



Daemen Near Unanimous Pick Atop ECC Men's Basketball Preseason Poll

Daemen's Sischo Named Preseason Player of the Year

West Babylon, N.Y. – Daemen College is a clear favorite in the East Coast Conference Men's Basketball Coaches Preseason Poll released on Tuesday afternoon. The Wildcats were a near-unanimous pick for the top spot, earning eight of nine first-place votes. Daemen also has the ECC Preseason Player of the Year on their roster with junior center Andrew Sischo (Guilderland, N.Y.) earning the honor.

Daemen is coming off its most successful season since joining Division II. The Wildcats finished with a record of 24-6, won their second ECC Regular Season Championship, and made their first-ever appearance in the NCAA Division II Championship a year ago. Daemen, who also begins the year ranked No. 22 in the National Association of Basketball Coaches (NABC) Division II Top 25 poll, owes their optimistic outlook to their returning cast. The Wildcats welcome back three other starters in seniors Breon Harris, Jeff Redband, and Jay Sarkis, all of whom have earned ECC All-Conference honors during their career, in addition to Sischo, the reigning ECC Player of the Year.

This marks the second year in a row Sischo has earned the ECC's preseason honor. He was a double-double machine in the post for the Wildcats, finishing with averages of 20.9 points and 10.1 rebounds per game. Sischo collected 17 double-doubles on the year, good for first in the ECC and sixth nationally. He led the conference with a 58.6 field goal percentage, as well. Sischo earned a bevy of honors for his outstanding season. In addition to the ECC Player of the Year award, he was a Division II Conference Commissioners Association (D2CCA) and NABC All-Region First Team pick, the D2CCA East Region Player of the Year, and a D2CCA Second Team All-American.

St. Thomas Aquinas comes in at No. 2 in the poll. The Spartans, who earned the final first-place vote and are among teams receiving votes in the NABC Top 25 poll, return nearly their entire roster from a team that advanced to last season's NCAA Championship East Region final. Reigning ECC Rookie of the Year, Demetre Roberts, and All-Conference selections Osbell Caraballo and Sekou Cisse headline 11 returning players for St. Thomas Aquinas.

Bridgeport, who advanced to the final of the ECC Championship for the 10th time in 12 seasons in 2018-19, is next at No. 3. Like the teams above them in the poll, the Purple Knights return All-Conference honorees in Bakary Camara and Hashem Abbas. D'Vonne Trumbo, a First Team All-ECC pick in 2017-18, is also back for Bridgeport after missing most of last season with an injury.

Defending ECC Champion, Molloy, is next up at No. 4. Nick Corbett, a two-time ECC All-Conference First Teamer and the Most Outstanding Player of last year's ECC Championship, is back to help the Lions defend their title but Molloy does lose the services of three-time ECC Defensive Player of the Year, Curtis Jenkins, to graduation.

University of the District of Columbia at No. 5 and Roberts Wesleyan at No. 6 round out the league's expected postseason participants.

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2019-2020 ECC Men's Basketball Preseason Poll

Team	Pts.	Last Year's Record
1. Daemen (8)	80	24-6 (16-2 ECC)
2. St. Thomas Aquinas (1)	72	25-7 (15-3 ECC)
3. Bridgeport	64	18-13 (11-7 ECC)
4. Molloy	53	21-10 (14-4 ECC)
5. Dist. Columbia	40	15-14 (8-10 ECC)
6. Roberts Wesleyan	28	16-14 (10-8 ECC)
T7. New York Tech	23	3-24 (3-15 ECC)
T7. Queens	23	7-21 (7-11 ECC)
9. Mercy	22	8-18 (6-12 ECC)

() - first place votes

Preseason Player of the Year – Andrew Sischo, Daemen (6-9, R-Jr., C, Guilderland, N.Y.)

About the ECC

Founded as the New York Collegiate Athletic Conference in 1989 and rechristened the East Coast Conference in July 2006, the ECC was formed to enhance intercollegiate athletic competition among member institutions and to assist them in integrating athletics into their academic program in a fiscally sound way. The ECC is committed to the highest standards of scholarship, sportsmanship, teamwork, and citizenship. Its mission is to promote the total person concept in its student-athletes, which stresses the abilities to excel in academic achievement, athletic competition, and positive character traits. East Coast Conference members include: University of Bridgeport (Bridgeport, Conn.); University of the District of Columbia (Washington, D.C.); Daemen College (Amherst, N.Y.); Mercy College (Dobbs Ferry, N.Y.); Molloy College (Rockville Centre, N.Y.); New York Institute of Technology (Old Westbury, N.Y.); Queens College (Flushing, N.Y.); Roberts Wesleyan College (Rochester, N.Y.); College of Staten Island (Staten Island, N.Y.) and St. Thomas Aquinas College (Sparkill, N.Y.). Associate Members include: Adelphi University (Garden City, N.Y.); Bloomfield College (Bloomfield, N.J.); Caldwell University (Caldwell, N.J.); Chestnut Hill College (Philadelphia, Pa.); Farmingdale State College (Farmingdale, N.Y.); Felician University (Rutherford, N.J.), Georgian Court University (Lakewood, N.J.), Holy Family University (Philadelphia, Pa.), Kutztown University (Kutztown, Pa.), Lincoln University (Lincoln University, Pa.), Lincoln Memorial University (Harrogate, Tenn.), Mercyhurst University (Erie, Pa.); Post University (Waterbury, Conn.), Southern New Hampshire University (Manchester, N.H.), Tusculum University (Greeneville, Tenn.); and Wilmington University (New Castle, Del.).

The ECC sponsors the following championship sports: baseball; men's and women's basketball; women's bowling; men's and women's cross country; Esports (Overwatch and League of Legends); men's and women's lacrosse; softball; men's and women's tennis; men's and women's indoor track and field; men's and women's outdoor track and field; men's and women's soccer; and women's volleyball.

The East Coast Conference is a proud member of the NCAA and Division II. Division II is a dynamic and engaging group of colleges, institutions and conferences of varying sizes and educational missions. Division II members encourage and support diversity; value sportsmanship, fairness and equity; and place the highest priority on the overall educational excellence of the student-athlete.

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