



Today's Scholar-Athletes ~ Tomorrow's Leaders

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Patriot League Announces 2008 Baseball All-League Teams

Army Leads All Schools With Eight Honorees

Center Valley, Pa. (5/7/08) – After earning the top seed in this weekend's Patriot League Tournament, Army reaped the benefits of its stellar season by leading all teams with eight selections on the 2008 Patriot League Baseball All-League Team. The team was voted on by the League's six head coaches, who could not vote for their own student-athletes.

The Black Knights placed three players on the first team, while five garnered second-team honors. Bucknell followed Army with seven selections, while Navy had six picks overall and a League-high five student-athletes that received first-team honors. Holy Cross and Lehigh each had three All-League selections, while Lafayette had one representative.

The first-team outfield includes three seniors with outstanding career resumes, and a sophomore that sits in the top five in the League in nearly every offensive category. Army's Cole White and Bucknell's Jason Buursma join the elite category of four-time All-League selections with their place in the first-team outfield, becoming just the fourth and fifth players in League history to receive All-League recognition in each of their four seasons.

White extends his Patriot League record by receiving his seventh spot on an All-League team, as he was selected as both a pitcher and positional player in the previous three seasons. He receives his third honor as an outfielder, and third first-team spot as a positional player, after a season where he hit .383 with six home runs, 26 RBI and 37 runs scored for the first-place Black Knights. White heads into the Patriot League Tournament tied for second in the League record book in home runs (26) and fourth in hits (224).

Buursma earns his fifth overall All-League spot, with his third selection in the field to go with two as a pitcher. He ties Army's Arthur O'Neal (1992-95) for the second-most career All-League nods behind White. Buursma leads the Patriot League with a .400 batting average and 11 home runs to go with 34 RBI and 29 runs scored. He is a candidate for the Dick Howser Trophy and Brooks Wallace Award given to the collegiate baseball player of the year, as well as one of 10 finalists for the Lowe's Senior CLASS Award.

The remaining two spots in the first-team outfield went to Lehigh senior Joe Ercolano and Navy sophomore Michael Speciale. Ercolano joins the list of three-time All-League selections after batting .328 with 29 RBI, 38 runs scored and a League-high 22 stolen bases. He is second in Patriot League history with 229 career hits. Speciale fills out the first-team outfield after finishing at or near the top of the League in most offensive categories. He currently leads all Patriot League players in runs (52), triples (six) and total bases (126), while placing second in home runs (nine), RBI (43) and hits (74). His .346 batting average is fourth in the Patriot League.

Navy senior Thomas Hamilton, sophomore Kendall Bolt and freshman Mike Guadagnini all earned first-team honors on the infield, where they were joined by Army freshman Clint Moore and Holy Cross senior Brendan Akashian. Hamilton receives First-Team All-League recognition at first base for the second year in a row after leading the Patriot League with 78 hits and 45 RBI and placing second with a .388 batting average and 95 total bases. Hamilton set the Navy single-season record for hits. Bolt receives first-team honors at third base after batting .304 with 31 runs scored and 29 RBI. Guadagnini and Moore emerged as two of the top freshmen in the League to earn first-team plaudits at second base and shortstop, respectively. Guadagnini batted .342 with 26 runs scored and 21 RBI, while Moore hit .341 with 40 runs scored and 32 RBI. Akashian is the First-Team All-League catcher for the second straight year after leading the Crusaders by hitting .312 with 30 RBI and 28 runs scored.

Bucknell sophomore John Avanzino fills out the positional players on the first team, receiving the designated hitter spot after a year where he hit .331 with nine home runs, 33 RBI and 22 runs scored.

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The First-Team All-League pitching staff consists of three sophomores: Army's Matt Fouch, Holy Cross' Matt Shapiro and Navy's J.D. Melton. Fouch and Shapiro receive the starting pitcher spots after outstanding performances in Patriot League games. Fouch recorded a 3-0 record with a 1.27 earned run average while appearing in seven Patriot League games with four starts. He finished the year with an impressive 27 strikeouts while walking only four batters in League action. Shapiro made a significant impact in Holy Cross' run to the Patriot League Tournament by going 3-1 with a 1.78 ERA in five League starts. He completed three of those five contests, with a League-leading two shutouts. Shapiro struck out 21 and walked eight over 30.1 innings in Patriot League games. Melton led all Patriot League pitchers with seven saves to earn the first-team nod as a relief pitcher. He compiled a 1.93 ERA over 17 appearances to earn his second All-League honor in as many seasons.

Because of ties in the voting, 15 student-athletes earned Second-Team All-Patriot League recognition. There are four players in the second-team outfield, with Army junior Andy Ernesto, Holy Cross senior Gil Gomez, Bucknell junior Dane Grandizio and Navy senior Renaldo Hollins forming the group. Ernesto hit .295 with 37 runs scored and 28 RBI, Gomez was .310 with 19 runs and 28 RBI, Grandizio finished .331 with 27 runs and 29 RBI and Hollins put up a .291 batting average with 29 runs and 13 stolen bases. Grandizio receives All-League recognition for the second year in a row.

There were seven players on the second-team infield, with six of those spots split between Army and Bucknell. For the Black Knights, senior Chris Simmons earned the catcher spot after hitting .320 with 37 RBI and 24 runs scored, junior J.P. Polchinski was picked at third base with a .297 batting average, 25 runs and 22 RBI, and freshman Kevin McKague shared first base with a .324 batting average, 43 RBI and 30 runs scored. Bucknell senior Mark Angelo also claimed the first base spot with a .335 batting average, 32 RBI and 26 runs scored. He was accompanied in the second-team infield by a pair of teammates, with 2007 Patriot League Rookie of the Year Ben Yoder taking second base with a .309 average, 24 RBI and 23 runs scored and fellow sophomore Ben Allen sharing the shortstop position with a .301 average, 37 runs scored and 19 RBI. Lafayette's lone representative, junior Dan Bierce, also claimed the shortstop honor by recording a .320 batting average with 28 runs and 15 RBI.

The final positional spot on the All-League team went to Lehigh freshman Logan Marshall, who is the second-team designated hitter with a .278 batting average, 15 runs scored and 15 RBI.

Bucknell senior Mathew Wilson, Army freshman Ben Koenigsfeld and Lehigh senior Andrew Grim make up the Second-Team All-League pitching staff. Wilson and Koenigsfeld earned the starting pitcher nods after coming up big for their teams in League play. Wilson compiled a 3-0 record with a 2.14 ERA in League action while completing all three of his Patriot League starts with one shutout. He had 22 strikeouts and six walks in 21 innings pitched. Koenigsfeld won four of his five Patriot League starts, completing the League schedule with a 4-0 record and 2.57 ERA. He tossed a complete-game shutout against Lafayette on April 26 to clinch Army's position as the No. 1 seed in the upcoming Patriot League Tournament. Grim receives the second-team spot as a relief pitcher. He led the Mountain Hawks with a 2.25 ERA in League games.

The 2008 Patriot League Baseball major awards (Player, Pitcher, Rookie and Coach of the Year) will be announced on Thursday.

The season continues with the Patriot League Tournament beginning with the semifinal round on Saturday. No. 4 Bucknell visits No. 1 Army in one matchup, while No. 3 Holy Cross is at No. 2 Navy in the other series. Both semifinal matchups are best-of-three series that include a doubleheader on Saturday and single game, if necessary, on Sunday. The winners of the semifinals will advance to the best-of-three Patriot League Championship series at the site of the higher seed on May 17-18.

[2008 All-Patriot League Baseball Teams](#)

First-Team All-League*

Name, School	Pos.	Yr.	Ht.	Wt.	B/T	Hometown/High School
Matt Fouch, Army	SP	So.	6-1	180	L/L	Stafford, Va./Colonial Forge
Matt Shapiro, Holy Cross	SP	So.	6-0	195	L/L	Raynham, Mass./Bridgewater-Raynham
J.D. Melton, Navy	RP	So.	6-0	180	R/R	Myrtle Beach, S.C./Myrtle Beach
Brendan Akashian, Holy Cross	C	Sr.	6-1	215	L/R	Lowell, Mass./Lowell
Thomas Hamilton, Navy	1B	Sr.	6-2	195	R/R	Houston, Texas/Lamar
Mike Guadagnini, Navy	2B	Fr.	6-1	195	L/R	Virginia Beach, Va./First Colonial
Clint Moore, Army	SS	Fr.	5-10	175	R/R	Greensboro, N.C./Grimsley
Kendall Bolt, Navy	3B	So.	6-0	180	R/R	Stockton, Calif./Lincoln
Jason Buursma, Bucknell#	OF	Sr.	6-3	205	R/R	Seattle, Wash./Lakeside School
Joe Ercolano, Lehigh^	OF	Sr.	5-10	170	L/R	Fairfield, Conn./Fairfield
Michael Speciale, Navy	OF	So.	6-1	220	R/R	Pearland, Texas/Pearland
Cole White, Army#	OF	Sr.	6-2	200	R/R	Midland, Texas/Midland (USMAPS)
John Avanzino, Bucknell	DH	So.	6-5	225	R/R	Manhasset, N.Y./Manhasset

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Second-Team All-League\$

Name, School	Pos.	Yr.	Ht.	Wt.	B/T	Hometown/High School
Ben Koenigsfeld, Army	SP	Fr.	6-3	200	R/R	New Port Richey, Fla./Ridgewood
Mathew Wilson, Bucknell	SP	Sr.	6-3	190	R/R	Toronto, Ontario/Northern S.S.
Andrew Grim, Lehigh	RP	Sr.	5-11	190	L/L	Boalsburg, Pa./State College Area
Chris Simmons, Army	C	Sr.	6-0	215	R/R	Prairieville, La./Dutchtown
Mark Angelo, Bucknell	1B	Sr.	6-2	195	L/R	Quakertown, Pa./Quakertown
Kevin McKague, Army	1B	Fr.	6-5	220	R/R	Fayetteville, N.C./Jack Britt
Ben Yoder, Bucknell	2B	So.	5-9	185	L/R	Belleville, Pa./Indian Valley
Ben Allen, Bucknell	SS	So.	5-10	175	L/R	Port Royal, Pa./Juniata
Dan Bierce, Lafayette	SS	Jr.	5-10	180	R/R	Virginia Beach, Va./Kellam
J.P. Polchinski, Army	3B	Jr.	5-10	200	R/R	Jamestown, N.C./Ragsdale
Andy Ernesto, Army	OF	Jr.	5-10	185	L/L	West Lawn, Pa./Wilson
Gil Gomez, Holy Cross	OF	Sr.	6-0	195	R/R	Lake Worth, Fla./Stoneman Douglas
Dane Grandizio, Bucknell	OF	Jr.	5-10	195	R/L	Bloomsburg, Pa./Bloomsburg
Renaldo Hollins, Navy	OF	Sr.	5-9	170	R/R	Virginia Beach, Va./Ocean Lakes
Logan Marshall, Lehigh	DH	Fr.	5-11	170	L/L	Bethlehem, Pa./Notre Dame

* - 13 players due to ties in the voting

\$ - 15 players due to ties in the voting

- Four-time All-League selection

^ - Three-time All-League selection

“Today’s Scholar-Athletes, Tomorrow’s Leaders” – The Patriot League continually demonstrates that student-athletes can excel at both academics and athletics without sacrificing its high standards. The Patriot League’s athletic success is achieved while its member institutions remain committed to its founding principle of admitting and graduating student-athletes that are academically representative of their class. Participation in athletics at Patriot League institutions is viewed as an important component of a well-rounded education.