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Merrimack Picked to Finish First in Northeast-10 Men's Basketball

South Easton, Mass. – Merrimack College has been selected to claim the Northeast-10 men's basketball regular season title this season as voted by the conference's head coaches. Overall, the Warriors received 214 points to put them on the top of the preseason coaches' poll.

Merrimack advanced to the NCAA tournament last season, finishing the year with a 21-9 overall record. The Warriors picked up seven of the possible 16 first-place votes in the poll.

Bentley University also received seven first-place votes and was edged out by the Warriors to finish second after picking up 212 points. The Falcons made it all the way to the East Regional Finals last season with an overall record of 26-7. The University of Massachusetts-Lowell received one first-place vote with a total of 191 points in the poll, for third place, slightly ahead of Le Moyne College, who picked up 189 points. Stonehill College, who received the final first place vote, received 164 points to round out the top five.

Saint Anselm College is picked to finish sixth after earning 140 points, finishing ahead of Assumption and Southern New Hampshire, who are tied for a seventh place finish, with 132 points each. Adelphi University is next in the poll in ninth place with 120 points, while American International appears tenth with 102 points. The College of Saint Rose received 88 points, followed by Pace University (68), as the Golden Knights and Setters round out the potential playoff bound teams in eleventh and twelfth place respectively.

The remaining of the poll is as follows in order with Franklin Pierce University (55), Saint Michael's College (50), University of New Haven (48) and Southern Connecticut State University (15).

The Northeast-10 placed the second most teams in last year's NCAA Tournament with five, including Assumption, Bentley, UMass-Lowell, Merrimack, and Stonehill. That marked the fourth time the Northeast-10 placed five teams in the tournament (2005, 2006, 2008, and 2009).

The season will tip-off on Nov. 15 with 12 teams in action. Northeast-10 conference play will begin on Wednesday, Nov. 18 with seven games slated. The Northeast-10 Championship begins on Saturday, Feb. 27 with first round action and will conclude on Saturday, March 6 with the championship final.

2009-10 Men's Basketball Preseason Coaches' Poll

<u>Team</u>	<u>Points</u>	<u>Overall/Conf. 08-09 Record</u>
1. Merrimack (7)	214	21-9/16-6
2. Bentley (7)	212	26-7/18-4
3. UMass-Lowell (1)	191	21-8/16-6
4. Le Moyne	189	20-11/13-9
5. Stonehill (1)	164	21-8/16-6
6. Saint Anselm	140	17-13/10-12
T-7. Assumption	132	23-10/15-7
T-7. So. New Hampshire	132	18-12/12-10
9. Adelphi	120	20-10/14-6*
10. American Int'l	102	15-13/11-11
11. Saint Rose	88	11-17/9-13
12. Pace	68	9-19/7-15
13. Franklin Pierce	55	11-17/8-14
14. Saint Michael's	50	10-15/7-15
15. New Haven	48	8-19/6-16
16. So. Connecticut	15	2-25/1-21

(First place votes in parentheses.)

* Member of the East Coast Conference in 2008

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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