



UPDATE

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GEORGE WASHINGTON IS THE PICK TO WIN THE MEN'S BASKETBALL CROWN IN THE NEW LOOK ATLANTIC 10

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

PHILADELPHIA, PA - As the Atlantic 10 embarks on its 30th season, George Washington has been tabbed as the team to beat in the Atlantic 10 men's basketball race, according to a poll of the Atlantic 10's head coaches and media released at today's Media Day.

The Colonials received 38 of the 65 first-place votes cast by the panel of coaches and media to win the Atlantic 10. GW returns four starters and from last year's 22-8 team which won the West division title and earned its first-ever A-10 Championship title and the subsequent NCAA bid. Mike Hall (10.6 ppg, 8.0 rpg) and Pops Mensah-Bonsu (12.6 ppg, 6.6 rpg), both of whom were second-team All-A-10 selections last year, return to lead a talented cast.

The Atlantic 10 sports a new look in 2005-06 as Charlotte and Saint Louis are set to make their A-10 debuts. With their addition, the league has gone away from the two-division alignment it had used nine of the past 10 years and will employ one division of 14 teams.

As for Charlotte, the 49ers were the top pick on 18 of the ballots cast to place second in the preseason poll. Charlotte, which was the Conference USA runner-up in 2004-05, posted a 21-8 overall mark and advanced to the NCAA Tournament for the seventh time in the last nine years. The 49ers return two starters from last year's squad, including Curtis Withers, a two-time all-Conference USA first-team selection who averaged 18.0 points and 8.1 rebounds a game last season.

Temple was the choice on eight ballots as the Owls return four starters from last season's 16-14 squad, which earned an NIT berth. Leading the pack is Mardy Collins, who garnered first-team All-Conference laurels for leading the Owls in scoring (17.5 ppg), rebounding (5.9 rpg), assists (109), steals (85), three-pointers (48), and minutes (37.6 mpg).

Xavier (17-12) was chosen fourth, Dayton (18-11) was picked fifth, Saint Joseph's (24-12), which advanced to the NIT final a year ago, was selected sixth, and Massachusetts (16-12) was tabbed seventh. Fordham (13-16), which received the remaining first-place vote, is picked eighth, followed by Rhode Island (6-22), La Salle (10-19), Richmond (14-15), Duquesne (8-22), Saint Louis (9-21), and St. Bonaventure (2-26).

In that same poll, the coaches and media selected the preseason All-Conference teams. With the expansion to 14 teams, the league will honor 10 players on its first-team and 10 players on its second-team. In addition to Collins, Hall, Mensah-Bonsu, and Withers, other first-team selections include Steven Smith of La Salle, who garnered co-Player of the Year honors last year for leading the A-10 in scoring (20.3 ppg) while placing third in rebounding (8.5 rpg); Xavier's Stanley Burrell, an All-Rookie team pick who netted a team-best 12.7 ppg; A-10 Rookie of the Year Bryant Dunston of Fordham, who averaged a team-high 14.9 ppg and was second in the A-10 with an 8.6 rpg average; Rashaun Freeman of UMass, who led the Minutemen in scoring (15.4 ppg), rebounding (7.8 rpg), and the A-10 in field goal percentage (.538); Duquesne's Bryant McAllister, who finished fourth in the A-10 in scoring (16.1 ppg); and Dayton's Monty Scott, who led the Flyers in scoring (11.1 ppg) and rebounding (4.6 rpg).

The second-team consists of Kieron Achara of Duquesne, the 2005 Chris Daniels Award winner as the A-10's most improved player; Charlotte's Mitchell Baldwin; Justin Cage of Xavier; Dwayne Lee and Chet Stachitas of Saint Joseph's; Danilo (formerly J.R.) Pinnock of George Washington, the A-10's 2005 Sixth Man of the Year; St. Bonaventure's Ahmad Smith; Fordham's Marcus Stout; Kevin Steenberge of Richmond; and Temple's Mark Tyndale.

The preseason All-Defensive team consists of Cage, Collins, Lee, Mensah-Bonsu, and George Washington's Carl Elliott. The All-Rookie team boasts of Temple's Dionte Christmas; Jordan Fowler and Ahmad Nivens of Saint Joseph's; Jerrell Lewis of Charlotte; Dayton's Charles Little; Chris Lowe of Massachusetts; Xavier's B.J. Raymond; and Kahiem Seawright of Rhode Island.

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2005-06 ATLANTIC 10 PRESEASON ALL-CONFERENCE TEAMS

(as selected by coaches and media)

FIRST-TEAM	<i>Cl.</i>	<i>Pos.</i>	<i>Ht.</i>	<i>PPG</i>	<i>RPG</i>	<i>AST</i>	<i>STL</i>	<i>BLK</i>
Stanley Burrell, XU	So.	G	6-3	12.7	3.2	60	23	4
Mardy Collins, TU	Sr.	G	6-6	17.5	5.9	109	85	11
Bryant Dunston, FOR	So.	F	6-8	14.9	8.6	44	32	67
Rashaun Freeman, UM	Jr.	F/C	6-9	15.4	7.8	29	26	13
Mike Hall, GW	Sr.	F	6-8	10.6	8.0	56	29	14
Bryant McAllister, DUQ	Sr.	G	6-3	16.1	4.0	83	54	1
Pops Mensah-Bonsu, GW	Sr.	F	6-9	12.6	6.6	24	26	46
Monty Scott, UD	Sr.	F	6-6	11.1	4.6	21	10	9
Steven Smith, LAS	Sr.	F	6-7	20.3	8.5	60	47	23
Curtis Withers, CHA	Sr.	F	6-8	18.0	8.1	49	31	25

SECOND-TEAM

Kieron Achara, DUQ	Jr.	F/C	6-9	11.5	6.7	30	21	46
Mitchell Baldwin, CHA	Sr.	G	6-2	7.5	2.9	107	36	2
Justin Cage, XU	Jr.	F	6-6	11.1	5.6	62	30	7
Dwayne Lee, SJU	Sr.	G	6-0	9.4	2.8	188	39	2
Danilo Pinnock, GW	Jr.	G	6-5	13.4	5.1	62	45	16
Ahmad Smith, SBU	Sr.	G	6-5	14.2	6.2	98	25	9
Chet Stachitas, SJU	Sr.	G/F	6-5	10.8	2.6	71	29	2
Marcus Stout, FOR	So.	G	6-4	13.6	3.1	71	34	4
Kevin Streenberge, UR	Sr.	C	6-11	12.6	6.0	16	16	39
Mark Tyndale, TU	So.	G	6-5	12.5	5.5	77	37	2

DEFENSIVE TEAM

Justin Cage, XU	Jr.	F	6-6	11.1	5.6	62	30	7
Mardy Collins, TU	Sr.	G	6-6	17.5	5.9	109	85	11
Carl Elliott, GW	Jr.	G	6-4	8.2	3.8	138	79	5
Dwayne Lee, SJU	Sr.	G	6-0	9.4	2.8	188	39	2
Pops Mensah-Bonsu, GW	Sr.	G	6-3	16.1	4.0	83	54	1

ROOKIE TEAM

Dionte Christmas, TU	Fr.	G/F	6-5	18.0				
Jordan Fowler, SJU	Fr.	G	6-5	23.6	8.0	4.5*		
Jerrell Lewis, CHA	Fr.	G	6-2	25.0		7.0		
Charles Little, UD	Fr.	F	6-5	20.6	10.3			
Chris Lowe, UM	Fr.	G	6-0	11.1		6.5		
Ahmad Nivins, SJU	Fr.	F	6-9	15.0	10.0			
B.J. Raymond, XU	Fr.	G/F	6-6	20.8	7.8	3.0		
Kahiem Seawright, URI	Fr.	F	6-7	19.1	15.0	5.0		

*2003-04 statistics

2005-06 ATLANTIC 10 PREDICTED ORDER OF FINISH

(as selected by coaches and media)

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|---------------------------|---------------------|
| 1. George Washington (38) | 8. Fordham (1) |
| 2. Charlotte (18) | 9. Rhode Island |
| 3. Temple (8) | 10. La Salle |
| 4. Xavier | 11. Richmond |
| 5. Dayton | 12. Duquesne |
| 6. Saint Joseph's | 13. Saint Louis |
| 7. Massachusetts | 14. St. Bonaventure |

First-place votes in parenthesis