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MEN'S BASKETBALL All-Conference - March 4, 2009

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MEN'S BASKETBALL ALL-CONFERENCE SELECTIONS ANNOUNCED

Middlebury's Rudin Scores Player of the Year

HADLEY, Mass. - Middlebury senior guard Ben Rudin (Scarsdale, N.Y.) has been selected by the conference coaches as the 2009 NESCAC Player of the Year. Rudin helped his team achieve multiple records this season, as the Panthers head into this weekend's NCAA Tournament with a program-best 24 wins and the 2009 NESCAC Men's Basketball Championship in hand, their first conference crown. Rudin is the first Middlebury player ever to be named NESCAC Player of the Year.

Rudin, the 2006 Rookie of the Year, also received NESCAC All-Conference First Team honors for the first time in his career. Leading the Panthers in scoring this season, Rudin has started all 27 contests and is fourth among all players in the league with an average 16.7 points per game - well above the 10.3 points per outing he posted a year ago in what previously was his best season. The 6-0 senior guard has connected on 42.3-percent of his shots from the floor, 33.7 from beyond the arc, and 76.7 from the foul line. Even more impressive were his performances against NESCAC foes in 2008-09 as he averaged 21.2 points per game in conference competition (2nd NESCAC). Rudin elevated his play down the stretch, being held to less than 20 points in only one of Middlebury's last seven games and setting a personal mark with a career-high 30 points against Bowdoin during the Panthers' 76-46 win over the Polar Bears in the NESCAC semifinals. As prolific as his scoring numbers have been this season, Rudin has also been savvy with moving the ball around, averaging a league-leading 4.52 assists per game while holding a 1.49 assist-to-turnover ratio. Rudin broke the Middlebury record for career assists earlier this season in a win over Wesleyan on Jan. 24.

Colby junior forward Adam Choice (Newport, R.I.) was the only member of this year's All-NESCAC First Team to earn conference honors a year ago, garnering Second Team recognition in 2008. Choice paced the Mules in scoring for the second-straight season with 15.7 points per game (6th NESCAC) while also contributing 5.6 rebounds per game. He connected on nearly 49-percent of his shots from the field and sank an even 80-percent of his free throw attempts.

Williams placed two individuals on the First Team with senior guard Kevin Snyder (Littleton, Colo.) and junior forward Blake Schultz (Atherton, Calif.) representing the Ephs. The duo were among the league's top five overall scorers with Schultz second at 18.0 points per game and Snyder third with a 16.8-point average. Hitting 46.5-percent from the field this season, Schultz was also sixth in the NESCAC in rebounding with 6.5 boards per game and third in free throw percentage, making 84.5-percent of his attempts at the line (109-129). Snyder contributed 4.0 rebounds and 3.69 assists for the Ephs with a conference-best 1.81 assist-to-turnover ratio while draining 2.54 three-point field goals per game, third among all conference players. He buried 41.5-percent of his shots from beyond the arc in 2008-09.

Rounding out the 2009 NESCAC All-Conference First Team was senior G/F Brian Baskauskas (Palo Alto, Calif.) of Amherst. Baskauskas has enjoyed a career year with the Lord Jeffs this season, ranking fifth in the NESCAC in scoring and seventh in rebounds with a team-leading 16.4 points and 6.4 boards per game. A 51.6-percent shooter this season, Baskauskas, who garnered All-NESCAC accolades for the first time, is not surprisingly among the top 10 individuals in field goal percentage, as his 178 baskets made and 345 attempts are the most by any player from the top tier.

Rookie of the Year honors went to Connecticut College freshman Demetrius Porter (Virginia Beach, Va.). In his first year in the league, Porter was second for the Camels and ninth in the NESCAC in scoring with an average 13.9 points per game. He also contributed a team-high 4.6 rebounds and 1.05 blocks. Porter's highest total of the season came during his team's 86-72 victory against Tufts on Jan. 31, pouring in a game and career-high 29 points.

Middlebury junior Tim Edwards (Greenwich, Conn.) was selected as the Defensive Player of the Year. Edwards has been the Panthers' deterrent this winter as he has averaged a league-leading 2.26 steals per contest. He has also corralled roughly six rebounds per appearance, with 4.56 coming on the defensive glass. Stopping foes' top players isn't the only part of Edwards game. Starting 26 of Middlebury's 27 outings, Edwards is sixth among his teammates in scoring at 6.7 points per game.

Jeff Brown of Middlebury was the unanimous choice by the conference coaches for Coach of the Year honors. Brown, now in his 12th season at the helm of the Panthers and 15th year in the league, has guided the Panthers to their second-straight record-setting season with a program-best 24 wins heading into Saturday's NCAA Tournament second round contest. Middlebury also put together a school-best 17-game winning streak this season and won the 2009 NESCAC Men's Basketball Championship, the first title in team history.

2008-09 NESCAC MEN'S BASKETBALL ALL-CONFERENCE

First Team

G	Ben Rudin	Middlebury	Sr.	Scarsdale, N.Y.
G	Kevin Snyder	Williams	Sr.	Littleton, Colo.
G/F	Brian Baskauskas	Amherst	Sr.	Palo Alto, Calif.
F	Adam Choice ^	Colby	Jr.	Newport, R.I.
F	Blake Schultz	Williams	Jr.	Atherton, Calif.

Second Team

G	Chris Wilson	Bates	Jr.	Brewer, Maine
G/F	Artie Cutrone	Colby	Sr.	Garden City, N.Y.
G/F	Paul Rowe	Trinity	Sr.	Brooklyn, N.Y.
F	Kyle Jackson	Bowdoin	Sr.	Acton, Mass.
F	Jon Pierce ^	Tufts	Jr.	Belmont, Mass.

Player of the Year: Ben Rudin, Middlebury

Rookie of the Year: Demetrius Porter, Connecticut College

Defensive Player of the Year: Tim Edwards, Middlebury

Coach of the Year: Jeff Brown, Middlebury

* - 2007-08 All-Conference First Team

^ - 2007-08 All-Conference Second Team