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USI, NKU AGAIN HEADLINE GLVC BASEBALL PRESEASON POLL **EAGLES, NORSE PICKED AS FAVORITES TO CLAIM DIVISIONS FOR SECOND STRAIGHT YEAR**

INDIANAPOLIS – The University of Southern Indiana and Northern Kentucky University baseball teams have been selected as the favorites to win the Great Lakes Valley Conference West and East Divisions, respectively, in 2009. The two teams were selected as the favorites last season as well, with Southern Indiana winning the GLVC West and Northern Kentucky claiming the 2008 championship.

Southern Indiana, two years removed from a trip to the NCAA Division II World Series, collected 25 total points in the annual coaches' poll to place first in the GLVC West Division. The Eagles received five of the six first-place votes.

Drury finished second in the west division poll with 21 total points and the final first-place vote. The Panthers were followed by Quincy (15 total points), Rockhurst (11), Missouri S&T (10) and Missouri-St. Louis (8).

Northern Kentucky garnered 34 total points in the GLVC East Division Poll and notched four first-place votes. The Norse, which entered the 2008 GLVC Tournament as a wild-card, earned last season's conference crown, their fourth overall.

Bellarmine placed second in the GLVC East Division poll with 30 total points and one first-place vote. The Knights edged Saint Joseph's who finished third in the poll with 27 total points and the final two first-place votes.

Indianapolis is fourth in the poll with 23 total points and is followed by Lewis (15 total points), Kentucky Wesleyan (11) and UW-Parkside (7).

Southern Indiana posted a 36-20 overall record in 2008 in head coach Tracy Archuleta's second-year. The Eagles earned the top-seed for the 2008 GLVC tournament with a 24-7 league mark, their first regular season crown in 15 seasons.

Despite the loss of a pair of top starters, Southern Indiana will have a strong pitching staff behind all-American closer Shaun Larsen who led the nation in saves (17) a year ago. The Eagles will have 13 returning letterwinners in all, including all-GLVC third baseman Alex Theiroff who hit .300 with 34 RBIs in 2008.

Northern Kentucky claimed their fourth GLVC championship last season, despite entering the tournament as the No. 5 seed. The Norse, under the guidance of head coach Todd Asalon, posted an overall record of 38-24 and finished the conference campaign with a 21-10 record, good for third-place in the GLVC East Division.

The Norse will be led by a pair of Preseason All-America selections in Kevin Dusold and Larry Pempek. Dusold hit .353 with eight homeruns and 55 RBIs in 2008 and earned second team All-

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GLVC honors. Pempek earned the ABCA Gold Glove award last season as one of the nation's top catchers. He also hit .325 with 34 runs and 26 RBIs.

The top two teams from each division and two wild cards will earn a berth to the 2009 GLVC Tournament at GCS Ballpark in Sauget, Illinois where the GLVC Champion will be crowned. The GLVC Tournament is scheduled for May 7-10.

The complete 2009 GLVC Baseball Preseason Poll follows:

<u>Team (First-place votes)</u>	<u>Total Points</u>
<i>East</i>	
Northern Kentucky (4)	34
Bellarmino (1)	30
Saint Joseph's (2)	27
Indianapolis	23
Lewis	15
Kentucky Wesleyan	11
UW-Parkside	7
<i>West</i>	
Southern Indiana (5)	25
Drury (1)	21
Quincy	15
Rockhurst	11
Missouri S&T	10
Missouri-St. Louis	8

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