



# MEN'S BASKETBALL

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## BOSTON UNIVERSITY ONCE AGAIN TABBED AMERICA EAST MEN'S BASKETBALL FAVORITE

CAMBRIDGE, Mass. — For the second consecutive year, Boston University, winner of a conference-best five America East Championships, is the preseason choice of the coaches to win the America East Men's Basketball title in 2008-09. The Terriers received five of a possible eight first-place votes (coaches were not allowed to vote for their team) and 59 points slightly, ahead of University of Vermont, which received four first-place votes and 55 points.

University of Hartford, which appeared in the America East Championship title game for the first time last season, was slotted third with 51 points. UMBC, the defending league champion, tallied 45 points and a fourth-place position. New York rivals Binghamton University (37 points) and University at Albany (30) came in fifth and sixth, respectively, followed by University of New Hampshire (24), University of Maine (13) and Stony Brook University (10) to round out the nine-team field.

Boston University (14-17 overall, 9-7 America East in 2007-08), which won nine of its final 12 games last season, will return its top seven scorers from that squad, including second-team All-Conference selection Corey Lowe and America East Rookie of the Year John Holland. Lowe ranked second in the league averaging 18.1 points per game a year ago and made 92 three-pointers on the season (3.5 pg). Holland, who also garnered third-team All-Conference, All-Rookie and All-Defensive recognition, contributed 15.5 points and 6.8 rebounds in conference action. The Terriers were last season's preseason pick in a large part to Tyler Morris, the 2007 America East Rookie of the Year. Morris averaged 6.5 points, 3.5 rebounds and 2.3 assists per game last year after missing 11 games due to injury. Juniors Scott Brittain (10.0 ppg, 6.3 rpg) and Carlos Strong (11.2 ppg) will also play big roles for head coach Dennis Wolff, who begins his 15th season in Boston and has racked up 230 wins and a pair of America East titles during his tenure.

Vermont (16-15, 9-7) brings back a wealth of talent in junior Marqus Blakely and senior Mike Trimboli, who ranked first and third, respectively, in America East in scoring last year. Blakely, a 6-foot-5 forward, became the first player in league history to take home both Player of the Year and Defensive Player of the Year awards in the same season. He led the conference in scoring (19.0 ppg), rebounding (11.0 rpg) and blocked shots (2.7 bpg). Trimboli, who has accumulated 1,496 career points in just three seasons with the Catamounts, is America East's active scoring leader and stands 36th on the all-time list. Fourth-year head coach Mike Lonergan welcomes Michigan State transfer Maurice Joseph to the fold after he sat out last season. Joseph averaged 5.9 points in 2006-07 for the Spartans.

Hartford (18-16, 10-6) is coming off its best season as a Division I program, winning a record 18 games and reaching the America East title game for the first time in 22 seasons. Third-year head coach Dan Leibovitz will rely on first-team All-Conference performer Joe Zeglinski to carry his squad again in 2008-09. Zeglinski poured in 16.2 points per game last season, good for fourth best in the league and became just the second player in league history to make over 100 three-pointers in a season (103). Senior Michael Turner (8.9 ppg) earned All-Defensive recognition in 2007-08 after ranking second in steals (2.1 spg) and 14th in rebounding (5.6). Sophomore Morgan Sabia averaged 10.2 ppg and was fourth in America East hitting 47.3 percent of his shots from the field to earn All-Rookie honors.

UMBC (24-9, 13-3) will try to defend its first America East title, which the Retrievers captured last season, along with their first trip to the NCAA Men's Basketball Championship. While UMBC graduated three all-conference performers (Ray Barbosa, Brian Hodges, Cavell Johnson), head coach Randy Monroe, who received a new six-year contract in the offseason, has first-team All-America East standouts Jay Greene and Darryl Proctor returning in 2008-09. Greene, the Reggie Lewis Most Outstanding Player at last year's championship, averaged 8.3 points and a league-best 7.2 assists per game last season, which was fourth-best in the nation. His 236 assists were the fourth-most in a season in America East history. Proctor, an undersized power forward at 6-foot-5, contributed 15.1 points and 8.4 rebounds per game (second in AE) last season. He also ranked fifth in field goal percentage (.500) and in steals (1.8 spg). Juniors Justin Fry (2.9 ppg, 2.6 rpg in 20 starts) and Matt Spadafora (5.9 ppg, 3.6 rpg in 12 starts) will be counted on to replace the output of the departing seniors.

Binghamton (14-16, 9-7) loses its top three scorers from last season in second-team all-conference standout Mike Gordon, third-teamer Lazar Trifunovic and Richard Forbes. Second-year head coach Kevin Broadus will bring in 10 new players, including high impact transfers Theo Davis (Gonzaga), Emanuel Mayben (Hudson Valley CC) and D.J. Rivera (St. Joseph's). Junior Reggie Fuller (6.6 ppg, 5.7 rpg, 1.3 bpg) is the Bearcats' top returner. Dwayne Jackson (8.1 ppg) is their top returning scorer.

Albany (15-15, 10-6), winners of two of the last three America East Championships, will have to replace the production of first-team All-America East performer Brian Lillis, who was one of 10 players in the country to lead his team in scoring, rebounding and assists. Senior forward Brian Connolly is the Great Danes' top returning scorer after averaging 10.1 points while shooting at a .476 clip last season. Tim Ambrose received All-Rookie honors after a solid season (7.6 ppg). Seventh-year head coach Will Brown, one of 10 head coaches to have won multiple America East titles, brings in seven new players to the fold, including Virginia transfer Will Harris.

New Hampshire (9-20, 6-10) welcomes back third-team All-Conference star Tyrece Gibbs (14.4 ppg) and all-rookie choices Alvin Abreu (12.7 ppg) and Tyrone Conley (8.8 ppg). James Madison transfer Colbey Santos is eligible this season after averaging 4.3 points and 3.5 rebounds per game for the Dukes two years ago. Head coach Bill Herrion, the league's active leader with 268 Division I victories, returns for his third season in Durham.

Maine (7-23, 3-13) hopes to reach its first league title game since 2003 on the back on junior Mark Socoby. A third-team All-Conference honoree last season, Socoby (14.6 ppg, 5.7 rpg) broke out for 31 points and set a conference championship record with nine three-pointers in an opening round loss to Stony Brook last season. Junior Bernal (10.9 ppg, 4.7 rpg, 2.9 spg) returns for his junior season. Kaimondre Owes (12.5 ppg), who played in 19 games, including all 16 conference contests after transferring from St. Peter's, returns for his first full season under fourth-year head coach Ted Woodward.

Stony Brook (7-23, 3-13) will need to replace the output of starting guards Ricky Lucas and Mitchell Beauford. Head coach Steve Pikiell, who enters his fourth season on the Seawolves' bench, will add seven new players to the roster in 2008-09. Stony Brook will also rely on senior Demetrius Young (6.3 ppg, 6.7 rpg), who made 90-of-141 field goal attempts last season (.638).

2008-09 Preseason Poll		
Rank	Team (1st-place votes)	Total
1.	Boston U. (5)	59
2.	Vermont (4)	55
3.	Hartford	51
4.	UMBC	45
5.	Binghamton	37
6.	Albany	30
7.	New Hampshire	24
8.	Maine	13
9.	Stony Brook	10