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--Feb. 26, 2009-- Midwest Conference Women's Basketball

MWC Championship Host St. Norbert Looks to Remain Perfect at Home

RIPON, WIS -- The 2009 Midwest Conference Women's Basketball Championship Tournament will have a familiar feel to it as St. Norbert will play host for the second straight year. The event will be held at the school's Schuldes Sports Center (De Pere, Wis.) with the semifinal games being played on Friday, February 27 and the Championship on Saturday, February 28. In search of their league-best ninth championship, the Green Knights enter this weekend's play as the top seed with a 15-1 mark in league play; however they are not the only team capable of taking home the crown as Beloit, Ripon, and Illinois College will also battle it out for conference supremacy. Beloit handed St. Norbert its only conference loss of the season and hopes to earn its first conference championship since the 1997-98 season. Ripon looks to continue its impressive turnaround from finishing eighth in the MWC in 2008 to contending for a conference title this season. Illinois College earned its Championship berth after winning a three-way tiebreaker between Monmouth and Lake Forest. The Lady Blues are in search of the school's second ever MWC championship and its first since the 1992-93 season.

The semifinal games feature top-seeded St. Norbert playing host to fourth-seeded Illinois College, and second-seeded Beloit matching up with third-seeded Ripon. Not only does St. Norbert carry the conference's best record, but it also enters with an impressive 11-0 mark on its home court - including a 66-45 victory over Illinois College on January 23. Beloit and Ripon is certainly a match-up worth watching as the two teams will play for the third time this season. The Buccaneers and Red Hawks split the regular season series with the visiting team winning both contests. All tourney contests will be carried live on MWCTV (www.midwestconference.tv).

--2009 MWC Women's Basketball Tournament--

Friday, February 27 - Semifinals

#3 Ripon vs. #2 Beloit 5 p.m.
#4 Illinois College at #1 St. Norbert 7 p.m.

Saturday, February 28 - MWC Championship

#2/3 Seed vs. #1/4 Seed 2 p.m.

No. 3 Ripon (15-8, 12-4) vs. No. 2 Beloit (15-8, 12-4)

Last Three Seasons Head-To-Head...

2008-09 Beloit 42, at Ripon 40 Ripon 64, at Beloit 57
2007-08 Beloit 61, at Ripon 4 at Beloit 59, Ripon 48
2006-07 at Beloit 70, Ripon 65 at Ripon 77, Beloit 56

Friday's first game will mark the third time Beloit and Ripon meet this

year. If the regular season can be used as a foreshadow, fans should be in for a treat as the series was decided by a total of nine-points. Beloit Head Coach **Don Adams'** squad will be led by one of the conference's best backcourts in senior **Christine Brown** and junior **Mary Parker**. Brown enters the game leading the Buccaneers in both scoring and rebounding, averaging 13.2 points per game and 9.0 rebounds per game. Parker is a close second with an average of 10.3 points and 6.2 rebounds, while also dishing out a conference-best 4.2 assists per game.

Ripon Head Coach **Julie Johnson** will count on the same well-balanced attack that has helped her team flip last year's 4-12 conference mark to a 12-4 record this year. Johnson will look to forward **Erin Lind** to continue her consistent play as the freshman leads the team in scoring and rebounding with 12.5 points per game and 6.5 rebounds a contest. Complementing Lind will be **Emily Meyer** who averages 10.6 points per game but has shown she is capable of putting up big offensive numbers. The junior guard has scored twenty or more points on four different occasions this season.

No. 4 Illinois College (14-9, 9-7) at No. 1 St. Norbert (19-4, 15-1)

Last Three Seasons Head-To-Head...

2008-09 at St. Norbert 66, IC 45
2007-08 at St. Norbert 68, IC 51 St. Norbert 53, at IC 37
2006-07 St. Norbert 68, at IC 52 at St. Norbert 77, IC 41

St. Norbert looks to notch two more home victories this weekend and win its ninth MWC championship in school history. To accomplish this, the Green Knights will first have to go through a dangerous Illinois College squad. St. Norbert Head Coach **Connie Tilley** hopes to add to her impressive resume with another conference championship and NCAA playoff berth in her 32nd season at the helm. Tilley's squad is as balanced as ever with four Green Knights averaging eight or more points. Junior guard **Denise Heuser** leads the way at 11.2 points per game while point guard **Stefanie Bunday** will be relied upon to continue her consistent play. The sophomore enters the game leading the conference in assists with 4.2 per contest.

Illinois College Head Coach **Brenna Kelly** would like nothing more than to hand St. Norbert its first home loss on Friday night. Kelly's squad will look to one of the conference's most prolific scorers in **Candy Norville** as the junior guard ranks among the conference's best in points per game with 15.4. Talented sophomore **Rachel Macon** could present a problem for the Green Knights. The Lady Blues' center has proven she can fill up the stat sheet by averaging 12.3 points and 7.5 rebounds per game while shooting nearly 55 percent from the field.

By: Ryan Andersen

