



NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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The Poll

The AFCA Division II Coaches' Poll follows the same format as the Division I-A and Division III polls. A Division II Board of Coaches made up of 25 AFCA-member head coaches from NCAA Division II schools around the country will vote each Sunday for the top 25 teams in the division.

All Division II football-playing conferences are represented on the voting board, as well as independent schools. The poll will be released on Tuesdays during the regular season, see the results at www.afca.com.

Head-to-Head

There are only two head-to-head match-ups between Top 25 teams in the opening weekend for Division II on Aug 27.

No. 2 Pittsburg State hosts No. 17 Delta State, while No. 10 Northwood hosts No. 21 Saginaw Valley State. For the second straight year, Delta State will open the season against the Division II runner-up from the previous season. Last year, the Statesmen opened with No. 2 North Dakota, losing 28-19.

Poll Points

Thirty-nine schools spent at least one week ranked in the 2004 AFCA Coaches' Poll ... Twelve schools were ranked in the Top 25 all 13 weeks the poll was released in 2004 (Grand Valley State, North Dakota, Valdosta State, Texas A&M-Kingsville, Saginaw Valley State, Carson-Newman, Pittsburg State, Central Oklahoma, Winona State, Northwest Missouri, Shippensburg, Albany State) ... Eventual 2004 national champion Valdosta State was ranked No. 3 at the beginning of the 2004 season.

DEFENDING NATIONAL CHAMPION VALDOSTA STATE BEGINS 2005 SEASON AT NO. 1 IN THE FIRST AFCA DIVISION II COACHES' POLL

WACO, TEX.-- Defending national champion Valdosta State opens the season at No. 1 in the 2005 preseason American Football Coaches Association Division II Coaches' Poll.

Valdosta State is the best team in the country until proven otherwise according to voters. The Blazers will look to make their second straight trip to the national championship game in 2005. Last year's runner-up, Pittsburg State, begins the season where it finished last year, at No. 2. Grand Valley State is picked to win the Great Lakes Intercollegiate Athletic Conference and falls in at No. 3. Holding the fourth spot is Texas A&M-Kingsville and rounding out the top five is Northwest Missouri State.

North Dakota opens the season at No. 6. The Fighting Sioux fell to Pittsburg State in last year's semifinals. Carson-Newman comes in at No. 7. The Eagles finished 9-3 last season and are picked to win the South Atlantic Conference. Nebraska-Omaha, who finished the 2004 season at 8-3 and did not qualify for the playoffs, is ranked No. 8 while East Stroudsburg comes in at No. 9. The Warriors earned a berth in the quarterfinals last season and are picked to win the Pennsylvania State Athletic Conference Eastern Division. Defending GLIAC co-champion Northwood rounds out the Top 10.

Albany State finished the 2004 season ranked fifth, but starts 2005 in the 11th spot. No. 12 Central Oklahoma is the preseason favorite to win the Lone Star Conference North Division. Winona State starts the 2005 season like it ended last year, ranked No. 13. Colorado School of Mines and Edinboro come into the poll in a tie for the 14th position.

Tuskegee is picked to win the Southern Intercollegiate Athletic Conference and is ranked No. 16 in the first AFCA poll. Delta State was unrated at the end of the 2004 season, but shows up in the 17th spot. No. 18 Arkansas Tech made it to the second round of the Division II playoffs, while No. 19 West Chester earned a trip to the semifinals. Catawba rounds out the Top 20.

Saginaw Valley State enters the poll at No. 21 and St. Cloud State holds the No. 22 spot. Tarleton State comes in at No. 23, while Michigan Tech is ranked 24th. C.W. Post and South Dakota are tied for the 25th spot and complete the 2004 AFCA preseason poll.

Conference Breakdown: The Great Lakes Intercollegiate Athletic (Grand Valley, Northwood, Saginaw Valley, Michigan Tech) and North Central Conference (North Dakota, Nebraska-Omaha, St. Cloud State, South Dakota) are tied at four with the most representatives in the preseason AFCA Division II Coaches' Poll. The Lone Star (Texas A&M-Kingsville, Central Oklahoma, Tarleton State), Gulf South (Valdosta State, Delta State, Arkansas Tech) and Pennsylvania State Athletic Conference (East Stroudsburg, Edinboro, West Chester) come in tied for second with three representatives each.

Other conferences represented include: Mid-American Intercollegiate Athletic-2 (Pittsburg State, Northwest Missouri State), South Atlantic-2 (Carson-Newman, Catawba); Southern Intercollegiate-2 (Albany State, Tuskegee); Northeast 10-1 (C.W. Post), Northern Sun Intercollegiate-1 (Winona State), Rocky Mountain Athletic-1 (Colorado School of Mines).

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**American Football Coaches Association Division II Coaches' Poll
August 23, 2005**

Rank	School (1st votes)	2004		2004		Season Opener	Head Coach
		Rec.	Pts.	Rank*			
1.	Valdosta St. (Ga.) (19)	13-1	617	1		Aug. 27 vs. Fort Valley St. (Ga.)	Chris Hatcher
2.	Pittsburg St. (Kan.) (4)	14-1	600	2		Aug. 27 vs. No. 17 Delta St. (Miss.)	Chuck Broyles
3.	Grand Valley St. (Mich.) (2)	10-3	545	9		Aug. 27 vs. Ferris St. (Mich.)	Chuck Martin
4.	Texas A&M-Kingsville	9-2	507	6		Aug. 27 vs. Texas College	Richard Cundiff
5.	Northwest Missouri St.	11-2	483	3		Aug. 25 at Minnesota St.-Mankato	Mel Tjeerdsma
6.	North Dakota	11-3	459	4		Aug. 27 at Central Washington	Dale Lennon
7.	Carson-Newman (Tenn.)	9-3	441	14		Aug. 27 at Shaw (N.C.)	Ken Sparks
8.	Nebraska-Omaha	8-3	365	24		Aug. 27 at Nebraska-Kearney	Pat Behrns
9.	East Stroudsburg (Pa.)	10-2	351	12		Aug. 26 at Bentley (Mass.)	Denny Douds
10.	Northwood (Mich.)	10-2	346	10		Aug. 27 vs. No. 21 Saginaw Valley St. (Mich.)	Pat Riepma
11.	Albany St. (Ga.)	11-1	332	5		Aug. 27 at Miles (Ala.)	Mike White
12.	Central Oklahoma	8-2	290	21		Aug. 25 at Missouri Western	Chuck Langston
13.	Winona St. (Minn.)	10-2	285	13		Aug. 27 at Truman St. (Mo.)	Tom Sawyer
14t.	Colorado School of Mines	12-1	246	8		Aug. 27 vs. Washburn (Kan.)	Bob Stitt
14t.	Edinboro (Pa.)	9-3	246	18		Aug. 27 vs. West Virginia Tech	Lou Tepper
16.	Tuskegee (Ala.)	10-2	230	22		Aug. 27 vs. Stillman (Ala.)	Rick Comegy
17.	Delta St. (Miss.)	6-4	200	NR		Aug. 27 at No. 2 Pittsburg St. (Kan.)	Rick Rhoades
18.	Arkansas Tech	10-2	173	16		Aug. 25 at Northeastern St. (Okla.)	Steve Mullins
19.	West Chester (Pa.)	11-4	164	7		Aug. 26 vs. Clarion (Pa.)	Bill Zwaan
20.	Catawba (N.C.)	7-4	156	NR		Aug. 27 at Winston-Salem St. (N.C.)	Chip Hester
21.	Saginaw Valley St. (Mich.)	7-3	144	25		Aug. 27 at No. 10 Northwood (Mich.)	Randy Awrey
22.	St. Cloud State (Minn.)	8-3	97	17		Aug. 27 vs. Wayne St. (Neb.)	Randy Hedberg
23.	Tarleton St. (Texas)	7-4	83	NR		Sept. 3 at Texas A&M-Commerce	Sam McElroy
24.	Michigan Tech	9-2	82	11		Aug. 27 vs. Northern Michigan	Bernie Anderson
25t.	C.W. Post (N.Y.)	8-3	74	NR		Sept. 3 at Pace (N.Y.)	Bryan Collins
25t.	South Dakota	9-2	74	19		Aug. 25 at Minnesota-Crookston	Ed Meierkort

*- Ranking in final AFCA Division II Poll of 2004

Others Receiving Votes: Shippensburg (Pa.), 65; Southeastern Oklahoma St., 62; Shepherd (W.V.), 60; Shaw (N.C.), 56; Central Missouri St., 51; Fayetteville St. (N.C.), 47; Bloomsburg (Pa.), 29; Central Arkansas, 26; Chadron St. (Neb.), 22; Bentley (Mass.), 21; Tusculum (Tenn.), 15; Midwestern St. (Tex.), 14; California (Pa.), 13; Indiana (Pa.), 12; Western Washington, 12; North Alabama, 10; Harding (Ark.), 8; Adams St. (Colo.), 6; North Carolina Central, 2; Wingate (N.C.), 2; Bemidji St. (Minn.), 1; Minnesota St.-Mankato, 1.

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