



NORTH COAST ATHLETIC CONFERENCE

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ALLEGHENY COLLEGE ★ DENISON UNIVERSITY ★ EARLHAM COLLEGE ★ HIRAM COLLEGE ★ KENYON COLLEGE
 OBERLIN COLLEGE ★ OHIO WESLEYAN UNIVERSITY ★ WABASH COLLEGE ★ WITTENBERG UNIVERSITY ★ COLLEGE OF WOOSTER

NCAC Basketball Special

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WOOSTER MEN, DENISON WOMEN FAVORED AS NCAC PREPS FOR 25TH BASKETBALL CAMPAIGN

CLEVELAND, Ohio -- Wooster's men and Denison's women were tabbed as the favorites in preseason voting by both league coaches and members of the media after the North Coast Athletic Conference's 25th annual Basketball Media Day, which was held today via teleconference.

Four-time defending champion Wooster topped second-place Wittenberg in the men's balloting after picking up seven of 10 possible first-place votes from the coaches and 20 of 23 from the media. In fact, the coaches and media predicted the exact same finish for the 10 league squads, with one exception. The Tigers, in second, earned one first-place nod from both the coaches and media. Defending NCAC tournament champion Ohio Wesleyan, with one first-place nod from the media, was third, followed by Wabash in fourth. The Little Giants garnered one first-place vote from reporters listening in and two from the coaches. Kenyon finished fifth, followed by Allegheny in sixth and Hiram in seventh. The coaches tabbed Oberlin eighth and Denison ninth, while the media reversed that order. Earlham rounded out both polls. The Fighting Scots return eight letterwinners and three starters from a team that went 23-5 overall and was edged out in the semifinals of the NCAA Tournament. The Scots will look to senior forward **Marty Bidwell (Middletown, OH/Bishop Fenwick)** and sophomore forward **Bryan Wickliffe (Columbus, OH/St. Charles Prep)** for leadership in the early going. Bidwell earned All-NCAC honorable mention honors last winter, averaging 9.3 points, 5.1 rebounds, 3.5 assists, and 1.8 steals, while Wickliffe contributed 10.8 points and 5.4 rebounds in his first season.

Four-time NCAC tournament champion Denison took seven of nine first-place votes in the women's coaches' poll, and 16 of 20 in the media poll to outdistance second-place Wittenberg. The coaches and media on the call predicted the Tigers would finish second and gave them a combined three first-place nods - two from reporters and one from the league coaches. Both polls were remarkably similar in their predictions in the standings, only one difference exists in their opinions. Ohio Wesleyan was third; the Battling Bishops received one first-place vote from the coaches. Kenyon, which received the remaining two first-place votes from the media, was tabbed fourth, followed by Allegheny in fifth and Wooster in sixth. The coaches slotted Hiram, Oberlin and Earlham in places seven through nine, respectively, while the media mixed things up with Oberlin in seventh, followed by Hiram in eighth. The Big Red return 10 letterwinners and five starters from a team that won its third straight NCAC tourney crown after entering the event as the fourth seed. Denison compiled an 18-5 overall record a year ago and bowed out in the first round of the NCAA Tournament. Denison's top returning scorer and rebounder is senior **Carolyn Simpson (Dublin, OH/Scioto)**, who averaged 12.8 points and 8.4 rebounds per game last season.

The bulk of the 2008-09 season begins on Friday, Nov. 21. The NCAC Tournament will be held at the end of February, with the men's and women's semifinals and finals at the site of the respective high seeds on Feb. 27-28.

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2008-09 Men's Poll (Coaches)

1. Wooster (7)	97
2. Wittenberg (1)	82
3. Ohio Wesleyan	76
4. Wabash (2)	73
5. Kenyon	62
6. Allegheny	60
7. Hiram	32
8. Oberlin	25
9. Denison	24
10. Earlham	19

2008-09 Women's Poll (Coaches)

1. Denison (7)	78
2. Wittenberg (1)	69
3. Ohio Wesleyan (1)	64
4. Kenyon	51
5. Allegheny	49
6. Wooster	33
7. Hiram	25
8. Oberlin	22
9. Earlham	14

2008-09 Men's Poll (Media)

1. Wooster (20)	227
2. Wittenberg (1)	190
3. Ohio Wesleyan (1)	181
4. Wabash (1)	171
5. Kenyon	138
6. Allegheny	119
7. Hiram	81
8. Denison	65
9. Oberlin	61
10. Earlham	32

2008-09 Women's Poll (Media)

1. Denison (16)	172
2. Wittenberg (2)	142
3. Ohio Wesleyan	138
4. Kenyon (2)	130
5. Allegheny	109
6. Wooster	78
7. Oberlin	56
8. Hiram	47
9. Earlham	28