



NORTHEAST-10 CONFERENCE

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American International College Tabbed as Northeast-10 Women's Basketball Favorite

South Easton, Mass. – The Yellow Jackets of American International College have been picked to be the Northeast-10 regular season champions, as they were selected the favorite in the 2005-06 women's basketball preseason coaches' poll, announced today by the conference office.

American International, which finished fourth in the conference with a record of 23-9, received 205 points overall, including three first place votes, to earn the top ranking. The Yellow Jackets edged Bentley College by just six points, as the Falcons received 199 points and two first place votes.

Merrimack College, who shared the regular season title in 2004-2005 with Southern Connecticut State University, trailed the Falcons by six votes in the preseason poll. The Warriors earned a third place nod with four first place votes while the Owls tallied 186 votes and also received four first place votes.

The final two first place votes went to Pace University and helped the Setters to a fifth place selection in the preseason poll with 182 votes.

The remainder of the field included, in order, The College of Saint Rose (140), Stonehill College (123), Bryant University (117), the University of Massachusetts Lowell (111), Assumption College (104), Franklin Pierce College (73), Saint Anselm College (54), Saint Michael's College (43), Le Moyne College (35) and Southern New Hampshire University (35).

Bentley defeated Merrimack, 61-53 in overtime, to win last year's Northeast-10 tournament crown. The NCAA national tournament saw six league members receive bids, including Merrimack, Bentley, American International, Bryant, Southern Connecticut and Pace. The Warriors advanced through the Northeast Regional by avenging Bentley in the championship and defeated St. Cloud State in the "Elite Eight" before falling to Seattle Pacific in the NCAA "Final Four."

The season gets underway on November 4 when Bentley travels to the Disney Division II Tip Off Classic and takes on Regis (Colo.), while Merrimack opens the season the same day against North Dakota, also at the Disney Classic. The regular season opens on November 19 with three Northeast-10 women's contests. The tournament begins on February 26 with first round games, followed by the quarterfinals on February 28 and the Northeast-10 "Final Four" scheduled for March 3-4.

Sponsoring 23 championship sports and 15 full-time members, the Northeast-10 is the second largest NCAA Division II athletic conference in the nation and sponsors the most championships of any Division II conference.

2005-06 Women's Basketball Preseason Coaches' Poll		
Team	Points	04-05 Record
1. American International (3)	205	23-9
2. Bentley (2)	199	28-8
3. Merrimack (4)	193	29-6
4. Southern Connecticut (4)	186	25-6
5. Pace (2)	182	20-11
6. Saint Rose	140	14-14
7. Stonehill	123	14-14
8. Bryant	117	18-12
9. UMass Lowell	111	16-13
10. Assumption	104	13-15
11. Franklin Pierce	73	14-14
12. Saint Anselm	54	7-20
13. Saint Michael's	43	8-18
14. Le Moyne	35	10-18
14. Southern New Hampshire	35	5-22

(First place votes in parentheses.)