

# Northeast Conference

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## Northeast Conference Announces 2010 Baseball Postseason Honors

*CCSU's Sean Allaire Tabbed NEC Player of the Year*  
*Bryant's Brent Almeida Named NEC Pitcher of the Year*  
*Bryant's Kevin Brown Billed NEC Rookie of the Year*

**Somerset, NJ** -- Central Connecticut State senior **Sean Allaire (Bristol, CT/Bristol Eastern)** captured the Northeast Conference Player of the Year honor and denied NEC newcomer Bryant a clean sweep of the league's major baseball awards. In its first season as a conference member, Bryant compiled three major accolades and seven All-NEC selections on the heels of its regular season title.

Bulldogs' senior **Brent Almeida (Fairhaven, MA/Fairhaven)** earned the NEC Pitcher of the Year award, while freshman teammate **Kevin Brown (Northborough, MA/Algonquin)** claimed the NEC Rookie of the Year honor. Bryant head coach **Jamie Pinzino** was tabbed the NEC Coach of the Year by his peers. The NEC announced the selections at an awards banquet on the eve of the 18<sup>th</sup> annual NEC Baseball Championship presented by Akadema.

**Allaire** put together a monster senior season that ended with him standing atop the Northeast Conference in six offensive statistical categories. The all-NEC first team utility player hit .456 to win the conference batting title, while leading the league in on-base percentage (.515) and slugging (.804). Leaving very few ducks on the pond, Allaire recorded a NEC-best 70 runs batted in over 49 regular season games. His 93 hits and 164 total bases during that span are also NEC highs. Although his 22 doubles are second to Bryant's Kevin Brown on the league leader board, they are enough to rank him first in CCSU single-season history. Making a habit of putting the ball in play, Allaire struck out only 15 times in 204 at-bats.

**Almeida** looked everything like an ace during the season's stretch run. The 5-foot-10 right-handed hurler notched complete-game victories in each of his final three starts on the way to a perfect 6-0 record. His 5-0 shutout of Sacred Heart clinched the regular season title for Bryant on May 21. He surrendered only 14 earned runs in 65.0 innings of work to account for a league-low 1.94 ERA. Almeida collected five wins during conference play, while holding NEC opponents to a .200 batting average.

No NEC player registered more at-bats this season than **Brown**, and the rookie outfielder proved extremely deserving of his numerous opportunities in the lead-off spot. Brown hit .355 and slugged .593 over 231 at-bats, both percentages ranking ninth overall amongst league leaders. Of his 82 hits, which are third-most in the NEC, 36 went for extra bases. Brown's 23 doubles rank him atop the NEC and his seven triples tie the speedy outfielder for first in Bryant's single-season annals. Brown started all 56 games on Bryant's 2010 slate, and was especially rude to opposing pitchers during NEC play. He posted a .398 batting average and .680 slugging percentage in 32 contests against conference foes. Four of his six home runs came against NEC hurlers, as did 30 of his 40 RBI. Brown also occupies one of the three outfield positions on the All-NEC Second Team.

**Pinzino** coached Bryant to a league-best 34-22 overall record during only its second season of Division I baseball. The 34 victories surpassed last year's total of 32 wins and are the fourth-most victories in single-season program history. The Bulldogs finished atop the regular season standings by winning 25 of 32 Northeast Conference contests. Bryant did not lose any of the eight four-game NEC series it played, winning six of them and splitting two. Pinzino's team closed out the season winning 21 of its last 24 games.

(2010 All-NEC Baseball; 1-of-4)

Bryant University (2012-13) • 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

Five CCSU Blue Devils rank amongst the NEC's Top 7 in batting average, and all five, including the aforementioned Allaire, earned All-NEC First Team status. CCSU outfielders **Pat Epps (Waterford, CT/Waterford)** and **Richie Tri (Everett, WA/Barnstable)** both hit over .400 and secure their second consecutive all-NEC honor as a result. Epps, who was an all-NEC first team selection at the designated hitter position in 2009, saw increased time in the outfield and batted .413. After going deep only three times in 2009, Epps enjoyed a power surge during his junior season. He belted a league-leading 17 home runs, setting CCSU's single-season program record in the process. With 25 career long balls, Epps can also call himself the Blue Devils' All-Time Home Run King. With his name appearing frequently throughout the league rankings, Epps was second amongst NEC leaders in five categories – batting average (.413), on-base percentage (.515), slugging percentage (.776), runs (60), and RBI (66).

Tri improved upon both his batting average and all-NEC standing from a year ago. After accounting for a .348 average and Second Team selection in 2009, Tri hit .404 and jumped up to the First Team as a senior. He drove in 38 runs and scored 40 more over 46 games. On his way to the NEC's fourth-highest slugging percentage (.627), Tri belted six home runs and 15 two-baggers. His .452 on-base percentage stands sixth in the conference.

Bryant senior **Nick Campbell (Raynham, MA/Bridgewater-Raynham)** joins Epps and Tri in the First Team outfield. Running his career total up to a program-record 341, Campbell compiled 84 hits during his first season in the NEC. Starting all 56 of Bryant's games, the Bulldogs' clean-up hitter batted .391 and scored 43 runs. More of a contact hitter, Campbell belted only homers, both of which came in conference play, while driving in 45 runs.

Moving to the infield, Blue Devils man both corner positions. CCSU senior first baseman **Tommy Meade (Pearl River, NY/Pearl River)** slugged .626 (5<sup>th</sup> in NEC) and posted a .445 on-base percentage (7<sup>th</sup> in NEC). Batting .379, a mark that stands seventh amongst league leaders, Meade went deep nine times and drove in 51 runs. He made only two errors all season and posted a perfect 1.000 field percentage during conference play.

CCSU junior third baseman **Mitch Wells (East Haddam, CT/Xavier)** accounted for the NEC's sixth-highest batting average (.390). He homered eight times and belted 19 doubles and a pair of triples. Reaching base at a .462 clip, which is third-best in the NEC, Wells came around to score 49 runs in 49 games. His 43 RBI rank fourth on a team that averaged a conference-high 8.8 runs per contest.

Juniors from Monmouth and Wagner occupy the middle infield positions on the All-NEC First Team. **Ryan Terry (Levittown, PA/Conwell Egan Catholic)** moved from the left side of Monmouth's infield to second base following the graduation of two-time all-NEC first teamer Chris Collazo. Terry, who was the 2008 NEC Rookie of the Year, hit for both average and power at his new position. Batting .353 over 47 games, Terry totaled 31 extra-base hits. His nine home runs rank fifth amongst NEC leaders, while his 20 doubles are third. He recorded 33 RBI and scored 49 runs, which tie him for seventh amongst the conference's best. Terry, who slugged .626, displayed speed, too, swiping a team-high 15 bases.

Junior **Brian Martutartus (Carlsbad, CA/La Costa Canyon)** earned all-league honors at shortstop after leading Wagner in hitting this season. Martutartus batted .344 with 24 RBI and 35 runs scored over 53 starts. Eighteen of the shortstops 63 hits went for two bases. Martutartus made good on 15 of 18 stolen base attempts.

Sacred Heart features an all-NEC first team battery in seniors **Jeff Heppner (Aquabogue, NY/Riverhead)** and **Jared Balbach (Pine Bush, NY/Pine Bush)**. Heppner's second season in the NEC resulted in his second consecutive all-conference honor at catcher. The 6-foot-1 right-handed slugger once again ranked amongst the NEC's Top 4 in both home runs and RBI. Heppner matched last season home run total, blasting 13 to tie Allaire for third in the league. After leading the NEC in RBI last year, Heppner drove in 55 runs to rank fourth in 2010. Heppner's .617 slugging percentage sits eighth on the conference leader board.

After pitching his way onto the All-NEC Second Team as a junior, Balbach was even better during his final season at Sacred Heart. The 6-foot-2 southpaw posted an 8-3 record over 13 starts and recorded a 3.62 ERA. All six of his complete games came during conference play. In eight NEC starts, he went 6-1 with a 3.04 ERA. Overall, he registered 66 strikeouts in 82.0 innings.

With the NEC specifically recognizing relief pitchers for the first time, Bryant junior **Mark Andrews (Hillsborough, NJ/Hillsborough)** takes the First Team honor. Andrews led the Northeast Conference in saves, closing out 12 victories. He posted a 3-1 record and 2.73 ERA

in 23 appearances out of the bullpen. Throwing a total of 33.0 innings, 19.1 of which came against NEC foes, the lefty reliever struck 27 men and held the opposition to a .250 batting average.

Wagner junior **Jon Lucas (Hackettstown, NJ/Hackettstown)** rounds out the All-NEC First Team at the designated hitter spot. Lucas batted .320 overall with 31 RBI and 20 runs. His numbers significantly improved once conference play rolled around. Lucas hit .350 against NEC opponents, while reaching base at a .409 clip. His slugging percentage, which stands at .447 overall, was .475 in league games.

Bryant players earned a league-high four All-NEC Second Team selections with Wagner and Mount St. Mary's right behind having earned three apiece.

Two Seahawks occupy the right side of the Second Team infield with senior first baseman **Vin Avella (Matawan, NJ/CBA)** and junior second baseman **Seth Boyd (Perth Amboy, NJ/Perth Amboy)** doing the honors. Reclaiming all-NEC honors for the first time since his sophomore season, Avella batted .316 over a 53-game sample. Ranking amongst the NEC's Top 3 in both home runs and RBI, Avella blasted 15 long balls (2<sup>nd</sup>) and drove in 56 runs (3<sup>rd</sup>). He slugged .617 and made only one error in 461 fielding opportunities at first base. Boyd earns his second consecutive Second Team honor after hitting .312. His average rose to .378 against conference competition, while 19 of his 28 RBI came against NEC pitching. Boyd scored 40 runs and stole 13 bases in 47 games.

A pair of juniors comprises the left side. Third baseman **Joe Poletsky (Riverside, CT/Greenwich)** is Quinnipiac's lone all-NEC honoree. The right-handed hitter batted .318 with 38 RBI and 31 runs scored. Poletsky totaled 62 hits, including 14 doubles and two home runs. Bryant shortstop **Zakary Cianciolo (Prospect, CT/Woodland)** posted a .324 batting average with 18 doubles, four triples, and three long balls over 51 games. He scored 33 runs and drove in another 32. Cianciolo's seven errors were a league low amongst shortstops.

Fairleigh Dickinson's lone all-NEC representation comes in the outfield where newcomer **DJ Robinson (Woodbury, NJ/Gloucester Catholic)** compensated for the graduation of former Knight Matt Maher, who earned second team honors last year. Leading FDU at the plate, Robinson batted .339 over 50 games. His power numbers were some of the best in the NEC. Robinson ranked sixth amongst RBI leaders (49) and tied for seventh in home runs (8). Sacred Heart senior **Mike Drowne (South Hadley, MA/South Hadley)** makes a second consecutive appearance in the Second Team outfield. The left-handed hitter batted .321 and scored more runs (61) than anyone in the NEC. Drowne hit seven of his eight home runs during NEC play, while seeing his average spike to .357 against conference pitching.

Battery mates **Jeff Vigurs (South Windsor, CT/South Windsor)** and **Peter Kelich (Jackson, NJ/Jackson Memorial)** round out Bryant's all-NEC representation. Occupying the catcher position, Vigurs threw out 18 of 27 attempting base stealers and posted a .991 fielding percentage. Vigurs, who bats from the left side, entered the season as a member of the 200-hit club and recorded 74 base-knocks to run his career total up to 277, second all-time at Bryant. He batted .333 with 41 RBI and 35 runs scored. Throwing to Vigurs, freshman pitcher **Peter Kelich (Jackson, NJ/Jackson Memorial)** posted a NEC-best 9-1 record during his rookie campaign. The right-handed hurler pitched to a 4.23 ERA, while striking out 52 batters in 72.1 innings. He made eight starts in NEC play, going 6-1.

Mount St. Mary's senior **Kent Worthington (Hagerstown, MD/North Hagerstown)** accounts for the other starting pitcher position on the Second Team. Worthington's 2.95 ERA was second only to Almeida amongst NEC leaders. On his way to a 4-2 record, the 6-foot-2 righty allowed just 65 hits and struck out 72 batters in 76.1 innings. Opponents hit a measly .223 off the Mount's ace.

Wagner junior **David Rees (Staten Island, NY/Xavier)** is the all-NEC second team relief pitcher. He posted a 1.10 ERA in 15 appearances against NEC opponents. After moving from a set-up role into the closer position, Rees posted six saves. The southpaw struck out 33 batters in 34.0 innings of work.

Mount St. Mary's upperclassmen round out the All-NEC Second Team at the designated hitter and utility positions. Occupying the DH spot, Junior **Andrew Caron (Waynesboro, PA/Waynesboro)** batted .305 and reached base at a .412 clip. Caron's .547 slugging percentage was tops on the Mount. Meanwhile, senior **Mike Matta (Woodbridge, VA/Potomac)** did a little bit of everything on the way to earning all-NEC utility honors. In addition to pitching as both a starter and reliever, Matta played the infield and outfield. He went 4-6 with a 3.98 ERA on the hill and hit .338 at the plate. He saw 56 of his 77 at-bats during league play, slugging .554 over that sample. He totaled 13 runs scored and 12 RBI.

**2010 NEC Baseball Major Award Winners****Player of the Year**

| <b>Name</b>  | <b>School</b>     | <b>Yr</b> | <b>B/T</b> | <b>Ht</b> | <b>Wt</b> | <b>Hometown/Highschool</b>  |
|--------------|-------------------|-----------|------------|-----------|-----------|-----------------------------|
| Sean Allaire | Central Conn. St. | Sr.       | R/R        | 5-10      | 180       | Bristol, CT/Bristol Eastern |

**Pitcher of the Year**

| <b>Name</b>   | <b>School</b> | <b>Yr</b> | <b>B/T</b> | <b>Ht</b> | <b>Wt</b> | <b>Hometown/Highschool</b> |
|---------------|---------------|-----------|------------|-----------|-----------|----------------------------|
| Brent Almeida | Bryant        | Sr.       | R/R        | 5-10      | 190       | Fairhaven, MA/Fairhaven    |

**Rookie of the Year**

| <b>Name</b> | <b>School</b> | <b>Yr</b> | <b>B/T</b> | <b>Ht</b> | <b>Wt</b> | <b>Hometown/Highschool</b> |
|-------------|---------------|-----------|------------|-----------|-----------|----------------------------|
| Kevin Brown | Bryant        | Fr.       | L/R        | 6-0       | 195       | Northborough, MA/Algonquin |

**Coach of the Year**

| <b>School</b> |
|---------------|
| Bryant        |

**2010 NEC Baseball All-Conference First Team**

| <b>Pos</b> | <b>Name</b>       | <b>School</b>     | <b>Yr</b> | <b>B/T</b> | <b>Ht</b> | <b>Wt</b> | <b>Hometown/Highschool</b>      |
|------------|-------------------|-------------------|-----------|------------|-----------|-----------|---------------------------------|
| 1B         | Tommy Meade       | Central Conn. St. | Sr.       | R/R        | 6-4       | 215       | Pearl River, NY/Pearl River     |
| 2B         | Ryan Terry        | Monmouth          | Jr.       | R/R        | 6-0       | 190       | Levittown, PA/Truman            |
| 3B         | Mitch Wells       | Central Conn. St. | So.       | L/R        | 5-10      | 190       | East Haddam, CT/Xavier          |
| SS         | Brian Martutartus | Wagner            | Jr.       | R/R        | 5-10      | 160       | Carlsbad, CA/La Costa Canyon    |
| OF         | Nick Campbell     | Bryant            | Sr.       | R/R        | 5-10      | 170       | Raynham, MA/Bridgewater-Raynham |
| OF         | Patt Epps         | Central Conn. St. | Jr.       | R/R        | 6-3       | 225       | Waterford, CT/Waterford         |
| OF         | Richie Tri        | Central Conn. St. | Sr.       | L/R        | 6-2       | 200       | Everett, WA/Barnstable          |
| C          | Jeff Heppner      | Sacred Heart      | Sr.       | R/R        | 6-1       | 220       | Aquobogue, NY/Riverhead         |
| DH         | Jon Lucas         | Wagner            | Jr.       | S/R        | 5-9       | 185       | Hackettstown, NJ/Hackettstown   |
| UT         | Sean Allaire      | Central Conn. St. | Sr.       | R/R        | 5-10      | 180       | Bristol, CT/Bristol Eastern     |
| SP         | Brent Almeida     | Bryant            | Sr.       | R/R        | 5-10      | 190       | Fairhaven, MA/Fairhaven         |
| SP         | Jared Balbach     | Sacred Heart      | Sr.       | L/L        | 6-2       | 200       | Pine Bush, NY/Pine Bush         |
| RP         | Mark Andrews      | Bryant            | Jr.       | L/L        | 6-0       | 180       | Hillsborough, NJ/Hillsborough   |

**2010 NEC Baseball All-Conference Second Team**

| <b>Pos</b> | <b>Name</b>      | <b>School</b>       | <b>Yr</b> | <b>B/T</b> | <b>Ht</b> | <b>Wt</b> | <b>Hometown/High School</b>      |
|------------|------------------|---------------------|-----------|------------|-----------|-----------|----------------------------------|
| 1B         | Vin Avella       | Wagner              | Sr.       | R/R        | 6-0       | 205       | Matawan, NJ/CBA                  |
| 2B         | Seth Boyd        | Wagner              | Jr.       | L/R        | 6-1       | 180       | Perth Amboy, NJ/Perth Amboy      |
| 3B         | Joe Poletsky     | Quinnipiac          | Jr.       | R/R        | 5-11      | 185       | Riverside, CT/Greenwich          |
| SS         | Zakary Cianciolo | Bryant              | Jr.       | R/R        | 5-9       | 180       | Prospect, CT/Woodland            |
| OF         | Kevin Brown      | Bryant              | Fr.       | L/R        | 6-0       | 195       | Northborough, MA/Algonquin       |
| OF         | Mike Drowne      | Sacred Heart        | Sr.       | R/L        | 5-10      | 175       | South Hadley, MA/South Hadley    |
| OF         | DJ Robinson      | Fairleigh Dickinson | Jr.       | R/R        | 6-4       | 235       | Woodbury, NJ/Gloucester Catholic |
| C          | Jeff Vigurs      | Bryant              | Sr.       | L/R        | 6-0       | 190       | South Windsor, CT/South Windsor  |
| DH         | Andrew Caron     | Mount St. Mary's    | Jr.       | R/R        | 6-1       | 215       | Waynesboro, PA/Waynesboro        |
| UT         | Mike Matta       | Mount St. Mary's    | Sr.       | R/R        | 6-1       | 190       | Woodbridge, VA/Potomac           |
| SP         | Peter Kelich     | Bryant              | Fr.       | R/R        | 6-1       | 175       | Jackson, NJ/Jackson Memorail     |
| SP         | Kent Worthington | Mount St. Mary's    | Sr.       | R/R        | 6-2       | 205       | Hagerstown, MD/North Hagerstown  |
| RP         | David Rees       | Wagner              | Jr.       | L/L        | 6-1       | 190       | Staten Island, NY/Xavier         |