



NORTH COAST ATHLETIC CONFERENCE

DENNIS M. COLLINS
Executive Director
P. O. Box 16679
Cleveland, Ohio 44116
Phone (440) 871-8100
Fax (440) 871-4221
ncac@northcoast.org
www.northcoast.org

ALLEGHENY COLLEGE ★ DENISON UNIVERSITY ★ EARLHAM COLLEGE ★ HIRAM COLLEGE ★ KENYON COLLEGE
OBERLIN COLLEGE ★ OHIO WESLEYAN UNIVERSITY ★ WABASH COLLEGE ★ WITTENBERG UNIVERSITY ★ COLLEGE OF WOOSTER

NCAC Volleyball Special

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WITTENBERG TOPS PRESEASON POLL AS NORTH COAST PREPS FOR 25TH VOLLEYBALL SEASON

CLEVELAND, Ohio -- Wittenberg University emerged as the preseason favorite in balloting by North Coast Athletic Conference volleyball coaches conducted via e-mail ballot.

The Tigers, who won the NCAC title with a 14-0 record and earned their 13th conference tournament title last fall, earned all nine first-place votes from league coaches to total 81 points. Wittenberg topped second-place Hiram by an nine-point margin. The Terriers, who won the NCAC title in 2005, totaled 72 points. Wooster (55), last year's third-place squad, was predicted to finish third again this season. Denison (46) was voted fourth, followed by Ohio Wesleyan (41) in fifth. Earlham (33) and Allegheny (32) were tabbed seventh and eighth respectively, while Oberlin (31) and Kenyon (14) rounded out the poll in places eight and nine.

Wittenberg enters its sixth season under the direction of head coach **Paco Labrador**, who has a 170-24 record over his five seasons at the helm. Last fall, the Tigers, winners of 13 North Coast titles overall, reached the national semifinals for the third consecutive season. Wittenberg returns 14 letterwinners from last year's team that did not lose a match during the regular season and remained undefeated until the national semifinals. Senior right side hitter **Jackie Williams (Rocky River, OH/Magnificat)** and senior libero **Laura Fender (Toledo, OH/St. Ursula)** lead four returning starters to the Tiger lineup. Williams was last year's NCAC Player of the Year after posting a .408 hitting percentage and averaging 3.36 kills per game. Fender enters the 2008 campaign second in career digs on Wittenberg's all-time list (2,222).

Founded in 1983, the North Coast Athletic Conference is celebrating 25 years of equity, broad-based athletic programs and excellence in academics over the 2008-09 academic year. Made up of 10 academically selective colleges and universities - Allegheny College, Denison University, Earlham College, Hiram College, Kenyon College, Oberlin College, Ohio Wesleyan University, Wabash College, Wittenberg University and the College of Wooster, the NCAC sponsors 22 championship sports, 11 for men and 11 for women.

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2008 NCAC Volleyball Poll

North Coast Athletic Conference 2008 preseason volleyball poll
(first-place votes in parentheses, followed by total points):

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|-------------------------|----|
| 1. Wittenberg (9) | 81 |
| 2. Hiram | 72 |
| 3. Wooster | 55 |
| 4. Denison | 46 |
| 5. Ohio Wesleyan | 41 |
| 6. Earlham | 33 |
| 7. Allegheny | 32 |
| 8. Oberlin | 31 |
| 9. Kenyon | 14 |