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**EMPIRE 8 ANNOUNCES VOLLEYBALL ALL-CONFERENCE TEAM
Melissa Rhode of Stevens Institute of Technology Named Top Player**

ROCHESTER, NY – The Empire 8 announced its 2007 Volleyball All-Conference team with senior setter/right-side Melissa Rhode of Stevens Institute of Technology being named 2007 Empire 8 Player of the Year.

A 2006 AVCA Division III All-America honorable mention honoree, Rhode led the Ducks to an 8-0 mark and the top seed in their first season in the Empire 8. The versatile player totaled 67 kills, 153 assists, 21 aces, 80 digs, and 18 blocks in conference play. Overall, she is averaging 2.6 kills (with a .294 hitting percentage), 6.3 assists, and 3.3 digs per game.

Senior outside hitter Dawn Herring, the two-time Skyline Conference Player of the Year for Stevens was also named to the first team. She recorded a .320 hitting percentage in conference play with 76 kills. Overall, Herring is averaging 2.7 kills and 3.5 digs per game.

2006 Empire 8 Player of the Year Amanda Hubbard of Ithaca College earned first-team all-conference recognition for the third consecutive season. The senior outside hitter finished with 114 kills and 93 digs in round robin conference play, hitting .296. Overall, Hubbard is averaging 4.6 kills per game.

Junior outside hitter Laura Persico of Nazareth College was selected to the all-conference first team for the second time. She registered 108 kills and a .268 hitting percentage in eight conference matches and is averaging just over four kills per game in all matches this season. Sophomore setter Kate Zwickl of the Golden Flyers earned first-team accolades for the first time after recording 351 assists in conference play. For the season, she is averaging 11.7 assists per game.

Junior outside hitter Jessica Schaffer of RIT, a second-team honoree in 2006, was named to the first team this season. She finished with 115 kills and 108 digs as the Tigers won seven of eight conference matches. Schaffer is averaging 4.3 kills and 4.1 digs per game overall.

Hartwick College sophomore outside hitter Christina Evans, in her first collegiate volleyball season, was named Empire 8 Rookie of the Year and was named to the all-conference second team. Sophomore libero Jenna Waldron of St. John Fisher College was chosen as the conference's first Libero/Defensive Specialist of the Year.

One member of each team was named that institution's representative on the 2007 Volleyball Sportswoman of the Year Team. Empire 8 emphasizes that "Competing with Honor and Integrity" is an essential component of a student-athlete's experience in conjunction with an institution's educational mission. These honorees have distinguished themselves and consistently exhibit the critical traits as outstanding sportswomen.

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Empire 8 2007 Volleyball All-Conference Awards

Player of the Year: Melissa Rhode, Stevens Institute of Technology

Libero/Defensive Specialist of the Year: Jenna Waldron, St. John Fisher College

Rookie of the Year: Christina Evans, Hartwick College

First Team

Name	Yr.	Position	School
Dawn Herring	Sr.	OH	Stevens Institute of Technology
Amanda Hubbard	Sr.	OH	Ithaca College
Laura Persico	Jr.	OH	Nazareth College
Melissa Rhode	Jr.	S/RS	Stevens Institute of Technology
Jessica Schaffer	Jr.	OH	Rochester Institute of Technology
Kate Zwickl	So.	S	Nazareth College

Second Team

Name	Yr.	Position	School
Hannah Cordes	Sr.	S	St. John Fisher College
Christina Evans	So.	OH	Hartwick College
Elizabeth Tregan	Sr.	OH	Nazareth College
Victoria Petko	So.	MH	Rochester Institute of Technology
Melanie Volk	Jr.	OH	Stevens Institute of Technology
Shea Haney	Sr.	MH	Rochester Institute of Technology

Sportswoman of the Year

Name	Yr.	School
Katie Lane	Jr.	Alfred University
Katie Schildwaster	Sr.	Elmira College
Kate Simmons	Sr.	Hartwick College
Jenna Yehl	Sr.	Ithaca College
Emily Payne	So.	Nazareth College
Kelly Wohlhagen	So.	Rochester Institute of Technology
Jessica Pegler	Jr.	St. John Fisher College
Melanie Volk	Jr.	Stevens Institute of Technology
Brielle Swerdlin	So.	Utica College

Honorable Mention

Nichole Boxler (RIT); Kayleigh Cassetta (St. John Fisher); Abby Cummings (Hartwick); Corinna Doctor (Ithaca); Jessica Gardner (Stevens); Jen Heberton (Ithaca); Andria Mynders (Ithaca); Katie Schildwaster (Elmira); Alyssa Ziobrowski (St. John Fisher)