

ARKANSAS TECH UNIVERSITY

ATHLETICS

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SEVEN GOLDEN SUNS NAMED ALL-GSC WEST DIVISION SELECTIONS; INCLUDING FOUR REPEAT FIRST-TEAM HONOREES

BIRMINGHAM, Alabama – Two days prior to the 2009 Gulf South Conference Softball Tournament, the Golden Suns had a league-high seven players honored by the league on one of its two All-GSC West Division Teams, including four repeat First-Team honorees from last season, which were announced by the league on Wednesday.

The All-GSC teams are voted on by the league's head coaches in their own respective divisions and the coaches weren't allowed to vote for their own players.

Tech, who won its second consecutive GSC West Division title this season, had four First-Team All-GSC West Division selections, which is the second most in school history for the Golden Suns since placing six players on the first team last season. The first team selections were senior rightfielder **Sarah Pratt** (Garland, Texas), junior pitcher **Casey Hammons** (Carthage, Texas), junior catcher **Roxie Palacios** (Crosby, Texas) and sophomore first baseman **Tiphani Moon** (Euless, Texas). All four of those Golden Suns were first team selections in 2008. In addition, sophomore second baseman **Shanda Jameson** (Mansfield, Texas), freshman pitcher **Morgan Rodgers** (Mansfield, Texas) and freshman shortstop **Stephanie Lasley** (Greenbrier, Ark.) were named Second-Team All-GSC West Division selections.

With her first team selection this season, Pratt joins former Golden Sun **Molly Schweigert** as just the second Golden Sun softball player to earn All-GSC West Division honors three times, as Pratt was a Second-Team honoree in 2007 and a First-Team selection the past two seasons.

In addition to naming the All-GSC Teams on Wednesday, the conference announced the winners of the league's individual awards. In the West Division, the coaches selected Arkansas-Monticello senior shortstop Lindsay Randall as its Player of the Year, while UAM freshman pitcher/first baseman Kayla Jackson earns both West Division Freshman and Pitcher of the Year honors and UAM Head Coach Alvy Early was named the West Division Coach of the Year. Meanwhile, in the East Division, Alabama-Huntsville's Beth Lawson took home Player of the Year honors, while West Florida's Jillian LaFrance earned Pitcher of the Year accolades and Valdosta State shortstop Marti Littlefield was named the division's Freshman of the Year. The fourth honor went to UAH's Les Stuedeman, who was named the East Division Coach of the Year for the second consecutive season.

Tech, Alabama-Huntsville and West Alabama each had a GSC-best seven players named All-GSC selections, while UAM and Valdosta State each had six players selected. UAM, the West Division runner-up and UAH, the East Division runner-up, each had a league-best five first team honorees.

Pratt earns repeat first team honors in the outfield after leading the Golden Suns in hits (78), runs scored (43), triples (9) and is second in both batting average (.370) and slugging percentage (.474). Pratt, who was a GSC West Division Player of the Week

earlier this season, has also hit four doubles, driven in 21 runs and is 8-for-13 in stolen bases. Pratt holds the school's career records for batting average (.360), hits (208), runs scored (102) and triples (16) and is second in career total bases (254) and at-bats (577). In addition, she also set new single-season school marks this year in at-bats (211), hits (78), runs scored (43), triples (9) and is tied for first in single-season games played with 60.

Hammons earns her second straight first team honor as a pitcher after compiling a 19-6 record and a 1.09 ERA, which is fourth-best in the GSC. On the season, Hammons, who was named a four-time GSC West Division Pitcher of the Week this year, made 36 appearances, 24 starts, threw 17 complete games, had a single-season record seven shutouts and recorded a team-best four saves. In 186.1 innings of work, the righthander allowed 126 hits, 45 runs (29 earned runs), while walking 53 and striking out 181 opposing hitters. In addition, she threw two no-hitters, including a perfect game this past season for the Golden Suns. With her performance this season, Hammons is now the school's career record holder in pitching appearances (88), victories (35), strikeouts (350), inning pitched (410.1), complete games (32), shutouts (12) and saves (9), along with holding single-season school records for ERA (1.09) and saves (5).

Palacios earns back-to-back first team honors at catcher after hitting .259 in 60 games. On the season, Palacios started 59 of Tech's 60 games behind the plate and collected 48 hits in 185 at-bats and drove in 26 runs. In addition, she collected four doubles, one triple and was walked 10 times. As a catcher, Palacios had a .980 fielding percentage and committed just seven errors in 343 fielding chances and helped Tech's pitching staff compile a single-season school record 1.77 ERA.

Moon repeats as a first-team selection at first base after following up her impressive freshman campaign with an even more solid sophomore year. On the season, Moon hit a team-best .376 with 67 hits in 178 at-bats and scored 36 runs, which is second on the team. Moon also collected 13 doubles, one triple and hit a single-season record tying nine home runs, along with driving in 36 runs and slugging a single-season school record .612. She also was walked a team-best 27 times and has a .985 fielding percentage at first base. She enters the postseason holding the school's career records for slugging percentage (.579), RBIs (78) and home runs (16) and is second in career doubles with 29.

Jimeson earns Second-Team honors at second base after hitting .291 in 60 games. On the season, Jimeson has recorded 52 hits, scored 21 runs, has collected eight doubles, one triple and has driven in 25 runs, which is third-best on the team. In addition, Jimeson had recorded a school and single-season GSC record 25 sacrifice hits.

Lasley earns Second-Team honors at shortstop after batting .297 with 47 hits and 31 runs scored in 55 games. On the season, Lasley has had 158 at-bats and has hit seven doubles, four triples and has had 15 RBIs. In addition, she has started 55 games at shortstop before missing the final five games of the regular season due to an injury. Lasley also leads the team and is tied for the sixth in the GSC with 17 stolen bases, which is tied for the school's third-best single-season mark.

Rodgers earns Second-Team honors as a pitcher after compiling a 16-11 overall record and a 1.92 ERA. On the season, Rodgers, who was a two-time GSC West Division Pitcher of the Week this season, leads the team in starts (28) and appearances (39) and has thrown 12 complete games and five shutouts. Rodgers has tossed 171.1 innings and has allowed 167 hits, 73 runs (47 earned runs), while walking 41 and striking out 77.

Pratt, Hammons, Palacios, Moon, Jackson and Randall are joined on the All-GSC West Division First-Team by Christian Brothers senior pitcher Nikki Dunn, UAM senior catcher Amy Mardis, UAM junior second baseman Emile Hobbs, Southern Arkansas junior

third baseman Katie Lenderman, UAM junior outfielder Becca Tipton, CBU sophomore outfielder Victoria Mathews, Ouachita Baptist sophomore utility player Kristen Rigsbee, Henderson State junior second baseman Catherine Jones and Delta State shortstop Brittany Eikner.

Jimeson, Lasley and Rodgers are joined on the All-GSC West Division Second-Team by DSU junior pitcher Edie Oliver, CBU sophomore first baseman Casey King, OBU freshman first baseman Taylor Austin, UAM freshman outfielder Katie Bowman, DSU senior outfielder Brittany Tillery, HSU senior outfielder Tori Gast and HSU freshman utility player Ashley Ray.

Lawson, LaFrance and Littlefield are joined on the All-GSC East Division First-Team by UAH senior pitcher Sage Woodham, UAH junior pitcher Whitney Hawkins, VSU senior catcher Becca Aszman, UWF freshman first baseman Shannon Miles, West Georgia freshman second baseman Lindsey Ellenburg, UWG senior shortstop Kim Weaver, UAH junior outfielder Kristina Prater, UAH freshman outfielder Kelli Long, VSU sophomore outfielder Melessa Jackson, West Alabama sophomore outfielder Valisha Fincher, UWG junior outfielder Candice Brown, UAH sophomore utility player Caitlin Lee, VSU junior utility player Alyssa Shirey, UWA senior catcher Ashley Edgar and UWA sophomore second baseman Kelli Hartley.

The Golden Suns will return to action on Friday, May 1, when they open up play at the 2009 GSC Tournament against East No. 4 seed West Alabama at 9:30 a.m. at the Greenbrook Softball Complex in Southaven, Miss.

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