

Heartland Collegiate Athletic Conference Office

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HCAC Volleyball Preseason Poll

Mount St. Joseph Picked to Claim Ninth HCAC Volleyball Crown

GREENWOOD, Ind. – The College of Mount St. Joseph volleyball team has been selected as the preseason favorite to win the 2007 Heartland Collegiate Athletic Conference championship. In a poll of the nine HCAC head coaches, the Mount received the maximum 81 total points and nine first place votes.

Hanover College placed second in the poll with 72 points, grabbing all nine second place votes. Anderson University is picked to finish third in the conference standings this fall with 62 points. Franklin College (50 points), Defiance College (44), Bluffton University (31), Manchester College (31), Transylvania University (21) and Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology (13) round out the poll.

The Lions are coming off a 27-12 season and 8-0 conference record in 2006. The Mount fell in the Great Lakes Regional opener to 15th ranked Hiram College, 30-27, 30-28, 30-25, ending their season. MSJ will look to continue their dominance in the HCAC after losing solid talent to graduation.

Leading the way for 2006 HCAC coach of the year Michele Benoit's Lions will be junior setter **Katie Playko (Norwalk, Ohio/Norwalk St. Paul)**, who was named to the 2006 All-HCAC first team, senior **Becky Breetz (Southlake, TX/Carroll)**, and sophomore outside hitter **Anna Richter (Fairfield, Ohio/Hamilton Badin)**. Playko saw action in 38 games last year, recording a league high 1,493 assists and also chipped in with 249 digs. Breetz played in 24 matches as a junior and recorded 198 kills and 37 blocks for the Lions. Richter had a solid freshman season for the Mount, adding 358 kills, 29 service aces, and 329 digs.

2007 HCAC Preseason Poll		
	Team	Points
1.	Mount St. Joseph	81 (9)
2.	Hanover	72
3.	Anderson	62
4.	Franklin	50
5.	Defiance	44
6.	Bluffton	31
	Manchester	31
8.	Transylvania	21
9.	Rose-Hulman	13

Hanover finished tied for second in the HCAC last season with a 6-2 conference mark and a 21-10 record overall. The Panthers will look to contend for the conference championship this season behind seniors **Danielle Hazelbaker (Selma, IN/Wapahani)** and **Carley Meek (Indianapolis, IN/Roncalli)**. Hazelbaker earned first team all-HCAC honors last season recording 321 kills and 498 digs as a junior. Meek was also a first team all-HCAC member, recording 463 kills for a league high 4.21 average per game. Meek also added 511 digs last year for the Panthers.

Anderson finished tied for second with Hanover last season with a 6-2 conference record and an overall record of 24-9. The Ravens return 2006 Freshman of the Year **Jessica Berlin (New Haven, IN/Snider)** who also received first team all-HCAC honors. Berlin ranked second on the Ravens with 361 kills last fall, also adding 58 service aces and 375 digs. She will be joined by **Whitney Osborn (Hartford City, IN/Blackford)** to lead the Ravens in 2007. Osborn led the team with 368 kills last year and ranked third in blocks (70).

The 2007 volleyball season is scheduled to open on Aug. 31.

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Players to Watch

Anderson 	Jessica Berlin Carol Weatherford Whitney Osborn Kate McCollum	Sophomore Sophomore Senior Sophomore	OH MH RS OH	New Haven, Ind./Snider Terre Haute, Ind./North Vigo Hartford City, Ind./Blackford West Alexandria, Ohio/Twin Valley South
Bluffton 	Chelsea Wyse Rachel Alvarez Michele Rosen Brittany Roth Shauna Rowland	Junior Senior Sophomore Sophomore Freshman	S OPP MH L S/OH	Archbold, Ohio/Archbold Convoy, Ohio/Crestview Harrison, Ohio/H.S. Findlay, Ohio/H.S. Bucyrus, Ohio/Wynford
Defiance 	Danyel Lipps Brittany Cooley Lauren Aldridge Sara Porter	Sophomore Senior Junior Freshman	OH/MH S OH/MH OH	West Alexandria, Ohio/Twin Valley South Toledo, Ohio/Cardinal Stritch Ypsilanti, Mich./Lincoln
Franklin 	Haley Bourke Marcy Robbins	Senior Senior	MH OH	Indianapolis, Ind./Lawrence North Bedford, Ind./Bedford North Lawrence
Hanover 	Danielle Hazelbaker Carley Meek Kristen Blood	Senior Senior Senior	OH OH MH	Selma, Ind./Wapahani Indianapolis, Ind./Roncalli Crawfordsville, Ind./N. Montgomery
Manchester 	Christa Peden Tasia Smith Tiffany Moore	Freshman Sophomore Junior	MH MH/RS S	Warsaw, Ind./H.S. Ossian, Ind./Norwell
Mt. St. Joseph 	Anna Richter Katie Playko Becky Breetz Brandi Corbello Lauren Terwilliger	Sophomore Junior Senior Freshman Freshman	OH S OPP OH OPP	Fairfield, Ohio/Hamilton Badin Norwalk, Ohio/Norwalk St. Paul Southlake, TX/Carroll Florence, Ky./Boone County Wolcottville, IN/Lakeland
Rose-Hulman 	Sarah Messmer Brandi Sturgill Amanda Fellows Erin Rumley	Junior Junior Senior Senior	MB S RS OH	Cincinnati, Ohio/McNicholas Zionsville, NC/Watauga Beavercreek, Ohio/H.S. Portage, Ind./Christian
Transylvania 	Andrea Herbstreit Morgan White Sarah Ruckreigel Sarah Sams	Junior Senior Junior Freshman	S MH OH L	Walton, Ky./Ryle Lexington, Ky./Dunbar Louisville, Ky./Butler Lexington, Ky./Dunbar

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