



MEN'S BASKETBALL

10 High Street, Suite 860
Boston, MA 02110
Phone: 617.695.6369
Fax: 617.695.6385

www.AmericaEast.com

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Contact: Matt Bourque

BOSTON UNIVERSITY CHOSEN AS AMERICA EAST MEN'S BASKETBALL FAVORITE

CAMBRIDGE, Mass. — Boston University, winner of a conference-best five America East Championships, is the preseason choice of the coaches to win the league title in 2007-08. The Terriers received five of a possible eight first-place votes (coaches were not allowed to vote for their team) and 61 points to outdistance back-to-back champion Albany, which had four first-place votes and 55 points.

Vermont, which earned the America East regular-season title last year en route to its first NIT berth, was chosen third with 50 points. Binghamton, with rookie head coach Kevin Broadus, was picked fourth with 45 points. UMBC (33 points) edged Hartford (31) for fifth place. Stony Brook (19) was seventh while Maine and New Hampshire tied for eighth place with 15 points.

Boston University's selection is based largely on its talented sophomore class. Although the Terriers are the only team in America East without a senior on their roster, Dennis Wolff's team has experience as Tyler Morris (30 games, 30 starts), Corey Lowe (28 games, 28 starts), Scott Brittain (29 games, 28 starts) and Carlos Strong (25.3 minutes per game) all saw significant action as freshmen a year ago when the Terriers were 12-18 overall, 8-8 in America East. Morris, the one-time teammate of Greg Oden and Mike Conley at Lawrence North High School, was chosen the America East Rookie of the Year after averaging 13.4 ppg while shooting 46.9 percent from three-point range (60-128). Lowe led the team in scoring with 14.1 ppg and had a team-high 61 three-pointers. Brittain averaged 7.0 ppg and was second on the team with 6.0 rpg. Strong provided offense off the bench, averaging 9.5 ppg while making 55 three-pointers. Each hopes to contribute to the Terriers' first conference championship since 2002.

2007-08 Preseason Poll		
Rank	Team (1st-place votes)	Total
1.	Boston U. (5)	61
2.	Albany (4)	55
3.	Vermont	50
4.	Binghamton	45
5.	UMBC	33
6.	Hartford	31
7.	Stony Brook	19
8.	Maine	15
	New Hampshire	15

Albany (23-10, 13-3 in 2006-07) will need to replace two first-team all-conference selections, including two-time America East Player of the Year Jamar Wilson, who helped the Great Danes improve from seven wins as a freshman to 21 and 23 wins in his final two seasons. Wilson closed his career ranked No. 7 on the America East scoring list with 2,164 points. Jason Siggers (13.8 ppg) has also graduated. Seniors Brent Wilson and Brian Lillis, who have been consistent performers as starters throughout their careers, will now be looked upon to pick up the void in scoring left by Jamar Wilson and Siggers. Brent Wilson, a third-team choice, averaged 11.0 ppg with 5.0 rpg and led the team with 71 three-pointers last year. Lillis, the America East Defensive Player of the Year, averaged 6.9 ppg with 4.9 rpg and 2.3 apg. Senior Jon Ilati, a former America East Rookie of the Year, averaged 5.9 ppg with 66 three-pointers.

Vermont (25-8, 15-1) will rely heavily on junior Mike Trimboli in its pursuit for a conference-record sixth-straight appearance in the America East Championship game. Trimboli is the lone first-team all-conference selection returning to America East this season after finishing second in the conference in scoring (15.8 ppg) and assists (5.0 apg) a year ago. Colin McIntosh averaged 7.9 ppg as a sixth man last year. Marqus Blakely (5.8 ppg) had a strong second half of the season. Kyle Cieplicki, a three-year captain, is the only player on the roster to have played in Vermont's upset of Syracuse in the 2005 NCAA Tournament. The Catamounts lost three top frontcourt players in first-team all-conference choice Chris Holm (10.6 ppg, 12.2 rpg), third-team selection Martin Klimes (6.8 ppg, 4.7 rpg), each of whom graduated, and all-rookie honoree Joe Trapani (11.4 ppg, 4.4 rpg), who transferred to Boston College.

Binghamton (13-16, 6-10) has a new coach but a familiar squad as the Bearcats take aim at the America East Championship. Kevin Broadus, who as an assistant helped lead Georgetown to the Final Four last year, begins his first season as a head coach. Second-team all-conference choice Mike Gordon (10.9 ppg, 4.0 apg) returns for his senior season. Richard Forbes (11.9 ppg) was the team's leading scorer last year after joining the Bearcats from Howard Junior College. Lazar Trifunovic (10.8 ppg, 6.4 rpg) was an all-rookie choice last year and is the conference's leading returning rebounder.

Head coach Randy Monroe saw his UMBC (12-19, 7-9) team take steps forward last season, advancing to the America East semifinals for the first time. His Retrievers return second-team all-conference choice Brian Hodges (14.7 ppg), the active career scoring leader in the conference (1,080 points), and Jay Greene (9.0 ppg), who led America East in both assists (5.3 apg) and assist-to-turnover ratio (2.37) last year. UMBC also adds three transfers to the mix. Former James Madison teammates Ray Barbosa and Cavell Johnson will play their senior seasons at UMBC after sitting out last year under NCAA transfer rules. Barbosa scored 1,013 points in three seasons at JMU while Johnson averaged 13.4 ppg and 7.9 rpg as a junior in 2005-06. Another newcomer is junior Darryl Proctor, who averaged 13.6 ppg and 7.4 rpg in two seasons at Coppin State, where he was named MEAC Rookie of the Year in 2004-05.

Second-year Hartford (13-18, 6-10) head coach Dan Leibovitz has already put his mark on the program with nine players who are in either their first or second seasons with the Hawks. Three newcomers contributed immediately in Leibovitz's first season as Joe Zeglinski (12.7 ppg, 4.8 rpg), Jaret Von Rosenberg (10.5 ppg) and Michael Turner (5.7 ppg, 5.2 rpg) all played more than 30 minutes per game. This year Leibovitz looks for production from several newcomers, including junior Warren McClendon, who averaged 12.8 ppg and 6.7 rpg as an all-rookie selection at The Citadel in 2004-05. Rich Baker (5.6 ppg) returns for his senior season. The point guard led Hartford to an 8-6 start but the team was just 2-9 in games in which he missed due to injury.

Steve Pikiell hopes his fourth year at Stony Brook (9-20, 4-12) results in improvement in the conference standings. Seniors Ricky Lucas (15.2 ppg) and Mitchell Beauford (12.2 ppg) are among the top six returning scorers in America East.

Maine (12-18, 7-9) and New Hampshire (10-20, 6-10) will have two of the younger squads in America East. Brian Andre, who played 11 games after transferring from Buffalo, is the only senior on the Black Bear roster. Bill Herrion adds eight newcomers to his Wildcat team.

Junior Bernal (9.9 ppg, 2.8 apg) and Mark Socoby (6.9 ppg) enjoyed solid rookie seasons at Maine last year. Philippe Tchekane Bofia added 9.4 ppg and 5.5 rpg.

Mike Christenen averaged 13.1 ppg and 5.7 rpg for New Hampshire in 15 games before a foot injury ended his season. Tyrece Gibbs (9.5 ppg, 5.1 rpg) played 34.2 minutes per game.