

Northeast Conference

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For Immediate Release
November 19, 2010

Sacred Heart's Courtney Kidd-Kadlubek Tabbed Northeast Conference Women's Volleyball Player and Setter of the Year

Central Connecticut State's Kaitlin Petrella Selected NEC Libero of the Year

Sacred Heart's Dianis Mercado Voted NEC Rookie of the Year

Sacred Heart's Rob Machan Chosen NEC Coach of the Year

Somerset, NJ - Sacred Heart senior **Courtney Kidd-Kadlubek** (**Santa Barbara, CA/Santa Barbara**) capped off a stellar Northeast Conference (NEC) career, earning NEC Player of the Year and a second-straight NEC Setter of the Year honor. Also voted on for the second year in a row was Central Connecticut State senior and NEC Libero of the Year **Kaitlin Petrella** (**Stratford, CT/Bunnell**). The remaining awards went to representatives from Sacred Heart. Outside hitter **Dianis Mercado** (**Vega Baja, Puerto Rico/Calegio Marista**) claimed NEC Rookie of the Year and **Rob Machan** was voted NEC Coach of the Year, collecting his second honor in four seasons. Machan led the Pioneers to their first regular season championship and most-ever wins (27) in program history.

The awards were presented at the banquet on the eve of the 2010 NEC Women's Volleyball Tournament, set to begin on Saturday, Nov. 20 at Sacred Heart University in Fairfield, CT. Top-seeded Sacred Heart will battle No. 4 Central Connecticut State at 4:00 p.m. in the first of two semifinal matches. Regular season runner-up Robert Morris will then take on No. 3 Long Island at 6:30 p.m. The championship match is slated for Sunday, Nov. 21 at 3:00 p.m. The winner of the NEC Tournament will receive the league's automatic bid to the NCAA Tournament.

In a season marked by firsts, Kidd-Kadlubek becomes the first-ever Pioneer to take home the coveted NEC Player of the Year honor. Clearly at the pinnacle of her career, the unanimous choice for player and NEC Setter of the Year leads the league in assists (1,353) and assists per game (11.87). Her assists per game average put her on the map nationally with a seventh place ranking in Division I. She is the foundation of the league's most productive offense as Kidd-Kadlubek's opportunity-playmaking helped Sacred Heart lead the NEC in assists (1,611), kills (1722) and hitting percentage (.246). Over the last weekend of regular season play, the California native generated 107 helpers to secure the Pioneers two victories and a once-elusive regular season championship. Now a fixture in her team's record books, the senior owns the single-season assists mark (1,353) and all-time assists standard (4,510). This is Kidd-Kadlubek's second All-Conference First Team honor and NEC Setter of the Year selection.

Petrella posted an impressive final season in Blue and White, worthy of her second consecutive NEC Libero of the Year distinction and third All-Conference selection. As a staple in Central Connecticut State's defensive strategy she ranks first on the team and second on the circuit in digs (511) and digs per set (4.78). Her hustle in the backcourt led the Blue Devils to the conference's second-best digs per game average (15.81). Petrella is also ranked third in the league for hammering 40 service aces in 2010. Always a consistent player, the libero surpassed her team's career dig record of 1,215 in just her sophomore campaign. Now entering her final

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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

postseason appearance, she has brought her all-time tally to an impressive 2,004 total. Adding to her notable career feat, the senior owns the Blue Devil single-season record for racking up 594 digs in 2007.

The season's most frequent Molten/NEC Rookie of the Week recipient now owns the NEC Rookie of the Year honor. Mercado, a six-time weekly award winner, had a breakout freshman campaign. Thriving in the outside hitter position, she laid into opposing defenses, drilling 365 kills and averaging 3.51 per game for first on the Pioneer squad and third in the league. The hard-swinging sensation recorded double-digit kills in 14 of 15 matches spanning from September 11 to October 16. She didn't hesitate to pitch in on defense either. Posting 16 double-doubles, Mercado's total digs (324) and digs per game average (3.03) are third highest among her Sacred Heart teammates.

Since taking over Sacred Heart's program in 2007, Machan has led the team to NEC Tournament play in each season. He has made sizable gains, trumping last year's 22 wins with 27 overall victories, 14 league triumphs and a perfect home slate in 2010. The coach's second consecutive NEC Coach of the Year honor also comes on the heels of the Pioneer's first regular season championship and convincing 20-match win streak record. Machan is in search of the squad's first tournament crown after making it to the final showdown 2009. He sports the league's most accomplished offense, topping the assists, kills and hitting percentage trifecta.

Joining her high-achieving teammates on the NEC All-Conference First Team list is Sacred Heart sophomore **Elise Sage (Greenwood Village, Co/Cherry Creek)**. The six-foot middle blocker mixes an unstoppable blend of quantity and quality at the net. Her accuracy is first in the league with .372 hitting clip, while her kills per game average (3.46) is sixth. The Colorado product remains one of two players to appear in the top-10 in both categories. Sage's hitting efficiency increased in conference-only statistics, spiking at .900 versus Bryant and leveling out at a .437 average. On six outings, she posted 15 kills and on two occasions she slammed down 20. The four-time Molten/NEC Player of the Week was a second-team selection in 2009.

Representing second-seeded Robert Morris on the All-Conference roster is first team duo **Hannah Veith (Columbus, OH/Worthington)** and **Amanda Graham (Melbourne, FL/Eau Gallie)**. The players are pillars on the Colonial court, leading the squad to a league high 2.26 blocks per game a second-ranked .206 hitting percentage. Veith, a six-foot-one junior, ranks first in the league with 1.21 blocks per game and second in hitting percentage (.350). Graham, a six-foot-two senior and fellow middle blocker, trails slightly behind her teammate with a second-ranked blocks per game average (1.17) and a third-place hitting percentage (.330). This season both players earned two Molten/NEC Player of the Week nods, while Graham became one of three Colonials in program history to surpass both the 1,000 kill plateau and the 400 block tally. This All-Conference award marks her second in as many years.

Rounding out the first team is Long Island freshman **Hanna Gibeau (Arvada, CO/Ralston Valley)**. She posted nine double-doubles this season and averaged the league's second-best kills per game average (3.94) and total kills (406) statistic. She smashed 24 kills on two separate outings and notched a career and match-high 26 in the last week of play. Gibeau earned Molten/NEC Rookie and Player of the Week awards to give the Blackbirds their lone honors this season. Senior teammate **Zuzana Buchlova (Pelhrmov, Czech Republic/Long Beach State Univ.)** accounts for Long Islands' remaining All-Conference nod and sole second team member. Buchlova flanked Gibeau in the outside hitter position all season, contributing to the Blackbird's third ranked kills per game average (11.63). The senior downed 258 kills for a 2.28 kills per game average and laid out for 280 digs for a 2.48 game average.

Adding to Sacred Heart's postseason clout are a pair of second team members in the form of **Johanna Osvenek (London, Ontario/Saunders Secondary)** and **Jessica Colberg (Long Beach, CA/Long Beach Polytechnic)**. Osvenek, a sophomore middle blocker, boasts the fourth best hitting percentage (.323) in the league and enjoys a season best, match-high 20 kills. She hit 307 in total and smashed double digits 11 times throughout the season. Colberg helped the Pioneers hold opponents to the lowest hitting percentage (.106) in the conference from her libero position. The junior stands sixth in the NEC with 4.03 digs per game and fifth with 480 in total.

Capping off Central Connecticut State's All-Conference honors is second-team junior **Sara DeLacey (Spring Lake Park, MN/Spring Lake Park)**. The outside hitter excelled for the Blue Devils offensively, sporting a .311 hitting clip for sixth best in the conference. The Minnesota native performed best when the team needed her most. Against Quinnipiac in the last match of the season, Delacey posted 18 kills in only 25 attempts over the course of four sets. She hit .600 while making only three errors in the entire match to help Central clinch a playoff bid.

The final three second-team players hail from schools not participating in the NEC Tournament this weekend. St. Francis' (NY) **Anisa Lila (Tirana, Albania/Palm Beach State College)** becomes the first Terrier to join the All-Conference ranks since predecessor Brittany Daniel did it in 2000. She came out of the gate swinging in her senior season, posting double-double figures in all four of her squad's matches during their first weekend on the court. The outside hitter went on to lead the league in kills (443) and kills per game (4.18) while posting a match-high 26. Behind Lila's handiwork, the Terriers finished the season with 10 wins, the most for the program since 2001. Sophomore **Lauren Wingard (York, PA/Dallastown)** of Saint Francis (PA) garners the first All-Conference honor in her young career, coming off a successful season for the Red Flash. Wingard is one of two athletes to appear among the top-10 conference leaders in hitting percentage (.322) and kills per game (2.76). She ranks fifth and eighth, respectively. The six-foot-one middle hitter also earned a spot in Red Flash history, breaking the single-season hitting percentage record of .312 set in 2002. Rounding out the list is sophomore **Meaghan Wheeler (Chatsworth, CA/Chaminade College Prep)** of Fairleigh Dickinson. The outside hitter finished the season with 391 kills, which is the fifth-most in Knight single-season history. Wheeler was the only player in 2010 to slate three top-10 league rankings. She notched fifth in kills per game (3.26), fourth in services aces per game (0.38) and tenth in digs per game (3.36).

2010 NEC Women's Volleyball Award Winners

Player of the Year

Courtney Kidd-Kadlubek	Sacred Heart	S	5-9	Jr.	Santa Barbara, CA/Santa Barbara
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Rookie of the Year

Dianis Mercado	Sacred Heart	OH	5-7	Fr.	Vega Baja, Puerto Rico/Calegio Marista
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Setter of the Year

Courtney Kidd-Kadlubek	Sacred Heart	S	5-9	Jr.	Santa Barbara, CA/Santa Barbara
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Libero of the Year

Kaitlin Petrella	Central Conn. St.	L	5-3	Jr.	Stratford, CT/Bunnell
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Coach of the Year

Rob Machan	Sacred Heart
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2010 NEC Women's Volleyball First Team All-Conference

<u>Name</u>	<u>School</u>	<u>Pos.</u>	<u>Ht.</u>	<u>Yr.</u>	<u>Hometown/High School</u>
Kaitlin Petrella	Central Conn. St.	L	5-3	Jr.	Stratford, CT/Bunnell
Hanna Gibeau	Long Island	OH	6-0	Fr.	Arvada, CO/Ralston Valley
Amanda Graham	Robert Morris	MB	6-2	Sr.	Melbourne, FL/Eau Gallie
Hannah Veith	Robert Morris	MB	6-1	Jr.	Columbus, OH/Worthington
Courtney Kidd-Kadlubek	Sacred Heart	S	5-9	Jr.	Santa Barbara, CA/Santa Barbara
Dianis Mercado	Sacred Heart	OH	5-7	Fr.	Vega Baja, Puerto Rico/Calegio Marista
Elise Sage	Sacred Heart	MB	6-0	So.	Greenwood Village, CO/Cherry Creek

2010 NEC Women's Volleyball Second Team All-Conference

<u>Name</u>	<u>School</u>	<u>Pos.</u>	<u>Ht.</u>	<u>Yr.</u>	<u>Hometown/High School</u>
Sara DeLacey	Central Conn. St.	RS	6-3 J	Jr.	Spring Lake Park, MN/Spring Lake Park
Meaghan Wheeler	Fairleigh Dickinson	OH	5-9	So	Chatsworth, CA/Charminade College Prep
Zuzana Buchlova	Long Island	OH	6-0	Sr.	Pelhrmov, Czech Republic/Long Beach State Univ.
Jessica Colberg	Sacred Heart	L	5-9	Jr.	Long Beach, CA/Long Beach Polytechnic
Johanna Ovsenek	Sacred Heart	MB	5-11	So.	London, Ontario/Saunders Secondary
Lauren Wingard	Saint Francis (PA)	MH	6'1"	So.	York, PA/Dallastown Area
Anisa Lila	St. Francis (NY)	OH/RS	5-11	Sr.	Tirana, Albania/Palm Beach State College