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Stonehill Picked to Finish First in Northeast-10 Women's Basketball

South Easton, Mass. – Stonehill College has been selected to claim the Northeast-10 women's basketball regular season title this season as voted by the conference's head coaches. Overall, the Skyhawks received 219 points to put them on the top of the preseason coaches' poll.

Stonehill advanced all the way to the East Regional final last season after finishing the year with a 22-9 record. The Skyhawks picked up 11 of the possible 16 first-place votes in the poll.

Bentley University received two first-place votes and is picked to finish second after picking up 206 points. The Falcons finished just ahead of last year's NCAA Division II Finalist, Franklin Pierce University. The Ravens received the final three first-place votes with a total of 201 points in the poll. Pace University appears next in the poll, in fourth place, with 172 points, followed by Assumption College with 163 points to round out the top five.

2009-10 Women's Basketball Preseason Coaches' Poll

<u>Team</u>	<u>Points</u>	<u>Overall/Conf. 08-09 Record</u>
1. Stonehill (11)	219	22-9/15-7
2. Bentley (2)	206	21-12/15-7
3. Franklin Pierce (3)	201	29-6/18-4
4. Pace	172	18-11/13-9
5. Assumption	163	15-13/13-9
6. So. New Hampshire	152	18-11/12-10
7. American Int'l	144	21-13/14-8
8. Le Moyne	113	15-13/12-10
9. New Haven	112	16-13/10-12
10. Saint Rose	100	20-11/13-9
11. Saint Michael's	91	14-13/11-11
12. UMass Lowell	68	8-19/5-17
13. Merrimack	57	9-19/8-14
14. So. Connecticut	52	7-20/4-18
15. Adelphi	41	13-15/10-8 *
16. Saint Anselm	29	4-23/2-20

(First place votes in parentheses.)

* Member of the East Coast Conference in 2008

Southern New Hampshire University is picked to finish sixth after earning 152 points slightly ahead of American International who picked up 144 points. Le Moyne College is next in the poll in eighth place with 113 points as the Dolphins just edged out the University of New Haven who appears ninth with 112 points. The College of Saint Rose received 100 points and is picked to finish in tenth place, followed by Saint Michael's College (91) and the University of Massachusetts Lowell (68) as the Purple Knights and River Hawks round out the potential playoff bound teams in eleventh and twelfth place, respectively.

The remaining of the poll is as follows in order with Merrimack College (57), Southern Connecticut State University (52), Adelphi University (41) and Saint Anselm College (29).

In addition to Franklin Pierce's appearance in the National Championship game last season, the Northeast-10 was well represented in the NCAA Tournament as five teams advanced including American International, Bentley, Franklin Pierce, Saint Rose and Stonehill.

The 2009-2010 season tips-off early this year as Southern New Hampshire and Stonehill will take part in the annual Disney Division II Tip-Off Classic which is set to begin on Friday, Nov. 6 and conclude on Sunday, Nov. 8. Both teams will play three games at the Milk House in Lake Buena Vista, Fla. Northeast-10 conference play will begin on Wednesday, Nov. 18 with seven games slated.

The Northeast-10 Championship begins on Sunday, Feb. 28 with first round action and will conclude on Sunday, March 7 with the championship final.

For more information visit the Northeast-10 website throughout the season at www.northeast10.org.

With 16 member institutions the Northeast-10 shares the distinction of being the largest Division II conference in the country along with the PSAC and WVIAC. Its 23 championship sports provide athletic opportunities for over 5,500 student-athletes, the largest such program of any Division II conference.

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