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Volleyball Preseason Poll - August 23, 2018

For Immediate Release

Worcester State Tabbed to Repeat as 2018 MASCAC Volleyball Champs

Westfield, Mass.— After winning the 2017 Massachusetts State Collegiate Athletic Conference regular season and tournament titles, Worcester State has been tabbed to repeat as champions as voted on by the eight coaches from around the league.

Worcester State earned six of the eight first place votes for 48 points. The Lancers were a perfect 7-0 during MASCAC play last season. Returning is reigning MASCAC Player of the Year Amari King who led the conference in total kills (422) and kills per set (3.52) plus the second-best hitting percentage (.243) while adding 411 digs and 25 blocks on the year.

Claiming the other two first place votes for 42 points in second is Framingham State. The Rams were 5-2 during the 2017 league schedule. All-Conference honoree Mackenzie Whalen is back for the squad after registering the second most assists with 809 and assists per set with 7.42 in the conference while grabbing the third-most service aces at 57 and 291 digs on the year.

Sitting in the third spot with 39 points is Westfield State. The Owls were 5-2 during conference action. Last season, middle hitter Brianna Starkey registered 206 kills (290 per set), 67 digs and 32 total blocks on her way to earning All-Conference honors.

Bridgewater State lands in fourth with 29 points. The Bears had three wins at the conclusion of the 2017 MASCAC schedule. Libero Cassidy Tyros, 2017 All-Conference honoree, returns after tallying 413 digs, 35 service aces and 31 assists last season.

Coming in fifth with 26 points is MCLA. The Trailblazers finished 4-3 in conference play last season. Back for the team is Sara LaFreniere who netted 134 kills, 74 digs, 12 total blocks and 16 service aces last season.

Salem State grabs the sixth slot with 20 points. The Vikings had three wins during the MASCAC campaign last season. All-Conference honoree Mackenzie Salls returns after collecting 586 assists and 6.30 assists per set which was the fourth-highest in the league along with 150 digs and 52 services aces.

Tying for seventh are Fitchburg State and Massachusetts Maritime with 10 points. In her first season on the hardwood for the Falcons, Jessica Peirce tallied 258 digs, 40 services aces and nine assists. For the Buccaneers, All-Conference honoree Marie Harrison returns after netting 168 kills, 207 digs, 27 service aces and five total blocks last year.

The MASCAC volleyball teams start their season with non-conference play over Labor Day weekend.

The Massachusetts State Collegiate Athletic Conference, the nation's oldest Division III men's and women's playing conference, has a rich and storied tradition of competitive success while celebrating excellence in the classroom. MASCAC member schools include Bridgewater State University, Fitchburg State University, Framingham State University, MCLA, Massachusetts Maritime Academy, Salem State University, Westfield State University and Worcester State University. Two other institutions, the University of Massachusetts Dartmouth and Plymouth State University, are affiliate members of the conference in the sports of football and men's ice hockey, while Western Connecticut State University joined the conference as an affiliate member in football beginning in 2013.



2018 MASCAC Women's Volleyball Preseason Coaches Poll

(First Place Votes In Parentheses)

1.	Worcester State (6)	48 points
2.	Framingham State (2)	42 points
3.	Westfield State	39 points
4.	Bridgewater State	29 points
5.	MCLA	26 points
6.	Salem State	20 points
7.	Fitchburg State	10 points
	Massachusetts Maritime	10 points