

2008–2009 Annual Report of Athletics

AT ST. EDWARD'S UNIVERSITY

What It Means to be a Student-Athlete at St. Edward's

Athletics at St. Edward's University goes far beyond the wins and losses. It extends past conference championships and national tournaments. At St. Edward's, our student-athletes are challenged to think critically and creatively, and to strive for academic excellence. They participate in meaningful service activities and make a difference in the community. In other words, they embody the Holy Cross mission of St. Edward's.

ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

- ▶ Sixty-nine percent of all student-athletes at St. Edward's posted a 3.0 GPA or better in Fall 2008. Thirty-nine percent had a 3.5 GPA or better. Seventy-four percent of all student-athletes had a 3.0 GPA or better in Spring 2009. Forty-seven percent posted a 3.5 GPA or better.
- ▶ All 13 teams registered a GPA better than 3.0 in Fall 2008. Ten of 13 teams achieved the same feat in Spring 2009. Women's tennis achieved a team GPA above 3.5 for the 2008–2009 academic year. Baseball, men's cross country, women's soccer, women's tennis and volleyball compiled the highest GPAs in the Heartland Conference in their respective sports. Men's soccer, women's soccer and volleyball each received a team academic award from their respective sport governing body.
- ▶ Twenty-seven St. Edward's University student-athletes achieved a 4.0 GPA in Fall 2008, while 38 student-athletes earned a 4.0 GPA in Spring 2009. Thirteen student-athletes have a cumulative GPA of 4.0.
- ▶ One hundred forty-three student-athletes received academic all-conference honors during the 2008–2009 season. Seven student-athletes were named academic All-Americans.
- ▶ St. Edward's University has an academic success rate — or graduation rate — of 79 percent among its student-athletes, which is the second-highest in the Heartland Conference. This is nine percent higher than the NCAA Division II aggregate academic success rate.



LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR OF ATHLETICS

DEBBIE TAYLOR



What a privilege it is to work with the student-athletes and the coaching staff at St. Edward's. Our staff provides strong

leadership to our student-athletes and the Heartland conference. Our student-athletes are truly champions in the classroom and on the field. Student-athletes at St. Edward's continuously demonstrate that they cherish being students first. It is remarkable to have 71% (143) of our student-athletes earn academic all-conference honors, as well as to have seven academic All-Americans. I was not surprised when the Heartland Conference male and female Scholar-Athlete of the Year were both awarded to Hilltoppers — because our student-athletes lead by example, even in the classroom.

Student-athletes are also active in the community. In 2008–2009, Hilltoppers performed more than 3,600 hours of community service and raised funds for several important charities by holding events such as Volleyball's Dig for the Cure and the Kim Yeatts Memorial Soccer Tournament. The events earned more than \$3,000 for breast cancer research. The student-athlete advisory committee raised more than \$500 for Make-a-Wish.

I would like to thank our coaching staff, families and friends of the Athletics program for encouraging our student-athletes to be well-rounded community members who embody our Holy Cross mission to inform minds, form hearts and transform lives.

COMMUNITY SERVICE

St. Edward's University student-athletes assisted more than 70 different campus and community organizations during the 2008–2009 academic year. Highlights included:

Copperfield Elementary Math Night

Every year at Super Bowl time, Hilltopper athletes join students from Copperfield Elementary for a night of math and mentoring. The annual event brings together parents, students and more than 100 student-athletes for games and activities that allow elementary students to show off their math skills and discover new ones.

Move-in Day

One hundred seventy-five student-athletes came together on move-in day and spent a total of 262 hours helping incoming freshmen and their parents unload and move in suitcases, boxes and everything else that came with them to St. Edward's.

FACILITY UPGRADES

- ▶ St. Edward's University laser-leveled the infield of Lucian-Hamilton Field and completed its renovation of the baseball dugouts and batting cage facility. The newly built cinder block dugouts enhance the baseball field while the additional storage areas provide much needed space for equipment and supplies. The batting cage was updated with concrete and turf that improved the overall quality of the hitting facility.
- ▶ The university completed work on a 2,800 square-foot covered batting facility at Diane Daniels Softball Field. The facility is lighted and open-air with the possibility of being enclosed in the future. The batting cage features two netted areas for hitting, a large space for a variety of drills and turf for safety.

ATHLETIC EXCELLENCE

- ▶ After taking nine of 13 Heartland Conference championships in 2006–2007, five teams took home conference titles in each of the last two years for a total of 19 conference championships over the past three years. Men's tennis, softball, women's golf, women's tennis and volleyball all achieved top honors.
- ▶ Seven teams were ranked nationally during the 2008–2009 season, and six teams made appearances in national tournaments.
- ▶ St. Edward's University student-athletes garnered Heartland Conference Player of the Week honors 60 times with one Hilltopper earning National Player of the Week during the 2008–2009 season. Fifty-two student-athletes received all-conference honors with six receiving Heartland Conference Player or Senior of the Year honors and four named Freshman of the Year. Twenty-six student-athletes received all-region recognition, and seven student-athletes were All-Americans.

3.2

The combined GPA for all St. Edward's University student-athletes for the 2008–2009 academic year

3,620

Hours of community service performed by student-athletes in 2008–2009

40 Wins

The softball team won 40 games and advanced to the NCAA regional tournament for the fourth-straight year.

Sweet 16

The men's and women's tennis teams advanced to the NCAA Sweet 16.

STAFFING HONORS

Four St. Edward's University coaches combined to win five Heartland Conference Coach of the Year honors during the 2008–2009 season. Amy Coulter (softball), Sean Donahue (volleyball), Jennifer McNeil (women's golf), Russell Sterns (men's and women's tennis) were each named coach of the year for their respective sports. McNeil and Sterns were also named Regional Coach of the Year, while Simon Boyce was named Regional Assistant Coach of the Year.

- **Amy Coulter** (softball) serves as the chair of the Heartland Conference softball coaches.
- **Sean Donahue** (volleyball) serves on the American Volleyball Coaches Association national ranking committee. He is the volleyball chair for the Heartland Conference and a member of the NCAA Volleyball Regional advisory committee.
- **Nick Cowell** (women's soccer) serves on the NCAA Division II South Central Regional Soccer committee.
- **Logan Lawrence** (sports information) was named Heartland Conference Sports Information Director of the Year for the 2008–2009 season. He also serves on the College Sports Information Directors of America publications committee.
- **Jennifer McNeil** (women's golf) serves on the National Golf Coaches Association ranking committee, the NCAA South Central Regional Golf ranking committee and National Golf Coaches Association awards committee.
- **Todd Ohlmeyer** (men's golf) serves on the South Central Golf All-Region selection committee.
- **Rob Penders** (baseball) serves as the Heartland Conference baseball chair.
- **J.J. Riehl** (women's basketball) was selected to the 35th Anniversary of Women's Athletics at St. Edward's All Era Team.
- **Russell Sterns** (men's and women's tennis) serves on the ITA South Central Regional committee. He was also selected to the 35th Anniversary of Women's Athletics at St. Edward's All Era Team.
- **Debbie Taylor** (director of Athletics) was selected to the 35th Anniversary of Women's Athletics at St. Edward's All Era Team.
- **Jennifer White** (women's basketball) serves on the NCAA South Central Regional ranking committee.
- **Brian Young** (men's soccer) has served as member of the NCAA South Central ranking committee and the NSCAA South Central ranking committee for the last four years.

“Being a student-athlete is a great honor. Performing in the classroom and building great relationships on campus as well as being apart of a team takes dedication and drive. I feel lucky to be here at St. Edward's. It means I have a bright future.”

— **Sara Head**
Women's Basketball

“Being a student-athlete at St. Edward's means integrity, dedication, perseverance and family — meaning no one athlete is more important than another.”

— **Tylor Carr**
Men's Basketball





Hilltopper Athletics

Champions in the Classroom ♦ Champions on the Field ♦ Champions for Life

The Hilltopper Athletics program keeps getting stronger and stronger — thanks to our generous donors and supporters. Help us grow our legacy by joining the Hilltopper Club and making a donation today.

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The Hilltopper Club

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We appreciate your support!