

Northeast Conference

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For Immediate Release

May 23, 2007

Quinnipiac's Tim Binkoski Named NEC Baseball Player of the Year
Monmouth's Brad Brach Tabbed NEC Pitcher of the Year
Monmouth's Ryan Buch Chosen NEC Rookie of the Year
Mount St. Mary's Scott Thomson Selected NEC Coach of the Year

Somerset, NJ -- On the eve of the 2007 Northeast Conference Baseball Tournament, the league announced its year-end all-conference award winners in balloting conducted by head coaches. Quinnipiac senior outfielder **Tim Binkoski (North Haven, CT/North Haven)** was chosen NEC Player of the Year. Monmouth was the recipient of two awards, as junior **Brad Brach (Freehold, NJ/Freehold Township)** was named NEC Pitcher of the Year and freshman hurler **Ryan Buch (Yardley, PA/Conwell Egan Catholic)** was selected NEC Rookie of the Year. Mount St. Mary's **Scott Thomson** was unanimously picked by his peers as NEC Coach of the Year. Quinnipiac led the conference with five players named to all-NEC teams, followed by Monmouth and Mount St. Mary's with four apiece.

The major award winners were announced, along with the first and second all-NEC teams, at a banquet held at New Britain Stadium in New Britain, CT. The four-team, double-elimination NEC Tournament, presented by *Akadema*, will be contested at New Britain Stadium over the next three days, culminating in the championship on Saturday, May 26th. First round tournament pairings on Thursday afternoon pit NEC co-regular season champion and #1 seed Quinnipiac against #4 seed Central Connecticut State at 12:00 pm, followed by #2 seed and co-regular season champion Mount St. Mary's against #3 seed Monmouth at 3:30 pm.

Binkoski has been one of the ringleaders of a potent Quinnipiac lineup that helped the Bobcats earn a share of their second NEC regular season crown and establish school records for overall (28) and conference (21) victories. In recent weeks the senior outfielder has pulled away from the pack in the race for the league batting crown and enters the postseason with a scintillating .425 average. The only player in the conference hitting in excess of .400, Binkoski ranked 19th nationally in batting average in the most recent NCAA report. He also leads the NEC with a .488 on-base percentage and stands third on the circuit in hits (76), sixth in slugging percentage (.564), seventh in doubles (15) and tenth in runs (40). The North Haven, CT native finished the regular season with a 16-game hitting streak during which he had 12 multi-hit games and raised his average from .398 to .425. A three-time first team all-NEC performer, Binkoski becomes the third Quinnipiac player to receive NEC Player of the Year honors, joining Nate Noyes (2000) and former teammate Bryan Sabatella (2005).

Brach, who was a two-time *Akadema*/NEC Pitcher of the Week for playoff-bound Monmouth during the regular season, utilized pinpoint control to finish the year tied for the league lead with eight victories (against just two defeats). The righthander also ranked first in the conference with three shutouts and currently sits third in strikeouts (76) and fifth in ERA (3.01). Against NEC competition, Brach posted a 6-1 mark with a 2.50 ERA and walked just eight batters in 54 innings. In three years, the Freehold, NJ product has already equaled the school record with 20 career victories and is third with 196 strikeouts. On April 13, he tossed a no-hitter against Long Island and was named NCBWA National Pitcher of the Week for his performance. Brach joins Joe Aragona (1996) and Jim Carone (2002) as Monmouth players who have been selected NEC Pitcher of the Year.

(NEC Baseball All-Conference Release; 1-of-4)

Central Connecticut State University • Fairleigh Dickinson University • Long Island University
Monmouth University • Mount St. Mary's University • Quinnipiac University
Robert Morris University • Sacred Heart University • St. Francis (NY) College
Saint Francis (PA) University • Wagner College

Buch sparked in his freshman campaign, quickly establishing himself as one of the league's top starters while providing a terrific one-two combination in the Monmouth rotation along with Brach. Sporting an 8-2 record, Buch is tied for the league lead in wins, ranks second in the loop with a 2.23 ERA and occupies fifth place with 66 strikeouts. Opponents are hitting just .217 against the righthander from Yardley, PA, currently the second-lowest mark in the NEC. Consistency has been Buch's hallmark, having allowed three earned runs or less in each of his 11 starts. Buch joins a long line of Monmouth players - seven in total - honored as NEC Rookie of the Year, the most recent being teammate Rick Niederhaus in 2006. He is also the lone freshman this season to be rewarded with an all-conference spot, collecting second team accolades.

Thomson's selection by league head coaches as NEC Coach of the Year is a well-deserved honor for the veteran skipper, now in his tenth season at the helm of the Mount St. Mary's program. Picked fourth in the NEC Preseason Coaches Poll, Thomson helped engineer a year to remember for the Mount program, which went 32-11 following a 3-9 start, earned a piece of its first-ever NEC regular season title and obliterated school records for overall (35) and conference (21) victories. After charting steady growth in recent seasons, he will be seeking the program's first league title as he takes the Mountaineers to their first NEC Tournament since 1998. The key to the Mount's success in 2007: a terrific blend of hitting, pitching and fielding that saw the club rank in the NEC top-three in each category.

Ten additional honorees joined major award winners Tim Binkoski (outfield) and Brad Brach (pitcher) on the all-NEC first team. The first team featured a near complete turnover from last season with Binkoski and Quinnipiac third baseman John Delaney being the only repeat picks.

Monmouth junior **Andy Meyers (Stratford, NJ/Sterling)** claimed first team accolades at first base following a terrific regular season that saw him rank in the NEC top-10 in ten different categories, including RBI (61, first), average (.389, second), slugging percentage (.606, third) and on-base percentage (.473, third). Meyers, who has blasted nine homers and was the NEC's top run producer in league play with 33 RBI in 27 games, was tabbed *Akadema*/NEC Player of the Week on May 14.

Quinnipiac senior second baseman **Randy Gress (Shelton, CT/Notre Dame-Fairfield)** enters the postseason red-hot after driving in eight runs in his final five games to win the final *Akadema*/NEC Player of the Week award of the year. After pacing the circuit with 11 homers a year ago, Gress once again stands atop the NEC leaderboard with 12 dingers in 2007. The first team all-star is hitting .305 and ranks fourth in the NEC in slugging percentage (.586) and runs scored (46), fifth in RBI (45) and eighth in total bases (102).

Quinnipiac junior **John Delaney (Hanson, MA/Xaverian Brothers)** made it back-to-back first team all-NEC honors at third base. A .309 hitter during the regular season, Delaney is second on the Bobcats with a .411 on-base percentage and third with 14 doubles. His .347 average against conference rivals is the tenth best mark in the conference.

Wagner senior **Joe DiGeronimo (Hawthorne, NJ/Hawthorne)** took home first team honors at shortstop. DiGeronimo closed out his career in 2007 by hitting .347 and ranks first in the NEC in triples (six), second in stolen bases (28) and fourth in hits (69). He established a school record with 219 hits over his four years and leaves Wagner sitting in the top-10 in runs, doubles, triples, stolen bases and assists.

Monmouth senior **Kyle Messineo (Cedar Grove, NJ/Cedar Grove)** utilized his speed and patience at the plate to nab first team all-NEC plaudits in the outfield. Messineo, who is hitting .341 on the year with seven homers and 34 RBI, paces the conference and ranks among national leaders with 63 runs scored and a single-season school record 39 stolen bases in 43 attempts. In two years, he has swiped 68 stolen bases at a 90.7 percent success rate. Messineo, who is also first in the league with 34 walks and second with a .480 on-base percentage, earned *Akadema*/NEC Player of the Week honors on April 2.

Mount St. Mary's junior outfielder **Ryan Murray (Enola, PA/East Pennsboro)** was one of the key components in the Mount's ascension up the NEC ladder this season, ranking first in the conference in slugging percentage (.637), third in hitting (.385) and fifth in round trippers (ten). Murray, who had just one homer in 84 career at-bats entering this season, also scored 35 runs and drove in 31. He was selected *Akadema*/NEC Player of the Week on April 9.

Central Connecticut State senior **Adam Taha's (Bayville, NJ/Brookdale CC)** selection at catcher made it five times in the last six years that a Blue Devil backstop has been chosen to the first team. Taha leads the Blue Devils and is seventh in the league with a .350 average, and ranks fifth among all NEC players with a .440 on-base percentage. Taha also threw out 14 runners attempting to steal and was chosen *Akadema*/NEC Player of the Week on May 7.

Sacred Heart junior designated hitter **Jeff Hanson (Woodstock, NY/Onteora)** has stood among league leaders in hitting virtually the entire season and currently sits in fourth with a .376 average. His 19 doubles pace the NEC, while his .607 slugging percentage and 46 RBI rank him second and fourth, respectively. Hanson also teed off against conference pitching, hitting .402 for the year. He earned back-to-back *Akadema*/NEC Player of the Week awards on April 16 and April 23.

Sacred Heart senior **Rob Tencza (Meriden, CT/Maloney)** was the first team pick as a utility player after hitting .293 with four homers, 22 RBI and a .512 slugging percentage, which ranked him second on the Pioneers. The two-way player also won five games on the mound for the Pioneers.

Sacred Heart senior righthander **Jay Monti (Marlboro, NY/Marlboro)** may have had a better season than in 2005, when he was named NEC Pitcher of the Year. Monti, who led the nation in ERA for five straight weeks through mid-May, wrapped up his senior season with an 8-4 record, tying for most wins in the conference. In compiling a minuscule 1.34 ERA, he allowed just 12 earned runs and struck out 63 in 80.1 innings. Opposing batters hit .193 against Monti, the best mark in the conference. He was chosen *Akadema*/NEC Pitcher of the Week on March 12.

The all-NEC second team included three repeat all-conference performers, as Mount St. Mary's senior first baseman **Eric Smith (Marlton, NJ/St. Joseph's Prep (PA))** and junior designated hitter **Josh Vittek (Eldersburg, MD/Liberty)** both made their third all-star appearance, while Quinnipiac senior outfielder **Ryan Rizzo (East Northport, NY/Commack)** became a two-time honoree. Smith's third straight second team selection is a testament to his consistency over the course of a career that has left him as the school's all-time hits leader with 196. He currently leads the NEC with 61 RBI and is hitting .342 on the season. After a slow start that saw his average dip to .212 in mid-April, Vittek came on like gangbusters over the final month of the season, hitting .354 with ten homers, 33 RBI and a .737 slugging percentage over the Mount's 23-5 stretch to close out the year. He enters postseason play hitting .283 with a conference-best 12 homers to go along with 44 RBI (sixth in NEC). Vittek was previously named first team all-NEC in 2006 and second team in 2005. Rizzo, who was an *ESPN The Magazine* Academic All-America and first team all-NEC pick in 2006, is hitting .330 with 18 doubles (fourth in conference) and 32 RBI. Wagner sophomore second baseman **Pete Delleani (Manalapan, NJ/CBA)** hit .339 on the year and ranks eighth on the circuit with eight homers and 38 RBI. Mount St. Mary's third baseman **Matt Eiden (Silver Spring, MD/St. John's)** is the eighth-leading hitter in the conference with a .348 average and also ranks sixth with a .436 on-base percentage. Quinnipiac senior shortstop **Wilson Matos (Larchmont, NY/Mamaroneck)** began to heat up during the Bobcats' late-season drive and enters the playoffs with a 14-game hitting streak. He is hitting .295 with 27 RBI, and with eight homers on the year, is one of four Quinnipiac players ranked in the NEC top-10 in the category. Fairleigh Dickinson senior outfielder **Chris Grabowski (Brooklyn, NY/Xaverian)** tore up NEC pitching to the tune of a .388 average, fourth on the loop. Overall, he hit .309 and ranks second in the conference in triples (five) and fourth in stolen bases (19). Central Connecticut State junior outfielder **Jak Kidd (Casper, WY/McCook CC)** has been invaluable to the Blue Devils' success this season, racking up team-high totals in doubles (nine), triples (five, second in NEC), homers (five), RBI (36) and slugging percentage (.519). Wagner sophomore catcher **Chris Dreschel (Cranford, NJ/Cranford)** comes off a spectacular defensive campaign that saw him gun down 33 would-be basestealers. He also hit .338 in league play and finished the year with a .296 average, 24 runs and 18 RBI. Fairleigh Dickinson senior utility player **Vincente-Alexander Medina (North Bergen, NJ/Paramus Catholic)** played an assortment of positions for the Knights and was the team's leading power threat with five homers. Medina also led FDU with 33 RBI and ranked second on the club with a .333 average, including .361 versus conference opposition. Joining NEC Rookie of the Year Ryan Buch of Monmouth on the second team pitching staff is Central Connecticut State sophomore lefthander **Ken Kerski (Waterbury, CT/Crosby)**. Kerski concluded the regular season with a perfect 5-0 mark and 2.54 ERA against NEC rivals. On the year, he posted a 7-1 record and ranks seventh in the conference with a 2.67 ERA. He has not allowed a single long ball in 64.0 innings pitched.

2007 NEC Baseball Award Winners

Player of the Year

Tim Binkoski	Quinnipiac	OF	6-1	195	Sr	North Haven, CT/North Haven
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Pitcher of the Year

Brad Brach	Monmouth	RHP	6-3	200	Jr	Freehold, NJ/Freehold Township
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Rookie of the Year

Ryan Buch	Monmouth	RHP	6-3	190	Fr	Yardley, PA/Conwell Egan Catholic
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Coach of the Year

Scott Thomson	Mount St. Mary's
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2007 NEC Baseball First Team All-Conference

Name	School	Pos.	Ht	Wt	Yr	Hometown/High School
Andy Meyers	Monmouth	1B	6-1	190	Jr	Stratford, NJ/Sterling
Randy Gress	Quinnipiac	2B	6-2	185	Sr	Shelton, CT/Notre Dame-Fairfield
John Delaney	Quinnipiac	3B	5-10	180	Jr	Hanson, MA/Xaverian Bros.
Joe DiGeronimo	Wagner	SS	5-11	175	Sr	Hawthorne, NJ/Hawthorne
Tim Binkoski	Quinnipiac	OF	6-1	195	Sr	North Haven, CT/North Haven
Kyle Messineo	Monmouth	OF	5-10	180	Sr	Cedar Grove, NJ/Cedar Grove
Ryan Murray	Mount St. Mary's	OF	6-0	200	Jr	Enola, PA/East Pennsboro
Adam Taha	CCSU	C	5-11	205	Sr	Bayville, NJ/Brookdale CC
Jeff Hanson	Sacred Heart	DH	6-5	230	Jr	Woodstock, NY/Onteora
Rob Tencza	Sacred Heart	UT	5-10	170	Sr	Meriden, CT/Maloney
Brad Brach	Monmouth	RHP	6-3	200	Jr	Freehold, NJ/Freehold Township
Jay Monti	Sacred Heart	RHP	6-1	210	Sr	Marlboro, NY/Marlboro

2007 NEC Baseball Second Team All-Conference

Name	School	Pos.	Ht	Wt	Yr	Hometown/High School
Eric Smith	Mount St. Mary's	1B	6-0	215	Sr	Marlton, NJ/St. Joseph's Prep (PA)
Pete Delleani	Wagner	2B	5-11	180	So	Manalapan, NJ/CBA
Matt Eiden	Mount St. Mary's	3B	6-0	180	Jr	Silver Spring, MD/St. John's
Wilson Matos	Quinnipiac	SS	5-9	175	Sr	Larchmont, NY/Mamaroneck
Chris Grabowski	Fairleigh Dickinson	OF	5-10	175	Sr	Brooklyn, NY/Xaverian
Jak Kidd	CCSU	OF	6-0	215	Jr	Casper, WY/McCook CC
Ryan Rizzo	Quinnipiac	OF	5-10	180	Sr	East Northport, NY/Commack
Chris Dreschel	Wagner	C	5-10	220	So	Cranford, NJ/Cranford
Josh Vittek	Mount St. Mary's	DH	6-3	240	Jr	Eldersburg, MD/Liberty
Vincente-Alexander Medina	Fairleigh Dickinson	UT	6-1	200	Sr	North Bergen, NJ/Paramus Catholic
Ryan Buch	Monmouth	RHP	6-3	190	Fr	Yardley, PA/Conwell Egan Catholic
Ken Kerski	CCSU	LHP	6-2	190	So	Waterbury, CT/Crosby