



# SOFTBALL

215 First Street, Suite 140  
Cambridge, Mass. 02142  
Phone: 617.695.6369  
Fax: 617.695.6385

[www.AmericaEast.com](http://www.AmericaEast.com)

Thursday, February 14, 2008  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Leslie Hanna, [hanna@americaeast.com](mailto:hanna@americaeast.com)

## TERRIERS FAVORED TO WIN SOFTBALL CHAMPIONSHIP

CAMBRIDGE, Mass.— Boston University is the favorite to win the 2008 America East Softball Championship for the second straight year according to the preseason coaches' poll. The Terriers, who have appeared in five of the last six championship title games, received five out of a possible seven first-place votes (coaches are not allowed to vote for their own team), along with 47 total points. The defending champion University at Albany received two first-place votes and 42 points to finished second in the poll.

UMBC, who challenged the Great Danes in the league final last year, finished third with one first-place vote and 35 points. Stony Brook University (34 points) finished close behind in fourth, University of Hartford (23) finished fifth, and University of Maine (22) was selected to finish sixth. University of Vermont (12) and Binghamton University (9) rounded out the eight-team poll.

The top four teams in the conference will advance to the America East Championship, held at the number one seed on May 8-10, with the winner of the tournament receiving an automatic bid to the NCAA Softball Championship.

Boston University (34-14 overall, 17-3 America East in 2007) can boast the 2007 Player, Pitcher, Rookie and Coach of the Year, all of whom will be returning in 2008. Junior catcher Christy Leath (St. Charles, Mo./Francis Howell Central) took home the conference's top honor last season with impressive numbers: .386 batting average, .488 on-base percentage, eight home runs. A pair of sophomores swept the year-end pitching and rookie honors. Pitcher Megan Currier (Torrance, Calif./Torrance) led the league with a 18-4 record and averaged 5.82 innings per game, while Rachel Hebert (Humble, Tex./Humble) ranked among the conference leaders in runs batted in (RBI), home runs and slugging percentage during her rookie season. A rare early bowout from the Championship last season won't stop the Terriers this year, according to the league's head coaches, as Boston U. will be looking for their seventh conference championship crown.

Albany (35-17, 11-9) has won the last three America East Championships and is predicted to vie for that crown once again. Two all-conference first-teamers return this year for the Great Danes, including sophomore second baseman Michelle Connors (Clifton Park, N.Y./Shenendehowa) and senior outfielder Amber Maisonet (Newburgh, N.Y./Newburgh). Connors finished second in the conference with 41 runs scored and hit for nine homeruns. Maisonet ended up leading the conference in batting average (.382) and hits (65) after going 7-for-19 in the postseason.

UMBC (32-18, 13-8) finished the regular season second in the league standings and advanced all the way to the league final. Sophomore Amanda Fefel (Baltimore, Md./Catonsville) and senior Ashley Gray (Pasadena, Md./Northeast) highlight the Retrievers in 2008, both all-conference selections last year. Fefel and Gray both finished among the league's pitching leaders and will quarterback a pitching staff that allowed the fewest hits last year in America East. Both pitchers also bring a strong presence at the plate, combining for 21 home runs.

Stony Brook (28-20, 11-9) is a strong defensive unit who allowed the fewest runs per game in the conference last year and owned the second-best fielding percentage at .964. Much of that can be attributed to all-rookie pick Vicki Kavitsky (Cherry Hill, N.J./Cherry Hill East) who finished with 104 assists and five fielding double plays, and all-conference catcher Marissa Fleury (Mahopac, N.Y./Mahopac) who threw out six runners on the base path. Fleury also finished amongst the league leaders in almost every single batting category.

Hartford (23-27, 12-8) returned to the conference championship last year for the first time since 2002, and would like to make a return trip this season. The Hawks sent a league-high three players to the all-rookie squad last year--pitcher Brittney Stratton (Staten Island, N.Y./Tottenville), second baseman Amanda Dilworth (Jackson, N.J./Jackson Memorial) and infielder Rachel Clonick (Hilton, N.Y./Hilton)--and will rely on them and lone senior Alex Morley (East Amherst, N.Y./Clarence) to have a successful season.

Maine (24-26, 9-11) is another young team looking to make a splash, with underclassmen making up 82% of the roster. Sophomores Alexis Souhlaris (Derry, N.H./Pinkerton Academy) and Whitney Spangler (Canton, Ohio/Central Catholic), 2007 all-conference honorees, return as leaders at the plate and in the field. Junior Jenna Balent (Conifer, Colo./Conifer), the 2006 Rookie of the Year, worked 121.2 innings last year and led the team with nine wins, while classmate Ashley Waters (Amesbury, Mass./Amesbury) finished 2007 with 56 hits, 10 doubles, and 29 RBI.

Vermont head coach Marcie Hickey is in her second season leading the Catamounts (12-29, 5-16). She will turn to senior Aimee Kern (Wrentham, Mass./King Philip) who stood among the conference leaders in nearly all pitching categories, including strikeouts (168), ERA (2.50) and complete games (21) and is also the team's top hitter with a .328 batting average and five home runs. Junior Alison Daggett (Fort Collins, Colo./Fort Collins), newcomers Jocelyn Abaray (Acushnet, Mass./New Bedford) and Caitlin Monahan (Clarks Summit, Pa./Abington Heights) round out the pitching staff.

Binghamton (8-33, 3-17) is led by another second year head coach, Ali Brian, who improved the depth of her team during the offseason with 12 new players, including three transfers. The pitching core of juniors Cryilla Suker (Voorheesville, N.Y./UMass Lowell), Jessica Whitaker (Salinas, Calif./Notre Dame) and Patty Egan (Sierra Vista, Ariz./Buena) are the starting unit and will bring intensity to both the mound and the batter's box. Newcomer Emily Phillips (Pickerington, Ohio/North Pickerington) hit for power during the fall season and will fill the first base corner.

For more information on America East softball, log on to [www.AmericaEast.com](http://www.AmericaEast.com).

2008 Preseason Poll		
Rank	Team (1st-place votes)	Total
1.	Boston U. (5)	47
2.	Albany (2)	42
3.	UMBC (1)	35
4.	Stony Brook	34
5.	Hartford	23
6.	Maine	22
7.	Vermont	12
8.	Binghamton	9