

# Panther Report



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## Pitt Picked 4th in Big East

### *Gibbs Pre-Season POY*

The Pitt men's basketball team was selected by league coaches to finish fourth and senior Ashton Gibbs (Scotch Plains, N.J./Seton Hall Prep) was named the preseason Player of the Year at the Big East Conference's annual media day Wednesday at the New York Athletic Club.

In a vote of the league's 16 coaches, Pitt finished fourth with 188 total points. Syracuse and Connecticut tied for first place with 209 votes apiece followed by No. 3 Louisville (201 points), No. 4 Pitt, No. 5 Cincinnati (169), No. 6 Marquette (155) and No. 7 West Virginia (132). Since 2002-03, Pitt has been picked to finish in fourth place or higher in six of the last eight league preseason polls.



Gibbs became Pitt's fifth pre-season Big East Player of the Year following in the footsteps of Charles Smith (1986-87), Jerome Lane (1987-88), Brandin Knight (2002-03) and Aaron Gray (2006-07). The Scotch Plains, N.J. native was the league's only returning All-Big East First Team selection from a year ago.

Gibbs, who is a second year Wooden Award nominee, also enters his senior season as a Naismith Award candidate. He has garnered several preseason honors and nominations including Lowe's Senior CLASS Award, *Lindy's* Big East Player of the Year, *Athlon* Big East Player of the Year, *Sporting News* All-America Third Team and a Dick Vitale First-Team All-America (Solid Gold).

As a junior, Gibbs earned All-Big East First Team honors and was named an AP All-America honorable mention selection. He led Pitt in scoring (16.8 ppg), ranked third nationally in 3-point field goal percentage (49.0), paced the Big East in 3-point field goals made (102) and ranked second in the league in free-throw percentage (88.9). He also became the 39<sup>th</sup> player in school history to score 1,000 points in career. Over his first three seasons, Gibbs has totaled 1,207 career points, averaged 12.1 points per game, converted 216 of 490 3-point field goals (44.1 pct.) and hit 233 of 265 free-throws (87.9 pct.).

The past summer, Gibbs led the USA Men's Basketball team in minutes played (21.8 mpg) and averaged 11.6 ppg, while helping guide the team to a 7-1 record at the World University Games in Shenzhen, China. In 2009, he led the Under-19 USA Basketball Team to a Gold Medal and undefeated 9-0 record at the FIBA World Championships in Auckland, New Zealand.

Pitt Head Coach Jamie Dixon, along with seniors Gibbs, Nasir Robinson and Nick Rivers represented the Panthers in New York City. Pitt returns two starters (Gibbs and Robinson) and seven of its top-10 letterwinners from a squad that won the Big East regular season title outright with a 15-3 record, finished 28-6 overall, garnered a No. 1 seed upon entering the NCAA Championship and advanced to the NCAA Tournament for the 10<sup>th</sup> consecutive season.



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#### 2011-12 Schedule

Oct 22	Blue/Gold Scrimmage	
Oct 29	La Roche College (Exh)	W 101-33
Nov 7	Kentucky Wesleyan (Exh)	7 PM
Nov 11	Albany	7 PM
Nov 13	Rider &	6 PM
Nov 16	Long Beach St(ESPN-U)	9 PM
Nov 22	LaSalle &	7 PM

#### The Palestra — Philadelphia, PA

Nov 25	Penn &	7 PM
Nov 27	Robert Morris	5 PM
Nov 30	@ Duquesne**	7 PM
Dec 3	@ Tennessee	5:15 PM
Dec 6	VMI	7 PM

#### Madison Square Garden

Dec 10	Oklahoma St	2:30 PM
Dec 17	South Carolina St	6 PM
Dec 20	St. Francis (Pa)	7 PM
Dec 23	Wagner	8 PM
Dec 27	@Notre Dame(ESPN2)	7 PM
Jan 1	Cincinnati	7 PM
Jan 5	@DePaul(ESPN2)	7 PM
Jan 11	Rutgers	7 PM
Jan 14	@Marquette(ESPN-U)	2 PM
Jan 16	@Syracuse(ESPN)	7:30 PM

#### ESPN College Game Day

Jan 21	Louisville	9 PM
Jan 25	Providence	7 PM
Jan 28	Georgetown(ESPN/ESPN2)	4 PM
Jan 30	@West Virginia(ESPN)	7 PM
Feb 5	Villanova(ESPN)	2 PM
Feb 8	@USF	7 PM
Feb 12	@Seton Hall	Noon
Feb 16	West Virginia(ESPN/ESPN2)	9 PM
Feb 19	USF(ESPN2)	7 PM
Feb 26	@Louisville(CBS)	2 PM
Feb 29	St. John's(ESPN-U)	7 PM
Mar 3	@Uconn(ESPN/ESPN2)	Noon

#### Big East Championship

<u>Madison Square Garden, NY</u>	
Mar 6-10	TBA

#### NCAA Tournament

Mar 15-18	NCAA 1st/2nd Rounds(CBS)	TBA
Mar 22-25	NCAA Regionals(CBS)	TBA
Mar 31-Apr 2	NCAA Final Four(CBS)	TBA

& Philly HoopGroup Classic  
\*\* City Showdown



'41, '57, '58, '63, '74, '81, '82, '85, '87, '88, '89, '91  
'93, '02, '03, '04, '05, '06, '07, '08, '09, '10, '11

Sweet 16: '57, '74, '02, '03, '04, '07, '09  
Elite 8: '41, '74, '09

## Big East Preseason Rankings



**Junior Dante Taylor steps into the starting role for the 2011-12 season.**

<u>School</u>	<u>Points</u>	<u>2011-12 All-Big East Team</u>	
1) Connecticut (7)	209	<b>Ashton Gibbs (Sr.)</b>	<b>Pitt</b>
2) Syracuse (5)	209	Jeremy Lamb (So)	Uconn
3) Louisville (3)	201	Darius Johnson Odum (Sr)	Marquette
4) <b>PITT (1)</b>	<b>188</b>	Tim Abromatis (Sr.)	ND
5) Cincinnati	169	Kris Joseph (Sr.)	Syracuse
6) Marquette	155	Kevin Jones (Sr.)	WVU
7) West Virginia	132		
8) Villanova	127		
9) Notre Dame	114	<u>2011-12 All-Big East 2nd Team</u>	
10) Georgetown	104	Yancy Gates (Sr.)	Cincinnati
11) Rutgers	75	Alex Oriahki (Jr.)	Uconn
12) St. John's	71	Peyton Siva (Jr.)	Louisville
13) Seton Hall	56	Scoop Jardine (Sr.)	Syracuse
14) USF	43	Maalik Wayns (Jr.)	Villanova
15) Providence	40		
16) DePaul	27		
<u>Preseason Rookie of Year</u>		<u>2011-12 Preseason Player of Year</u>	
Andre Drummond	Uconn	<b>Ashton Gibbs (Sr.)</b>	<b>Pitt</b>

# RANKINGS

<u>AP Top 25</u>		<u>ESPN/USA Today Coaches Poll</u>	
1) North Carolina (62)	1,620	1) North Carolina (30)	774
2) Kentucky	1,501	2) Kentucky (1)	721
3) Ohio State (1)	1,482	3) Ohio State	702
4) Connecticut (2)	1,433	4) Connecticut	655
5) Syracuse	1,338	5) Syracuse	649
6) Duke	1,301	6) Duke	635
7) Vanderbilt	1,120	7) Vanderbilt	567
8) Florida	1,086	8) Louisville	514
9) Louisville	1,055	9) Memphis	482
10) <b>Pitt</b>	<b>1,027</b>	10) Florida	474
11) Memphis	997	11) <b>Pitt</b>	<b>471</b>
12) Baylor	892	12) Baylor	358
13) Kansas	755	13) Kansas	331
14) Xavier	747	14) Wisconsin	313
15) Wisconsin	720	15) Xavier	277
16) Arizona	616	16) Arizona	269
17) UCLA	404	17) Alabama	194
18) Michigan	401	18) Michigan	187
19) Alabama	395	19) Texas A&M	161
20) Texas A&M	357	20) UCLA	147
21) Cincinnati	353	21) Marquette	145
22) Marquette	335	22) Cincinnati	141
23) Gonzaga	283	23) Gonzaga	125
24) California	230	24) California	111
25) Missouri	139	25) Missouri	110

## *Panthers Beat La Roche 101-33*

### *Game Honors Former La Roche Coach Lang*



The No. 10 ranked Pitt men's basketball team opened its 2011-12 season with its largest exhibition win in school history, a 101-33 win over NCAA Division III La Roche College Saturday at the Petersen Events Center.

Pitt won its 25<sup>th</sup> consecutive exhibition game and Dixon improved to a perfect 17-0 in exhibition contests. The 68-point win also marked the largest exhibition win in school history, surpassing a 58-point victory over Carnegie Mellon on Nov. 1, 2006. Pitt also scored 100 or more points in an exhibition game for the eighth time in school history.

Pitt shot 60.3 percent (38-63) from the floor, converted 11-18 3-point field goals and outrebounded La Roche 42-24. Pitt also earned assists on 27 of its 38 field goal attempts.

Freshman Khem Birch led the Panthers with a game-high 16 points on a perfect 7-7 shooting day. Senior Ashton Gibbs added 15 points and four assists, sophomore J.J. Moore added 12 points, junior Tray Woodall scored 11 points, finished with seven assists and hit 3-4 3-pointers in only 17 minutes. Junior center Dante Taylor also finished with nine points and a team-leading nine rebounds.

La Roche was led by Mike Dixon's 14 points. Pitt built a 45-17 halftime lead, using a 12-0, four-minute run before intermission. Led by 11 points from Gibbs, the Panthers converted 6-8 3-point field goals in the half. Pitt's meeting with La Roche marked the second exhibition meeting between the two schools. Pitt defeated La Roche, 82-30, on November 9, 2008. Following the contest, Pitt hosted its annual meet and greet event with the Oakland Zoo. On Friday, it was announced that Pitt would enter the 2011-12 season ranked No. 10 in the Associated Press preseason poll. Pitt will also enter the year ranked No. 11 in the *USA Today/ESPN* Coaches poll, which was released on Oct. 20. Pitt will play its second exhibition game on Monday, Nov. 7 against Kentucky Wesleyan at the Petersen Events Center. Tipoff for that contest is 7 p.m.



Prior to tipoff, Pitt honored former La Roche College head coach Scott Lang and the 2010-11 Red hawk basketball team with a video tribute, which featured team highlights and interviews with Pitt head coach Jamie Dixon and director of basketball operations Brian Regan. During the game the Redhawks wore their jersey's from last year which had Coach Scott Lang's initials stitched on their jerseys. This will be the last time they were their old jerseys as they will wear their new uniforms for their next game. The Oakland Zoo handed out white stickers with red letters "S.L." for Scott Lang. Last December, Lang collapsed at center court during a practice and was rushed to a nearby hospital, but died at the age of 41. Coach Harry Jenkins took over the team and guided the squad to a 25-3 overall record, which included a 16-game win streak, the Allegheny Mountain Collegiate Conference regular season title and AMCC tournament title. La Roche players claim that Lang has been with them ever since.

Head Coach Harry Jenkins on Pre-Game ceremony: "I think I was still touched by the tributes. It was reserved for a man that meant as much to La Roche college as anybody that I've met. He was dedicated to the school and dedicated to his players. He provided for them in every way that he could. There were a lot of guys who played for him that may never have played college basketball if it wasn't for Coach Lang and I think that's why he became beloved like he was. I think our players played for him last year, he was in their heart and they carried out the season based on their love for him and I'm proud of them."

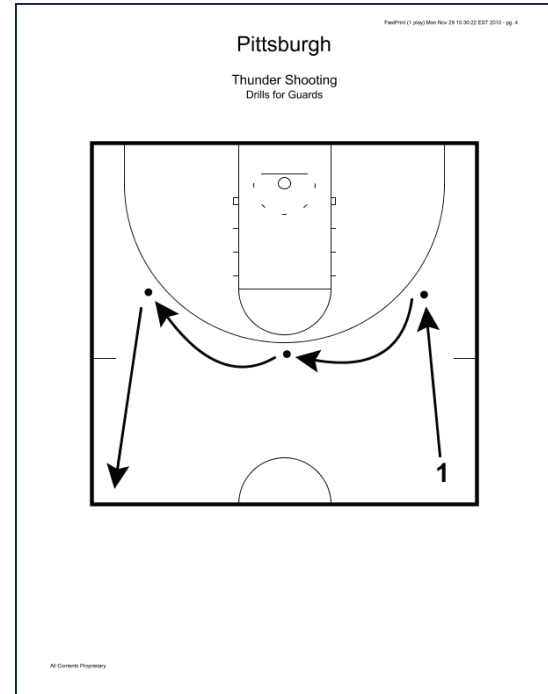


**Big East Regular Season Champions:** 1987, 1988, 2002, 2003, 2004, 2010

**Big East Tournament Champions:** 2003, 2008



## *Panther Drills*



### *Thunder Shooting*

- **Thunder Shooting starts with the player in the corner at midcourt**
- **Player runs to three point line free throw line extended and takes a shot**
- **After taking first shot player curl cuts to top of the key for the second shot**
- **After second shot player curl cuts to wing for third three point shot**
- **After first player finishes, second player begins**
- **Make competitive by keeping track of makes**
- **Drill is complete when player makes 10 shots**

## *Upcoming Events*



### **November 7th**

*Kentucky Wesleyan (Exh)*  
7 PM

### **November 11th**

*Albany*  
7 PM

### **November 13th**

*Rider*  
6 PM

## **Calling All Panther Hoopers!**

If you wish to join the Panther Hoop Report and receive our monthly newsletter please contact Jason Richards with the Pitt Men's Basketball Staff. Thank you and Hail to PITT!

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