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SOFTBALL All-Conference - May 13, 2010

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

NESCAC SOFTBALL ALL-CONFERENCE TEAMS RELEASED

Tufts' Sullivan Grabs Top Honors, Named Player & Defensive Player of the Year

HADLEY, Mass. – Tufts senior shortstop Casey Sullivan (Berlin, Conn.) has been chosen by the conference coaches as both the NESCAC Player of the Year and the Defensive Player of the Year. The conference's Rookie of the Year in 2007, Sullivan joins a long list of former Jumbos that have earned the league's top honor during their time in Medford, as eight of the last 10 Softball Players of the Year have come from Tufts.

Among the top hitters in the league this season, Sullivan had a career-year at the plate with personal-bests in batting average (.425), on-base percentage (.460), and slugging percentage (.832). She was also among the league leaders in multiple statistical categories with 48 hits (T-6th NESCAC), 10 doubles (T-8th), 10 home runs (T-1st), 41 runs scored (1st), 28 runs batted in (T-7th), and 18 stolen bases (2nd). Starting all 35 games this season, the senior shortstop was also stellar for the Jumbos in the field, as she committed only four errors on 157 chances for a fielding percentage of .975. In addition to being named Player and Defensive Player of the Year, Sullivan garnered All-NESCAC First Team recognition for the third time.

Wesleyan senior P/SS Meaghan Dendy (Swansea, Mass.) achieved a rare feat as she earned All-Conference First Team honors for the fourth year in a row. Joining Sullivan as the only two returners from last year's First Team, Dendy is hitting .350 with a .401 on-base percentage and a .445 slugging mark heading into this week's NCAA Tournament action with a team-leading and career-high 34 RBI along with 11 doubles. In the circle, Dendy (9-8) owns a 3.43 ERA over 120.1 innings with 87 strikeouts, second among all conference hurlers. Along with Dendy on the First Team from the 2010 NESCAC Softball Championship Cardinals were sophomores Dana Levy (Westport, Conn.) and Chrissy Bello (Upper Brookville, N.Y.). Similar to Dendy, Levy has been effective both in the batter's box and in the circle, batting .333 with a .372 on-base mark while recording a 6-4 record with two saves over 17 appearances and a 1.65 ERA in 68.0 innings. Bello has been the Cardinals' top hitter this spring, as the second year outfielder has a team-leading .408 average with 51 hits and nine doubles.

Bowdoin junior P/DP Kara Nilan (Pittsfield, Mass.) had All-NESCAC First Team honors bestowed upon her for the first time in her career. Nilan has been outstanding from the rubber this spring for the Polar Bears and currently leads the NESCAC in multiple categories, including ERA (1.23), wins (12-3), and strikeouts (95) over 101.2 IP - figures that helped her earn the conference's Pitcher of the Year award. She established a new program record in April when she tossed 27.2 consecutive innings without allowing a run. Nilan is also enjoying her most productive campaign at the plate, batting a respectable .350 with a team- and league-leading 56 hits. Accompanying Nilan from Bowdoin on the First Team was senior catcher Clare Ronan (Jenkintown, Pa.). Ronan is just ahead of her battery mate at the dish, averaging .352 with 14 doubles, second among all hitters, along with a .415 on-base percentage and a .608 slugging mark. She has committed only three errors on 219 chances (.986) and has allowed just four passed balls behind the plate. The duo helped the Polar Bears reach the title game of the NESCAC Softball Championship this past weekend for the first time since 2001 and also the program's first berth into the NCAA Tournament.

Junior P/DP Geena Constantin (Pelham, N.H.) of Middlebury capped an impressive season for the Panthers with a spot on the First Team. At 7-5 inside the circle over 15 appearances, Constantin was third among NESCAC hurlers with a 1.76 ERA and 84 strikeouts over 87.2 innings, holding opposing batters to a league-low .199 average. Constantin recorded a perfect game in the first outing of a doubleheader sweep of Hamilton on April 10, as she struck out four of the 21 batters she faced in the 6-0 victory. Fellow junior 1B/P Alyssa Lepore (Victor, N.Y.) of Colby was one of eight individuals recognized with All-NESCAC on the First Team for the first time ever. Lepore enjoyed a career year for the Mules, as her .462 average ranked second in the conference while her .519 on-base percentage and .681 slugging mark were all personal bests. She also committed only four error on 190 chances (.979).

First year members on the All-Conference First Team included Tufts' Emily Beinecke (Concord, Mass.) and Williams' Cedar Blazek (Highland Ranch, Colo.). Beinecke had the best batting average in the NESCAC this season, as the second baseman hit at a .467 clip with a .487 OBP and a .600 slugging percentage. Like Beinecke for the Jumbos, Blazek paced the Ephs at the plate with a .433 average and 52 hits (3rd NESCAC). Blazek, who also came away as the 2010 NESCAC Rookie of the Year, tied Sullivan from Tufts for the conference lead in home runs with a program-record 10 dingers and also drove in a NESCAC-best 40 runs.

Rounding out the First Team was two-time All-NESCAC honoree Jessica Tait (North Salem, N.Y.) from Trinity. A First Team member in 2007 and a Second Team selection in 2008, the Bantams' senior outfielder averaged a team-leading .395 at the plate with a .711 slugging percentage, as she hit a conference-best nine triples in 2010.

Wesleyan head coach Jen Lane was the choice among the coaches, earning Coach of the Year honors for the first time outright after sharing the honor in 2008. In her ninth season at the helm of the Cardinals, Lane has guided her team to the 2010 NESCAC Softball Championship and a spot in the NCAA Tournament, both program firsts.

2010 NESCAC SOFTBALL ALL-CONFERENCE

First Team

2B	Emily Beinecke	Tufts	Fy.	Concord, Mass.
OF	Chrissy Bello	Wesleyan	So.	Upper Brookville, N.Y.
OF	Cedar Blazek	Williams	Fy.	Highland Ranch, Colo.
P/DP	Geena Constantin	Middlebury	Jr.	Pelham, N.H.
P/SS	Meaghan Dendy *	Wesleyan	Sr.	Swansea, Mass.
1B/P	Alyssa Lepore	Colby	Jr.	Victor, N.Y.
SS/P	Dana Levy	Wesleyan	So.	Westport, Conn.
P/DP	Kara Nilan	Bowdoin	Jr.	Pittsfield, Mass.
C	Clare Ronan	Bowdoin	Sr.	Jenkintown, Pa.
SS	Casey Sullivan *	Tufts	Sr.	Berlin, Conn.
OF	Jessica Tait	Trinity	Sr.	North Salem, N.Y.

Second Team

OF	Allee Beatty	Wesleyan	Fy.	Redding, Conn.
3B	Caroline Blanchard	Trinity	Fy.	Norwich, Conn.
1B/OF	Lena Cantone ^	Tufts	So.	Southington, Conn.
2B	Lauren Dobish	Bates	So.	Chambersburg, Pa.
2B	Amy Hackett	Bowdoin	So.	Bangor, Maine
2B	Ali Hart	Williams	So.	Roswell, Ga.
SS	Jessa Hoffman	Middlebury	Fy.	Golden, Colo.
P	Julia Jacobs	Bowdoin	Sr.	Ridgewood, N.J.
1B	Megan Margel ^	Middlebury	Jr.	Ridgewood, N.J.
C/OF	Barbara Santos	Colby	Jr.	Topsfield, Mass.
OF	Stefanie Tong	Tufts	Sr.	Burlingame, Calif.

Player of the Year: Casey Sullivan, Tufts

Pitcher of the Year: Kara Nilan, Bowdoin

Rookie of the Year: Cedar Blazek, Williams

Defensive Player of the Year: Casey Sullivan, Tufts

Coaches of the Year: Jen Lane, Wesleyan

* - 2009 All-Conference First Team ^ - 2009 All-Conference Second Team