compiling an 11-game winning streak on the way towards earning an NCAA Tournament berth. The Hawks finished the season under first year head coach Kelly McCardell with a 13-7 overall record and perfect 7-0 conference mark. This season, McCardell and the Hawks return five all-NEC honorees from last year, including first team selections **Katie Degen (Glen Head, NY/North Shore)**, junior **Megan Nutter (Moorestown, NJ/Moorestown)** and sophomore **Monica Johnson (Radnor, PA/Archbishop Carroll)**, as well as second team juniors **Ashley Waldman (Oceanport, NJ/Shore Regional)** and **Jessica Picciuto (North Caldwell, NJ/West Essex Regional)**. A senior midfielder, Degen led the Hawks in caused turnovers (32) - which also her ranked 18th nationally - and draw controls (36), and was second in scoring (34 g, 21 a). In her rookie campaign, Johnson registered 228 saves and was ranked seventh nationally in save percentage (.525), while Nutter ended the season with 32 goals and 38 points. The Hawks will also rely on the leadership of seniors **Carolyn Raveia (Fairfax, VA/W.T. Woodson)** and **Kaitlyn Robinson (Huntington Station, NY/St. Anthony's)**. Raveia, tallied 39 goals and 41 points, while Robinson scored a career-high 14 goals and notched four assists on the year. Waldman logged 13 goals and dished out three assists from her midfield spot. Defenders Picciuto and sophomore **Erin Marley (Columbia, MD/Seton Keough)** will anchor the Hawks defense. Picciuto recorded 17 draw controls and caused 17 turnovers, while Marley tallied 26 ground balls and forced 11 turnovers on the season.

2007 Northeast Conference Women's Lacrosse Preseason Coaches Poll

1. Monmouth (7)
2. Quinnipiac (1)
3. Mount St. Mary's
4. Sacred Heart
5. Long Island
6. Wagner
7. Central Connecticut State (1)
8. Robert Morris
9. Saint Francis (PA)

First place votes in parentheses

Quinnipiac is looking to win its first-ever NEC title, after having the best defense in the league in 2006 and ending the season in third place. The Bobcats will attempt to do so with the return of two all-conference performers, including reigning Rookie of the Year **Tiffany Manzi (Feeding Hills, MA/Agawam)**. An all-NEC first teamer, Manzi led the team in groundballs (44) and game-winning goals (3), while also ranking among the team leaders in caused turnovers (19). Senior defender **Sophia Pantelides (Annapolis, MD/Annapolis)** received second team honors for the second straight year, after causing 20 turnovers and picking up 33 ground balls on the season. Along with Pantelides, the Bobcats will rely on the leadership of senior **Kara Cornelius (Joppa, MD/Joppatowne)** and junior attack **Katy Delagi**

(2007 NEC Women's Lacrosse Preseason Poll Release; 1-of-2)

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
St. Francis (PA) University • Wagner College

(Bay Shore, NY/Bay Shore). Delagi finished the season with 30 points (20 g, 10 a), while Cornelius led the team with 37 draw controls, ranking her fifth in the NEC for draw controls per game (2.20), which propelled her to receive NEC All-Tournament Team accolades.

After falling to Monmouth in the title game of the 2006 tournament, **Mount St. Mary's** looks to reclaim the NEC title for the third time. The Mountaineers finished the 2006 season 7-11 overall and 4-4 in conference play. Offensively, the Mount will look to second team all-conference senior **Casey Paris (Longwood, FL/Lake Brantley)**, junior attack **Jenna Duffy (Bel Air, MD/Catholic)**, and sophomore **Katelyn Catanese (Huntington, NY/St. Anthony's)**. Duffy paced the squad with 21 assists and found the back of the net 15 times for 36 points, while Paris led the team with 52 points (37 g, 15 a). Catanese notched 12 goals and six assists for 18 points along with 28 ground balls, 12 draw controls and 12 caused turnovers. On the defensive side, senior **Jacqui Ricca (Poolesville, MD/St. John's College)** tallied 25 ground balls with one caused turnover on the season.

Sacred Heart posted its best-ever record in conference play at 7-1 last year, and will look to improve upon its 8-10 record overall. Under the guidance of 2006 NEC Coach of the Year **Laura Cook**, the Pioneers will look to seniors **Brianna Bubeck (Bethlehem, NY/Bethlehem Central)** and **Jessica McDonough (Carmel, NY/Mahopac)** for leadership. A second team all-conference honoree, Bubeck led the team with 38 points (30 g, 8 a), while defender McDonough caused 15 turnovers and added 23 ground balls. A key to the midfield, sophomore **Mary Montesarchio (Cortlandt Manor, NY/Walter Panas)** emerged as an offensive standout last season with 33 points (21 g, 12 a), while nabbing second team all-NEC honors.

Around the league, **Long Island** returns senior first team all-conference attack **Amy Rizzo (Jackson, NJ/Jackson Memorial)**, who finished 12th in the NCAA in goals per game (3.18). **Wagner** looks for its first-ever NEC title led by sophomore attack **Jessica Richmond (Jenkintown, PA/Jenkintown)**. Richmond scored 30 goals and registered 33 draw controls on the year, earning second team all-conference accolades. **Robert Morris'** offense will be led by sophomore **Jennifer Collins (Edgewater, MD/South River)**, who registered 57 points (45 g, 12 a), while **Central Connecticut State** senior midfielder **Julia Steier (West Hartford, CT/Conard)** had 28 points along with 29 ground balls and 22 draw controls. Rounding out the pack, **Saint Francis (PA)** will be led by first-year head coach **Steph Marcon**.

The 2007 NEC Women's Lacrosse Tournament, to be hosted by the high seed, will take place on April 27 and April 29. The top four regular season teams will advance to the league playoffs.