



2012 Missouri Valley Conference Cross Country

Missouri Valley Conference
1818 Chouteau Ave. • St. Louis, MO 63103
Phone: 314.444.4300 Fax: 314.444.4344
Website: www.mvc-sports.com

MVC Cross Country Contact
Kristin Gregory
kgregory@mvc.org
Office: 314.444.4315 Cell: 314.435.4776

August 20, 2012 • For Immediate Release

Illinois State Women, Southern Illinois Men Tabbed as Cross Country Favorites

ST. LOUIS – The Illinois State women and Southern Illinois men have been selected as the 2012 favorites by a vote of Missouri Valley Conference cross country coaches in their annual preseason poll.



After winning last year's MVC Cross Country Championship and returning four of the seven members of the championship squad, the league coaches picked Illinois State to claim the women's title in 2012. The Redbirds received seven first-place votes and a total of 96 points largely due to their trio of All-Conference runners (Krista DeCeault, Elise Sigg and Kristen Zillmer) that are coming back. DeCeault took second-place at the 2011 MVC Cross Country Championship with Sigg and Zillmer finishing fifth and tenth, respectively.

Bradley was picked second in the preseason poll earning one first-place mark and 83 points. The Braves finished in third-place a year ago with three top-15 finishes. The sophomore duo of Sarah McMahon (seventh) and Emily Delvo (12th), along with junior Cassie Lohmeier (14th) held Bradley's top-three times in the 5k and 6k distances and will provide leadership to a talented young team.

Wichita State, came in as an extremely close third, earning 82 points and the remaining two first-place votes. The Shockers return three of their 2011 runner-up squad, with the most notable being senior Aliphine Tuliemuk. Tuliemuk had a stellar 2011 season winning the MVC Championship, taking the NCAA Midwest Regional title, finishing 12th at the NCAA Championship and being named the Midwest Region Cross Country Athlete of the Year.



Southern Illinois notched the No. 4 spot, tallying 68 points, after only losing their top-finisher from last year. Sophomores Lacey Gibson and Tori Parry as well as junior Eileen Schweiss are the top returners for the Salukis. Gibson finished four meets in the top-ten while Schweiss had four top-15 finishes.

Indiana State and Missouri State are tied for fifth-place, securing 53 points.



Indiana State returns four of their seven scorers from the 2011 Championship. Jessica Zangmeister returns as the Sycamores top-runner after finishing in 11th last year. Nicole Lucas and Valerie Burns will add depth to the 2012 squad.

2012 Women's Cross Country Preseason Poll

Rank	Team (1st-place votes)	Points
1.	Illinois State (7)	96
2.	Bradley (1)	83
3.	Wichita State (2)	82
4.	Southern Illinois	68
T5.	Indiana State	53
T5.	Missouri State	53
7.	UNI	43
8.	Drake	28
9.	Evansville	26
10.	Creighton	18

Missouri State only returns two of their top-five finishers in senior Emily Beaver and Junior Erin Edwards. Beaver crossed the line in eighth-place with Edwards close behind in 18th.



Northern Iowa is picked seventh with 43 points, while Drake took the eighth spot having 28 points. The Panthers return five of their top seven runners from its 2011 team, with four of them being seniors (Hayley Thomas, Lindsey Wilkins, Scotty Schon and Allison Fick). The Bulldogs bring back all of their runners who scored at the 2011 Championship. Sophomore Mariel Fulton and senior Kirsten Lake were Drake's top-two finishers last year and will look to guide the newcomers.

Evansville and Creighton round out the women's poll in ninth and tenth place, respectively.



The Purple Aces will be under the guidance of senior Lauren Zeabart and juniors Kelby Jenkins and Jacqueline Carlson. The Jays' return everyone from their 2011 Conference squad. Meghan Barry and Courtney Sawle, Creighton's top-two 2011 finishers, look to have strong sophomore campaigns.

After being the runner up in the 2011 MVC Men's Championship, Southern Illinois is the preseason favorite getting seven first-place votes for 74 points. The Salukis' will have great depth this year as they only lost one of their top-seven runners from their 2011 squad. Juniors Zach Dahleen (3rd) and Brian Dixon (9th) and sophomore Cole Allison (10th) will look to pace the team to a 2012 Championship Title.



Indiana State was tabbed in the second spot as they received one first-place vote totaling 65 points. The Sycamores return four of their seven scorers, including great leadership in All-Conference honorees Dustin Betz (6th, redshirt senior) and Albaro Escalera (7th, senior). Tristan Selby and Drew Gambill will add experience to the team.



Drake was picked as a close third with 64 points and bring back a solid returning core of Brogan Austin, Omet Kak, Doug Brady and Connor Wells. Austin was the 2011 Individual Champion, Kak took All-Conference honors finishing in eighth and Brady was right behind them in 11th. The junior trio will look to improve upon their third-place team finish from last year.

Wichita State tallied 57 points, one first-place vote and fourth-place. Five out of the seven scoring runners come back for the Shockers including seniors Jake Wike (20th) and Marcos Bailon (22nd) and sophomores Sterling Spencer (27th) and Tomas Cotter (28th).

Illinois State came in at fifth-place earning 49 points with four of the seven runners who competed in last year's championship coming back. The Redbirds will be a young team with all their returners starting their sophomore

2012 Men's Cross Country Preseason Poll

Rank	Team (1st-place votes)	Points
1.	Southern Illinois (7)	74
2.	Indiana State (1)	65
3.	Drake	64
4.	Wichita State (1)	57
5.	Illinois State	49
6.	Bradley	34
7.	UNI	26
8.	Evansville	23
9.	Creighton	13

season. Rutherford was the first Redbird finisher with his 13th-place finish and will get support from Andrew Sandoval, Sean Senf and Griffin Nykaza.

Bradley is picked sixth with a total of 34 points. The Braves bring back six of their seven scorers including Marshall Moyer (BU's top-finisher), Nathan Davis, Jon Richards, Eric Delvo and Chase Coffey. A group of eight talented freshman will add depth to this year's team.



Northern Iowa notched the seventh position with 26 points while Evansville (23) and Creighton (13) round out the final positions.



UNI will have experienced leadership this year with their top-two finishers from the 2011 Championship, Brett Egan (12th) and Ryan Krogmann (42nd), returning for their senior campaign. Terry Nielsen will also add experience to the trails.

Evansville returns every runner from its 2011 squad except for one while also adding a couple key newcomers. Sophomore Josh Genet should once again be towards the front of the pack for the Purple Aces' as he was their top finisher last year. Cody Stein and Andrew Barrett will add depth to the roster.

Four of the seven scorers for Creighton are back for another year. Mike Hitt (Sr.), Drew Prescott (So.) and Steve Raimondi (So.) will show a young team the way on the trails.



The 2012 MVC Cross Country Championship will be held in Normal, Ill. on October 27.

