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**TULANE PICKED TO WIN CONFERENCE USA CHAMPIONSHIP
UAB's Deanna Jackson named Preseason Player of the Year**

CHICAGO – Tulane, which has made seven straight NCAA Tournament appearances and won three straight Conference USA Tournament titles, has been chosen by the 14 C-USA head coaches to win the 2001-02 regular season title. UAB's Deanna Jackson, who is poised to become Conference USA's career scoring and rebounding leader this season, has been selected by the coaches to repeat as Player of the Year.

Tulane returns five of its top six scorers and four of its top five rebounders from last year's club. Leading the way for the Green Wave is preseason all-league center Teana McKiver. The 6-3 junior, last season's C-USA Sixth Player of the Year, averaged 8.1 points and 5.2 rebounds and ranked second in the conference in field goal percentage (.545) and blocked shots (58).

Jackson was an All-American last year after ranking second in the nation in scoring (25.1 ppg) and sixth in rebounding (11.5 rpg). Both those figures led Conference USA in scoring and rebounding. In addition to setting the C-USA single-season record for rebounds (385) last season, she needs 632 points and 184 rebounds to become the league's all-time leader in both categories.

DePaul's Lenae Williams, Conference USA's career leader in three-point field goals (237) and attempts (653), is looking to close her senior year with her third-straight all-league honor. She finished the 2000-01 first in the league in three-point field goals per game (2.45), second in free throw percentage (.827), and third in scoring (18.2 ppg).

A trio of sophomores - Sara Nord of Louisville, Chandi Jones of Houston and Cincinnati's Valerie King - round out the preseason all-conference team. Nord earned first team all-conference honors, along with several Freshman All-American laurels after averaging 14.1 points and 7.7 assists per game. She also set the conference single-season record in assists with a total of 222. Jones, the Conference USA Freshman of the Year and nation's leading freshman scorer in 2000-01 (21.5 ppg), returns to the court this season after suffering a torn ACL last January. King led Cincinnati in scoring (16.2 points) and earned a spot on Conference USA's all-freshman team and postseason All-Tournament team.

Conference USA welcomes East Carolina and TCU into the league this season. These additions increase league membership to 14 in women's basketball. C-USA will now have one division for women's basketball, and each school will play the other conference opponents once and its "traditional rival" home and away.

The traditional rivals are Charlotte and East Carolina, Cincinnati and Louisville, DePaul and Marquette, Houston and TCU, Memphis and Saint Louis, Southern Miss and Tulane and UAB and South Florida. The top 12 finishers in regular season standings qualify for tournament. The teams with the four best conference records earn a first round bye.

2001-2002 PRESEASON AWARDS
(as selected by the league's head coaches)

Preseason All-Conference Team

****DEANNA JACKSON- UAB**

Sr., F, Brewton, Ala./T.R. Miller

CHANDI JONES – Houston

So., G/F, Bay City, Texas/Bay City

VALERIE KING - Cincinnati

So., G, Washington Court House, Ohio/Washington

TEANA MCKIVER - Tulane

Jr., C, Beulaville, N.C./East Duplin/East Carolina

SARA NORD - Louisville

So., G, Jeffersonville, Ind./Jeffersonville

LENAE WILLIAMS- DePaul

Sr., F, Addison, Ill./Addison Trail

**** - Preseason Player of the Year**

2001-2002 PRESEASON POLL

1. Tulane
2. Louisville
3. TCU
4. Cincinnati
5. Houston
6. UAB
7. DePaul
8. Marquette
9. Memphis
10. Southern Miss
11. Charlotte
12. Saint Louis
13. ECU
14. South Florida