



News Release

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NCC Honors

Men's Honor Athletes for North Central Conference Announced

Sioux Falls, S.D. -- Seven outstanding male student-athletes have been honored by the North Central Conference as the league's Honor Athletes for the 2007-08 academic year.

Each school selected its top student-athlete on the basis of academic performance, athletic ability and performance and leadership in campus and community activities. In addition, each student-athlete must have graduated this spring or be within 12 credit hours of graduation. The select group will be honored at the NCC Celebration Dinner on June 21 in Sioux Falls, S.D. and are finalists for the NCC Scholar-Athlete Award which will be announced at the dinner.

The honored student-athletes with the schools they represent are: Jared Clementson, Minnesota Duluth; David Dreas, St. Cloud State; Weston Dressler, North Dakota; Ben Hochstein, Nebraska-Omaha; Frank Leibfarth, South Dakota; Jason Rhoten, Minnesota State; Ian Thomas, Augustana.

Here is a summary on each honored athlete:

Jared Clementson, Minnesota Duluth, Track & Field/Cross Country, Pine City, Minn. - The recipient of the 2007-08 E.L. "Duce" Rasmussen Award (UMD's top male senior scholar-athlete)...Four-year letterwinner on track team and was also a three-year letterman in cross country....Has compiled a 3.40 GPA while majoring in elementary/middle school education and will graduate from UMD next December...Has been a member of the NCC Commissioners Honor Roll three straight years and was also chosen to the 2007 U.S. Track and Field and Cross Country Coaches Association Division II All-Academic Team...The Bulldogs' 2008 team captain...Earlier this spring snared All-American honors after placing fifth at the NCAA II Indoor Track and Field Championships in the 800 meters...Will compete in that same event at NCAA II outdoors...Holds the distinction of being UMD's only two-time individual NCC champion, winning the 800-meter outdoor titles in both 2006 and 2007...Earlier this month, he came within .08 seconds from a three-peat, settling for second place at the NCC outdoors...Owns the UMD 800-meter outdoor record and is part of the record-holding sprint medley relay team as well.

David Dreas, St. Cloud State University, Basketball, Winona, Minn - Three-year starter...Team captain...Named All-NCC for the third straight season...Named All-North Central Region for the third straight season, and is first team for the second time (2006)...Named NABC All-North Central District...Selected to play in the NABC DII All-Star game as part of the 2008 NCAA DII Elite Eight festivities...Named All-American by the DII Bulletin Board, all in 2007-08...Twice named NCC player of the week, first on 1/7 after a three game stretch where he averaged 24.0 points, 4.0 rebounds, 3.7 assists, and 3.3 steals per contest...He was player of the week on 1/28 after two game stretch where he averaged 27.0 points, 5.5 assists, 3.0 rebounds, 2.0 steals and shot .581 from the field including .632 fro behind the arc...Starter in every game and played a team high 34.0 minutes/game...Led NCC with 36.8 minutes/game in conference games...In four games played entire 40 minutes...Spent majority of the season second in the NCC in scoring, but did overtake the top spot late in the season before finishing senior year as second leading scorer in the NCC...SCSU leading scorer for the third consecutive season...Season stat line includes 17.8 points/game, 3.1 rebounds/game, 75 assists, 58 steals, and one block...Shot .418 (166-397) from the field, .403 (73-181) from three-point range, and .760 (92-121) from the free throw line...Assists and steal numbers are second best on team...NCC ranks include 2nd in scoring (17.8), second in three-pointers made (73), second in steals (2.07), 11th in three-point percentage (.401), and 13th in free throw percentage (.760)...NCC ranks in conference games only include second in three-pointers made (2.33), fourth in scoring (17.0), sixth in steals (1.33), and eighth in free throw percentage (.815)...During season climbed from 17th on the Huskies all-time scoring list to final position of second with 1,802 career points, and is just the second men's player ever with over 1,800 career points...Also during the season set new SCSU career records with 250 made three-pointers and 623 attempted three-pointers...other SCSU career ranks include third in field goals attempted (1,339), third in steals (190), third in minutes played (3,571), fifth in games played (115), sixth in free throws made (366), sixth in steals average (1.8), sixth in assists (383), seventh in field goals made (593), eighth in minutes average (30.3), ninth in games started (93), 10th in assist average (3.2), 12th in free throws attempted (440), 15th in scoring average (15.3), and 18th in three-point percentage (.401)...As a senior hit double figures in all but four games and hit 20 points in 14 games...During six game stretch from 12/20 to 1/12 scored at least 20 points five times with the sixth game being a 19 point effort...On 11/16 in season opening 86-61 win over

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Bemidji State scored 20 points and grabbed a career high nine rebounds to lead the way...Biggest game of the season was 31 point effort on 1/26 in 82-73 road win over Minnesota Duluth that saw 10-14 shooting, 5-8 three-point shooting, and 6-7 free throw shooting with 21 points coming in the second half while playing 38 minutes...Another signature game came on 1/22 in a 88-71 home win over MSU Moorhead where he scored 23 points and dished out nine assists, while making a season high seven three-point shots...Three times sank 10 or more shots in a game and four times made five or more three-pointers...Led the NCC in league scoring as a sophomore...Set SCSU sophomore scoring record with 570 points...Academic All-NCC and Commissioner's Honor Roll in 2005-06...Named to Wells Fargo All-Tournament team in 2006...Played in every game of collegiate career...Named All-America Honorable Mention by Street & Smith's 2006-07 College Basketball Yearbook...Named to the 2007-08 Sporting News Honorable Mention All-America team and Basketball Times NCAA Division II Top 25 Preseason All-American...Led team to back-to-back North Central Region appearances in 2006 and 2007...2008 Noel Olson Honor Athlete Award Winner...American Marketing Association Webmaster...Successful completed Student's in Free Enterprise (SIFE) professional development series...Two-year member of SAAC...Participated in reading programs where team members read at local elementary schools...Volunteered for Kids Against Hunger, putting together food packages for those less fortunate...Husky Hot Shots volunteer (youth basketball program sponsored by SCSU basketball)...Clinician and counselor at summer basketball camps the last several years...Currently studying to be a National Academy of Sports Medicine Certified Personal Trainer...Will complete the program this summer...Marketing major with a 3.03 GPA.

Weston Dressler, North Dakota, Football, Bismarck, N.D. - A 2007 Harlon Hill Trophy finalist...Earned 2007 All-America honors from five different organizations, including four different first-team honors...A 2007 All-NCC first team selection at three different positions (wide receiver, return specialist, utility)...Named to the All-NCC first team in each of his four seasons, becoming just the fourth player in league history to do so...Earned his second straight NCC Most Valuable Receiver award...Named to ESPN the Magazine Academic All-America first team for the second straight year...A national semifinalist for the prestigious Draddy Trophy, the highest academic honor in NCAA football (all divisions)...Earned his third straight Academic All-NCC selection and was named to his third straight NCC Commissioner's Academic Honor Roll...Named UND's 2007-08 Glenn "Red" Jarrett Male Athlete of the Year...Also named UND's 2007-08 Male Scholar-Athlete of the Year...Participated in 2008 Cactus Bowl...Led UND to its fifth straight postseason appearance...Graduates as the holder of 19 different school single-season and career records, including receptions, receiving yards and touchdown receptions...Appeared in 13 games in 2007 and caught 72 passes for a school-record 1,272 yards and 13 touchdowns...Ranked third in NCC Division II in receiving yards, sixth in receiving yards per game (106.0) and 11th in all-purpose yards per game (171.6)...Led the NCC in receiving yards, receiving yards per game and yards per reception...Also had 337 kick return yards, 329 punt return yards and 121 rushing yards...Ranks 15th on Division II all-time receptions list...Tied for 17th in Division II history in touchdown receptions...Heavily involved with a variety of community initiatives, including the tornado relief efforts in Northwood, N.D. and Holiday Magic for Markus, which honors the memory of the late Markus Bryant by providing Christmas toys for seriously ill area children...Led UND's student-athlete alcohol awareness program...A management major with a 3.75 grade point average.

Ben Hochstein, Nebraska-Omaha, Football, Hartington, Neb. - 2007: Earned all-North Central Conference honors for a third time and was the most valuable offensive lineman for a second straight season...Named to NCC All-Academic team and also to the ESPN The Magazine all-district first team for a second year in a row...Averaged over 15 knockdown blocks per game...Named to Daktronics All-Northwest Region team...One of national finalists for the Gene Upshaw Award...One of team's captains for 2007 season...2006: Anchored the offensive line at left tackle, earning first-team All-American honors by the Associated Press and D2Football.com...Was the NCC's Most Valuable Offensive Lineman...Also was on the NCC all-academic team and was on the first-team ESPN The Magazine Academic All-American all-region team...2005: A full-time starter in the offensive line all season at left tackle...Earned All-NCC first-team honors and was voted onto the Daktronics all-region second team...voted to NCC all-academic team...2004: A starter at right guard in the offensive line, which averaged 239 rushing yards and gave up just seven sacks on the season...Also played special teams and recorded a tackle at Western Washington...High School: Earned Class C-2 all-state honors under coach Chad Caattau at Hartington Cedar Catholic HS...Three-sport standout in basketball, football and track...Also earned all-state honors as a junior...Personal: Son of Michael and Nancy Hochstein...Majoring in business...Holds a 3.885 GPA.

Frank Leibfarth, South Dakota, Football, Yankton, S.D. - Has a 3.949 GPA in chemistry and physics...One of the leaders for the Coyote Football Team, which had a 6-5 record in 2007...Named to the ESPN The Magazine Academic All-America first team for two straight years...Also been named to the ESPN The Magazine Academic All-District VII College Division first team and he is a two-time Academic All-NCC selection...Was selected to the 2006 USA Today All-USA College Academic Team, a squad that is composed of 20 students from all colleges and universities across the nation...Two-time selection on the NCC All-Academic Football Team, he scored 75 points for USD...Finished his career tied for the USD career record for points scored. He tied Jason Leber's (1993-96) record of 236 career points...Made 12 field goals this season and was a perfect 39-of-39 on extra point attempts...Against Winona State this season, made a career-best 52-yard field goal...Has been named to the NCC Commissioner's Academic Honor Roll for three straight years...A Goldwater Scholar, he is the only Coyote student athlete (just seventh USD student overall) to ever earn that honor...In 2005, completed a summer National Science Foundation Research Experience for Undergraduates at Columbia University...Named the USD Male Scholar-Athlete of the Year this spring.

Jason Rhoten, Minnesota State, Wrestling, Mantorville, Minn. - Graduate student in Biology/Ecology and carries a cumulative grade point average of 3.29.. Four-time All-American and the national 157-pound champion this year...Completed 2007-08 with a record of 40-2 and his 40 wins this year ranks third on MSU's single-season list...Established school record for career wins with 136...Four-time member of the National Wrestling Coaches Association All-Academic Team...2007-08 team captain for the Mavericks, helped lead Minnesota State to a North Central Conference title in 2006-07 and in 2007-08 the Mavericks captured the National Duals title, the NCAA Division II Central Region championship and finished second at the NCAA Division II national championship...Four-time member of the MSU Dean's List and a Maverick Achievement Award recipient as a senior scholar-athlete...Named the 2008 North Central Region Wrestler of the Year...Named MSU Athletics Senior Student-Athlete of the Year...Had national finishes of first (2008), third (2007), second (2005) and fourth (2004) during his career with the Mavericks...In addition to directing activities at Science Camp at Gustavus Adolphus College, assisted with Jump Rope for Heart at Kennedy Elementary, served as a guest speaker at Kasson-Mantorville High School, volunteered at the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources Fisheries, officiated at numerous youth wrestling tournaments and assisted as a youth coach at several area youth wrestling clubs.

Ian Thomas, Augustana, Basketball, Eden Prairie, Minn. - Holds a 3.63 GPA in Biology with a minor in Business Administration...Has been accepted to the USD School of Medicine...Four-year letterwinner on the men's basketball team...Was a starter as a redshirt freshman in 2004-05 and as a junior in 2006-07...Helped lead a turnaround of the Viking program which culminated with a 22-9 record in 2007-08, a second-place NCC finish and the team's first NCAA Tournament appearance since the 1988-89 season...Finished his career third on Augustana's career 3-point field goals list with 171...Was a career 85.4 percent free throw shooter, making 111 of 130 attempts...In 2007-08 overall statistics, Thomas ranked ninth in the NCC in 3-point field goal percentage (43.2 pct. – 51-118) and 12th in 3-point field goals made (1.65 avg)...In 2007-08 NCC games only statistics, Thomas ranked eighth in field goal percentage (52.1 pct. – 38-73),, 13th in steals (0.83 avg), fifth in 3-point field goal percentage (49.0 pct. – 25-51) and seventh in 3-point field goals made (2.08 avg)...*Character, campus and community involvements:* Two-time Academic All-North Central Conference selection...Tri-Beta Biology Honor Society – member of this honorary biological society, which is for biology majors showing exemplary performance in the classroom...Has been a member for three years...Y T Johnson Pre Med Scholarship Recipient – This scholarship is given to a select group of biology majors who show an interest in the medical field and have a strong academic standing...BRIN Grant – Awarded a position in the BRIN program in 2006, performing biomedical research for a summer and presented results at a number of conferences and seminars. BRIN, which is a program of the National Institute of Health, gives grants by an application process only and only around ten students from Augustana are accepted each year...Will graduate Cum Laude with a degree in biology and a minor in business administration...*Campus Activities:* Student Athlete Advisory Committee (SAAC) – has been a vocal member of SAAC for the past two years leading various activities promoting the group and unity among student athletes and a variety of subcommittees...Served on the Fundraising and Enrichment subcommittees...Helped create and MC'd an Augustana student-athlete "mixer," which drew around 200 student athletes and was a very successful event...Student speaker for Scholarship Banquet – selected to be the student representative speaker for the annual Augustana scholarship banquet this past year speaking in front of about 800 donors and students...Volunteer Work – Organized a group of students to participate in Augustana's Community Service Day in which we worked for Habitat for Humanity...Responsibilities included building retaining walls for insulating homes...Has participated in Community Service Day for Augustana in past years as well...Character Counts Program – Also called the "Hometown Heroes of Character," this program picks athletes from the community who show exemplary character on and off the court. Only two student athletes were selected from Augustana (one male and female). Posters and trading cards were made with Thomas' name, picture, and short explanation of "fairness" and how it is important for character...Responsibilities include going to the kickoff event, signing autographs, and going to elementary schools and talking with kids about character. The program is run by the YMCA...Volunteer at Sanford ER – volunteered at Sanford Hospital's ER during the fall...Duties included greeting and directing those who came into the ER, taking them back to their rooms, and bringing expecting mothers up to the OB ward...Basketball Day Volunteer – Through the basketball team, volunteered to go to a local special needs school for a day and teach them about basketball. Select players from the team do this every year.

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