

Northeast Conference

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For Immediate Release
May 12, 2009

Sacred Heart's Patrick Fillian Chosen NEC Men's Golfer of the Year *Pioneers' Leo Garcia Named NEC Rookie of the Year*

Somerset, NJ - Sacred Heart's **Patrick Fillian (Tinton Falls, NJ/St. Rose)** was selected Northeast Conference Men's Golfer of the Year, a title with which he is familiar as the senior Pioneer claimed the honor for the second consecutive year. An unprecedented five-time NEC Golfer of the Week earlier this season, Fillian hit a hot streak during SHU's spring slate winning three individual medalist honors in a row, beginning with a five under par 139 (70-69) at the 4th Annual Monmouth Hawk Invitational on Mar. 28-29. Two weeks later, the Tinton Falls, NJ native shared the top spot at the New England Division I Championships carding rounds of 72-38 (110), followed by another triumph at the Northeast Invitational, hosted by URI, on Apr. 20-21 after recording a one-under 141 (68-73) to best the field by three strokes and to notch the sixth victory of his career. During his senior campaign, Fillian finished in the top-10 on the individual leaderboard in every event, including his most recent eighth-place performance at the 2009 NEC Championship Tournament. On the par 72, 6,937-yard layout on the International Course at ChampionsGate in ChampionsGate, FL, Fillian fired rounds of 75-74-73 for a three-day total of 222, earning all-tournament distinction. Fillian also received a spot on the all-conference first team, while his 71.8 stroke average bests the league.

Following a successful debut season, the Pioneers' **Leo Garcia (Guaynabo, Puerto Rico)** was tabbed NEC Men's Golf Rookie of the Year and also took a spot on the all-NEC second team. Hailing from Guaynabo, Puerto Rico, Garcia posted a trio of top-10 performances in his freshman campaign with SHU, including a sixth-place standing at the Monmouth Hawk Invitational with matching 74s (148). In his very next outing, Garcia posted a 113 (74-39) at the New England Championships, good for a share of the seventh slot on the individual leaderboard. Garcia capped off the 2008-09 season with sole possession of seventh place at the NEC Championship. The newcomer carded a three under 69 on the first day of competition and followed with a 75 to sit at an even 144 after 36 holes of golf in ChampionsGate, FL. Garcia's final-round 76 left him with a total of 220, marking SHU's second-best score. Garcia also posted a 74.8 stroke average.

An additional four student-athletes were selected to the all-NEC first team, including Central Connecticut State's **Eric Hawerchuk (Orangeville, Ontario)**, Fairleigh Dickinson's **Robert Cerabone (Commack, NY)**, Long Island's **Greg Nicolson (Edinburgh, Scotland)** and Saint Francis' (PA) **Michael Magalski (Spring Grove, PA/Spring Grove)**.

The individual champion at the 2009 NEC Championship, Hawerchuk navigated the International Course at ChampionsGate to finish four under (212) after rounds of 68-69-75. The sophomore's two-round score of 137 at the league event earned second place on the Conference's all-time 36-hole championship performance list. Hawerchuk's 2008-09 campaign also saw the sophomore record five top-10 outings, including the ECAC Championships, the Patriot Shootout, the New England Championships, the Peacock Invitational and the NEC Championship. A consistent Cerabone, the 2008 NEC Rookie of the Year, logged a total of 215 (72-72-71) at ChampionsGate to earn a four-way tie for the second slot. The sophomore Knight also claimed a spot on the league's weekly honor roll earlier in the season and maintained a 74.9 stroke average.

Nicolson, a three-time NEC Golfer of the Week as a senior, reached multiple milestones during his final season as a Blackbird. On Oct. 27-28, the Edinburgh, Scotland native captured his first career title at the Mount St. Mary's Fall Invitational with rounds of 70-78 (148), besting the field of 58 by three strokes. At the league tournament a few weeks ago, Nicolson became just the second golfer in NEC history and first since 2003 to pen a 67 during championship competition. That mark was bookended by rounds of 70 and 78 for a one under 215, good for a share of

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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

second place overall. Nicolson also joined Hawerchuk on the league's championship performance list as his 137 after 36 holes tied for the number two spot.

With a 73.84 stroke average and a top-10 outing in each of his six events this season, Magalski rounds out the all-NEC first team. During his junior campaign, the Spring Grove, PA product displayed a one under 215 (69-72-74) at the Conference tournament to tie for second place, while Magalski also logged a pair of sixth-place finishes, including the Colgate Invitational (78-74=152) and the IUP Invitational (76-69=145).

Joining Garcia as a SHU representative on the all-NEC second team is senior **Matt Belizze (North Salem, NY/North Salem)**. During the fall portion of the Pioneers' schedule, Belizze won his first career individual title after carding a birdie on the first playoff hole at the 74th Annual New England Intercollegiate Golf Association Championship on Oct. 20-21. The senior landed fourth after day one with a 76, and came back to fire a one-under par 71 on day two to jump up the leaderboard and earn a four-way tie for first.

Rounding out the all-conference second team honorees are CCSU's **Tim Buczak (Meriden, CT)**, Monmouth's **Greg Etimos (East Islip, NY/East Islip)** and Robert Morris' **C.G. Mercatoris (Brookville, PA/Brookville)**. Buczak recorded a trio of top-10 finishes during his senior season, including a tie for sixth (76-72=148) at the Northeast Invitational, marking his best outing of 2008-09. Buczak concluded his career as a Blue Devil with a stroke average of 77.4 per round. The lone Hawk to earn all-NEC distinction, Etimos bested his squad with a 75.5 stroke average. The sophomore notched six top-10 outings this season, saving his best 18 holes of golf for last as Etimos fired a three under 69 on day one of the NEC Championship to mark his season low round.

Mercatoris enjoyed a career outing at the Bucknell Fall Invitational on Sept. 12. In opening round action, the sophomore tied his career low by firing a 72 on the par-70, 6,227-yard layout and proceeded to decimate that record, besting his previous mark by six strokes and recording a tournament-low 66. Mercatoris' two-day total of 138 landed him in second place overall and earned NEC Golfer of the Week honors. The Brookville, PA product posted a 74.95 average and concluded his second season as a Colonial with a sixth-place (68-73-77=218) showing at the NEC Championship.

2009 NEC Men's Golf Award Winners

Golfer of the Year

Patrick Fillian	Sacred Heart	Sr.	Tinton Falls, NJ/St. Rose
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Rookie of the Year

Leo Garcia	Sacred Heart	Fr.	Guaynabo, Puerto Rico
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2009 NEC Men's Golf First Team All-Conference

Name	School	Yr	Hometown/High School
Eric Hawerchuk	Central Connecticut State	So.	Orangeville, Ontario/Robert F. Hall Catholic
Robert Cerabone	Fairleigh Dickinson	So.	Commack, NY
Greg Nicolson	Long Island	Sr.	Edinburgh, Scotland
Patrick Fillian	Sacred Heart	Sr.	Tinton Falls, NJ/St. Rose
Michael Magalski	Saint Francis (PA)	Jr.	Spring Grove, PA/Spring Grove

2009 NEC Men's Golf Second Team All-Conference

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Tim Buczak	Central Connecticut State	Sr.	Meriden, CT
Greg Etimos	Monmouth	So.	East Islip, NY/East Islip
C.G. Mercatoris	Robert Morris	So.	Brookville, PA/Brookville
Matt Belizze	Sacred Heart	Sr.	North Salem, NY/North Salem
Leo Garcia	Sacred Heart	Fr.	Guaynabo, Puerto Rico