

Northeast Conference

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For Immediate Release

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Monmouth Men Fly to New Heights to Win Title at 2009 NEC Outdoor Championships

West Long Branch, NJ — Monmouth won its fifth title in the last six years, but none of the prior four measure up to this one. The Hawks smashed a 17-year-old meet record by scoring 232 team points to win the 2009 Northeast Conference Outdoor Track & Field Championships presented by Road Runner Sports. Saint Francis (PA), which edged Monmouth for the 2009 NEC Indoor crown, scored 127 points to finish second. Last year's champion, Sacred Heart (99 pts.) took third in the 11-team field.

Monmouth freshman **Chris Rutherford (Toms River, NJ/TR East)** claimed two of the five major post-meet awards handed out by the NEC Sunday. The Hawks' rookie hurdler claimed the Most Outstanding Track Performer award and the Most Outstanding Rookie accolade for his victories at 110 and 400 meters. As Rutherford did on the track, Saint Francis (PA) senior **Denis Eradiri (Sofia, Bulgaria)** used a double victory in the field to claim a pair of major honors – the Most Valuable Performer (MVP) award and the Most Outstanding Field Performer accolade. The two honors will sit nicely next to the field award Eradiri earned at the 2009 NEC Indoor Championships.

Monmouth's Joe Compagni won the NEC Coach of the Year award, his eighth men's honor during his 15-year tenure. It was three years prior to Compagni's arrival in the NEC that Fairleigh Dickinson tallied 221 points to win the 1992 team title and a NEC team has scored 200 only twice since the Knights set the original mark. Both of those ensuing 200-plus performances have come from Monmouth. Compagni's Hawks scored 210 in taking the 2004 crown.

Forty-eight (48) of Monmouth's record point total came courtesy of two senior throwers. **Larry Lundy (Friendsville, PA/Montrose Area)** and **Christian Keller (Matawan, NJ/Matawan)** tallied 24 points apiece with both men scoring in the shot put, discus, and hammer throw. Lundy won Sunday's shot put competition after Keller won the discus Saturday.

Despite neither winning the hammer throw, the two helped Monmouth scored 21 points in the event. Lundy came up 32 centimeters short of the winning mark of 56.49m (185' 4"), which came from Robert Morris senior **Kevin Argauer (Honeoye Falls, NY/Honeoye Falls)**, to lead a 2-3-5-6 Monmouth finish. Keller's toss of 53.94m (177') took bronze.

Morning rain wasn't enough to ground the usually high-flying Hawks in the shot put. Monmouth produced 29 points through its work in the shot circle. It was there that NCAA Regional qualifier **Lundy** dethroned his classmate **Keller**. Lundy, who owns a seasonal best in excess of 60 feet, threw 17.39m (57' 00.75") to bump last year's champion down to second place. Monmouth sophomores **Vincent Elardo (Forked River, NJ/Lacey)** and **Tom Ciccoli (King of Prussia, PA/Archbishop Carroll)** finished third and fourth, respectively, to complete the 1-2-3-4 Hawks' sweep of the event.

Eradiri twice jolted the Red Flash, but his power surge in the horizontal jumps was overshadowed by the Hawks' record point total. Still, the Saint Francis (PA) senior was the only man at the meet to record to NCAA Regional qualifying marks. After winning the Saturday's long jump in impressive fashion (his mark of 7.53m would have scored at last year's NCAA East Region Championships), Eradiri answered the calls for an encore on Sunday. The fourth-year Flash triple jumped 15.15m (49' 8.5") to ease to a second title in as many days.

(2009 NEC Men's Outdoor Championship; 1-of-3)

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 • Bryant University (2012-13)

The Flash received another two impressive doubles in the distance events. Junior **Chris Behre (Flanders, NJ/Mt. Olive)** nearly repeated the feat that landed him the 2009 NEC Indoor MVP award. After a triumphant 800-mile doubles indoors, Behre won the 1500-meter run on Sunday, but settled for bronze in the 800-meter race, which was won by Long Island junior **Julius Mutekanga (Fort Portal, Uganda)**.

Red Flash freshman **Christopher Mills (Pikesville, MD/Western Tech)** would have qualified for an Ironman Award had the NEC given one out Sunday. The rookie completed the vaunted 10K-5K double, winning both events.

Sacred Heart sophomore **Daniel Koehler (Red Hook, NY/Red Hook Central)** conquered the steeple chase and his freshman teammate **Taylor Dressman (Brooklyn, NY/Grady)** was the third to cross the line to deliver 16 points for the Pioneers

Fighting unfriendly conditions, Sacred Heart senior **Thomas Hyatt (Hopewell Junction, NY/John Jay)** pole vaulted his way to a NEC title.

Rutherford and his fellow freshman **Geoff Navarro (Mays Landing, NJ/Absegami)** did a great deal of damage for the Hawks on the track. The former out-dueled Sacred Heart's **Bertony Jean-Louis (Norwalk, CT/Brien McMahon)** in the 110-meter hurdles final by clocking in under the IC4A qualifying standard (14.67) to best his fellow freshman by 0.20 second.

Rutherford (52.58) was the front half of Monmouth's one-two finish in the 400-meter hurdles. Fellow first-year Hawk **Stevenson Cajuste (Egg Harbor, NJ/Egg Harbor)**, who took sixth earlier in the high hurdles, finished second.

Navarro flew to the 200-meter title in 21.69 for his second IC4A qualifying performance of the day. The first came with his third-place finish in the 100-meter dash (10.83).

Monmouth senior **Chris Vuono (Wall, NJ/CBA)** overtook the Red Flash's top-seeded **Jorden Davis (Mississauga, Canada/Loyola Catholic)** in the 400-meter dash final. With freshman **Kevin Merrigan (Marlton, NJ/Cherokee)** adding a third-place finish to Monmouth's tally, the Hawks made a net gain of eight points on the Red Flash.

Long Island's **Mutekanga** followed his fourth-place finish in the 400-meter dash by winning the NEC title at double the distance.

Long Island senior **Andre Marciano (Port-of-Spain, Trinidad & Tobago)** led a trio of IC4A qualifiers to claim the 100-meter title in 10.75s.

CCSU freshman **Matt Berube (Southington, CT/Southington)** scored in three of four jumps to help the Blue Devils' 45.5-point improvement in the team standings from last year (25).

2009 NEC Outdoor Men's Individual Champions

100m:	Andre Marcano	Long Island	Sr.	10.75
200m:	Geoff Navarro	Monmouth	Fr.	21.69
400m:	Christopher Vuono	Monmouth	Sr.	49.22
800m:	Julius Mutekanga	Long Island	Jr.	1:54.27
1500m:	Chris Behre	Saint Francis (PA)	Jr.	4:01.58
5000m:	Christopher Mills	Saint Francis (PA)	Fr.	15:02.75
10000m:	Christopher Mills	Saint Francis (PA)	Fr.	31:27.42
110 Hurdles:	Chris Rutherford	Monmouth	Fr.	14.67
400 Hurdles:	Chris Rutherford	Monmouth	Fr.	52.58
3000m Steeple:	Daniel Koehler	Sacred Heart	So.	9:31.82
400m Relay:	Monmouth			41.46
1600m Relay:	Long Island			3:13.82
3200m Relay:	Sacred Heart			7:44.48
Long Jump:	Denis Eradiri	Saint Francis (PA)	Sr.	7.54m (24' 8.50")
Triple Jump:	Denis Eradiri	Saint Francis (PA)	Sr.	15.15m (49' 8.50")
High Jump:	Dean Brown	St. Francis (NY)	Jr.	1.95m (6' 4.75")
Pole Vault:	Thomas Hyatt	Sacred Heart	Sr.	4.20m (13' 9.25")
Shot Put:	Larry Lundy	Monmouth	Sr.	17.39m (24' 8.50")
Discus:	Christian Keller	Monmouth	Sr.	49.95m (163' 10")
Hammer Throw:	Kevin Argauer	Robert Morris	Sr.	56.49m (185' 4")
Javelin:	Matthew Megerdichian	St. Francis (NY)	Jr.	61.77m (202' 8")

Men's Team Standings (21 Events Scored)

1. Monmouth	232*
2. Saint Francis (PA)	127
3. Sacred Heart	99
4. Long Island	84.50
5. Central Conn. St.	71.50
6. Mount St. Mary's	65
7. St. Francis (NY)	54
8. Robert Morris	47
9. Wagner	22
10. Fairleigh Dickinson	9
11. Quinnipiac	7

*NEC meet record for team point total