



Women's Swimming and Diving

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UMBC SELECTED IN WOMEN'S SWIMMING & DIVING PRESEASON COACHES' POLL

CAMBRIDGE, Mass.—UMBC has been selected as the preseason favorite to win the 2008 America East Women's Swimming and Diving Championship, according to a vote of the conference's head coaches. The Retrievers received four first-place votes (coaches were not permitted to vote for their own team), tallying 34 points. New Hampshire finished in a close second with 31 points and two first-place votes just edging out Boston University who finished third with 28 points and one first-place vote.

University of Vermont (20) came in fourth in the polls, followed by University of Maine (17), Binghamton University (10), and Stony Brook University (7) rounding out the standings.

UMBC looks to take home their second conference championship this year with 15 returning swimmers and nine incoming freshman. Junior tri-captain Daniele Surkovich (Ellicott City, Md./Wilde Lake) will lead the way after setting new records in the 50, 100, and 200 yard freestyle events last year and being an intrical part of the 200, 400, and 800 yard freestyle, and 400 medley relays. Seniors Lindsey Engler (Salisbury, Md./James M. Bennett) and Carly Fitzpatrick (Delran, N.J./Delran) as well as juniors Christina Ng (Bethpage, N.Y./Plainedge) and Joy Wilde (Greenlawn, N.Y./Harborfields) will round up a solid sprint group. The Retrievers will look to seniors Erin Matthews (Newtown, Pa./Council Rock) and Rachel Lesslie (Kingston, Ontario, Canada/Holy Cross) in the mid-distance and distance events. Lesslie will also provide much-needed experience in the backstroke events, while sophomore Tereza Kaplanova (Prague, Czech Republic/Gymnazium J.G. Jankovskeho) will be relied on in the backstroke. The Retrievers will count on junior tri-captain Tina Cantwell (Sinking Spring, Pa./The Hill School) a double conference champion in the 100 and 200 breast, as well as top eight finishers Wilde and Kaplanova to provide depth in the breaststroke and IM events.

2007 Preseason Poll		
Rank	Team (1st-place votes)	Total
1.	UMBC (4)	34
2.	New Hampshire (2)	31
3.	Boston University (1)	28
4.	Vermont	20
5.	Maine	17
6.	Binghamton	10
7.	Stony Brook	7

New Hampshire hopes to recapture their 2006 conference title after finishing third last year. Senior Kary Goodman (South Windham, Maine), is coming off of three first-place finishes in the 100 yard butterfly, 200 yard butterfly, and 100 yard backstroke, while setting a conference record in the 100 backstroke, and a pool record in the 100 yard butterfly. The relay team of Goodman, Evelyn Yuen (Princeton, N.J.), Deanna Petchonka (Ridgefield, Conn.) and Katrina Maloney (Dover, N.H.) will all be returning after finishing first in the 200-medley relay at conference championships. The Wildcats will look to sophomore Mattie Fowler (Farmington, Maine) who took second-place in the 200-yard butterfly. The Wildcats' top diver, Shana Dege (Lockport, N.Y.) will return after taking third in the 1-meter finals.

Boston University edged out New Hampshire and earned a second-place finish at the 2007 America East Championships. Leading a strong roster this year will be senior Sam Lupinetti (Warwick, N.Y.), junior Christina Ruggiero (Wilmington, Del.), and school-record holder Eve Kinsella (Freehold, N.J.). Ruggiero got second-place in the 1650 freestyle and Kinsella earned two individual crowns in the meet (100 free, 200 free) and broke two individual school records (200 free, 200 IM). The Terriers will also rely on Kara Oldero (Mesa, Ariz./Red Mountain), a sixth-place 200 yard backstroke finalist.

Vermont will be led by senior Nicole Underhill (South Burlington, VT /South Burlington) who posted two top-six showings at the America East Championship last year. Senior classmate Eryka Karz (Mt. Prospect, IL /Loyola Academy) returns after a successful season that also saw her post two top-eight finishes at the conference championship. The trio of Rachel Kent (Mystic, CT /R.E. Fitch), Lauren Honrath (Monroe, CT /Masuk), and Ashley Gillespie (Ithaca, NY /Ithaca) have each established themselves as top conference competitors in their individual events. Between the three of them they produced four top-10 finishes at conferences. The Catamounts also return the top two scoring freshmen from the conference championships last season, Molly MacMillan (Doylestown, PA /Central Bucks West) and Colleen Clark (Unionville, CT /Farmington).

Maine will rely on senior Jessie Ellis-Alcaide (Harpwell, Maine/Kootnai Academy) in the 50 and 100 yard freestyle as she has been a consistent finalist and top competitor in conference championships. Meaghann Fisher (Carmel, Ind./Carmel High School) will contribute in the I.M., breaststroke events, and free-style events. Junior Adi Levy (Givatayim, Israel/Kalay High School) will be a force to be reckoned with in the mid-distance/distance and butterfly events.

Binghamton is led by sophomore Allyce Brand (Highland Park, Ill.), who is coming off a stellar freshman campaign in which she earned team MVP honors. Brand finished sixth-place in the 100 breaststroke at conference championships. Senior tri-captains Amanda Decker (Rhinebeck, N.Y.), Bridget Dormer (Northport, N.Y.), and Nicole Sweeney (Commack, N.Y.) head the list of other top returning point scorers. The sophomore duo of Taryn Ferrara (Morristown, N.J.) and Rita Brodfuehrer (Syracuse, N.Y.) continue the youth movement as consistent point scorers for the Bearcats.

Stony Brook looks to sophomore Rebecca Sayles (Calgary, Alberta/Bishop Carroll) and junior Lucy Liu (Bronx, N.Y./Bronx High School of Sciences) who each posted top-16 scores when they finished 10th and 12th, respectively, in the 200-yard backstroke. Senior Courtney Teague (Colorado Springs, Colo. Cheyenne Mountain) earned a seventh place finish in the 100-yard freestyle and will also help the Seawolves.

The 2008 America East Swimming and Diving Championships will be held on February 14-17 at the University of Maine, Orono, Maine. For more information on America East women's swimming & diving log on to www.americaeast.com.