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GLIAC Women's Basketball Coaches Tab Lake Superior State and Hillsdale for 2002-03 Division Titles

BAY CITY, Mich. -- The head women's basketball coaches of the Great Lakes Intercollegiate Athletic Conference (GLIAC) chose Lake Superior State University and Hillsdale College to win the league's North and South Division titles, respectively.

Lake Superior State received all six first-place votes it was eligible for. Northern Michigan University received the remaining first-place vote and finished second in the poll, while Michigan Tech University edged Grand Valley State University by two points to finish third in the poll. Ferris State University placed fourth with 16 points. Northwood University in sixth (10 points), and Saginaw Valley State University in seventh (7) round out the Division.

Hillsdale garnered four first-place votes to rank first in the South Division. Second-place Ashland University received the two remaining first-place nods and finished just two points behind the Chargers. The University of Findlay beat out Gannon University by three points for third place. Wayne State University (10) and Mercyhurst College (7) placed fifth and sixth, respectively.

Each of the GLIAC's 13 coaches ranked the teams in the division in which they play, but were not allowed to vote for their own team. The first-place team on the North Division ballot received six points, while the second-place team received five points, etc. The first-place team in the South Division received five points, while the second-place team received four points, etc.

Hillsdale defeated Michigan Tech in the finals of the 2001-02 GLIAC post season tournament, claiming the programs's first-ever conference championship. The GLIAC tournament will take on a new look this season. Quarterfinal games will be played on Saturday, Mar. 1, on campus sites with the higher seeds hosting the games. The semifinals and finals will be hosted by the highest remaining seed on Friday, Mar. 7 and Saturday, Mar. 8.

The GLIAC sent four teams - Gannon, Hillsdale, Lake Superior State and Northern Michigan - to the NCAA II Great Lakes Region Tournament last season.

GLIAC basketball teams open play on Friday, Nov. 22 with conference play beginning Saturday, Nov. 30.

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2002-03 GLIAC Preseason

Women's Basketball Coaches Poll

North Division

<i>Rank</i>	<i>School (first-place votes)</i>	<i>Points</i>
1.	Lake Superior State (6)	36
2.	Northern Michigan (1)	30
3.	Michigan Tech	25
4.	Grand Valley State	23
5.	Ferris State	16
6.	Northwood	10
7.	Saginaw Valley State	7

South Division

1.	Hillsdale (4)	24
2.	Ashland (2)	22
3.	Findlay	17
4.	Gannon	12
5.	Wayne State	10
6.	Mercyhurst	7

2001-2002 GLIAC Women's Basketball Final Standings

North Division

<i>School</i>	<i>Record (GLIAC)</i>
Lake Superior State	21-6(14-4)
Northern Michigan	20-9(13-5)
Michigan Tech	19-10(11-7)
Ferris State	14-12(10-8)
Grand Valley State	13-13(7-11)
Saginaw Valley State	10-16(4-14)
Northwood	6-19(2-16)

South Division

Hillsdale	23-8(11-6)
Gannon	20-8(11-6)
Ashland	17-10(11-6)
Wayne State	16-11(9-8)
Findlay	16-10(9-8)
Mercyhurst	6-20(2-15)

The following are season previews on each of the GLIAC's 13 Women's Basketball Teams:

Ashland University: AU will feature a front-court with two of the league's top players - 6-4 junior Jackie Mason and 6-1 junior Alanna Buurma. Mason, a second team All-GLIAC selection, averaged 14.5 ppg. and 10.2 rpg. a year ago. She's the only player in school history to average a double-double for a season. She also rejected 68 shots and shot 63 percent from the floor. Buurma averaged 11.0 ppg. and 7.1 rpg. Three starters are back from last year's team, which went 17-10 and won a share of the GLIAC South Division championship. Head coach Sue Ramsey is in her eighth year with the Eagles.

Ferris State University: The return of eight letterwinners from last season's 14-12 finish, the debut of five promising freshmen and the addition of co-captains Patti Larson and Molly Potvin, both of whom missed the majority of last season with injuries, provide fifth-year Ferris State head coach Tracey Fisk with plenty of optimism entering the 28th season of Bulldog women's basketball. Fisk, who has compiled a 70-40 (.636) career mark at FSU, returns second-team 2001-02 All-GLIAC North Division junior center Bridget Horwitz (Auburn, Ind./DeKalb) and second-team 2001-02 Verizon Academic All-District IV junior guard Lucy DeMartin (Mason). Horwitz, who currently ranks third among the school's career blocks leaders (58), tallied 15 points and 8.8 rebounds per game as a sophomore while DeMartin averaged 14.2 points in 2001-02. Seven players with starting experience return, which should help Ferris in its quest to post a sixth-straight winning campaign and reach the GLIAC Tournament for a fourth consecutive season.

University of Findlay: The UF women's basketball team finished 16-10 overall and 9-8 in the GLIAC under head coach Carolyn Mair last season. Mair, now in her second season at Findlay, has a good recruiting class, led by 6-3 transfer Zsafia Horvath. Horvath played at West Virginia University last season and should help alleviate a hole in the inside game, vacated by graduated Kerri Unverferth (9.3 ppg, 8.0 rpg, 1.5 bpg). Also gone is All-GLIAC Second Team selection Molly Holt. The good news is that seniors Tiffany Stewart, Bev Fanning, and Lydia Carpenter are back to lead the team. Stewart, last year's second-leading scorer, averaged 12.2 ppg, 4.2 rpg, 3.0 apg, with 41 triples. With the addition of Fanning (7.7 ppg, 2.5 rpg, 26 three's) and Carpenter (7.3 ppg, 5.7 rpg), the Oilers appear to have all the pieces in place for a run at this year's GLIAC Championship.

Grand Valley State University: Grand Valley State's women's basketball team will begin its first year under head coach Dawn Plitzuweit. Plitzuweit comes to the Lakers after a four year stint as assistant coach at the University of Wisconsin-Green Bay. The Lakers return seven key contributors to the 2002-03 club headed by All-GLIAC North honorees senior Laurie Rehmann and junior Julie Zeff. Rehmann earned first-team honors and led the team in scoring for the second consecutive year averaging 14.8 ppg and 5.3 rpg. Zeff earned All-GLIAC second-team honors as she scored 11.1 ppg while leading the team in rebounds (5.4/game) and the GLIAC in blocks (3.2/game). Other returners include Jen Nielsen, Teresa Stuck, Cori Jewett, Kelly Erskine, and Diana Voikos.

Gannon University: Coach Cleve Wright begins his first season at the helm of a team that has won back-to-back GLIAC South Division Championships and advanced to the NCAA Tournament three consecutive seasons. Wright was hired after former head coach Jodi Kest resigned to accept a head coaching position at Division I Texas A&M-Corpus Christi. Gannon returns three starters and eight letterwinners, but needs to replace three seniors from last year's team who accounted for 38.4 points and 22.7 rebounds per game. All-American Kristin Roseberry started at center for the last four seasons and resides in second place on Gannon's all-time scoring chart with 2,147 career points. Monica Bortz and Nikki Smith split time at power forward last year. Jen Gwin, the 2001-02 GLIAC Freshman of the Year, returns at point guard after averaging five points, 4.6 rebounds, and 7.7 assists per game. The sophomore finished second nationally in assists per game. Kelly Irwin and Molly Dorrell also return as starters from last year's team.

Hillsdale College: HC has a new face at the helm with the hiring of new head coach Claudette Charney last spring. Charney took over for former head coach Dana Munk, who resigned to pursue a doctorate degree. Charney inherits a program that had a historical campaign in 2001-02. The Chargers, who posted a 23-8 record last season, defeated Gannon in the first round of their first ever NCAA Tournament appearance. Hillsdale claimed its first GLIAC Championship after winning the conference tournament with a 65-59 victory over Michigan Tech in the finals. First-team All-GLIAC performer Stephanie Heid returns for her senior season after finishing first on the team in points (18.0 ppg) and rebounds (6.4 rpg). The Chargers, who return four starters this season, will have the services of seniors Jen Newsone and Amanda Vriesenga. Newsone finished second on the team last year with 14.3 ppg, while Vriesenga posted 10.6 ppg.

Lake Superior State University: Four starters return for Lake Superior State, which won its first GLIAC regular-season title last season. GLIAC coach of the year Kris Dunbar led the Lakers to a 21-6 overall finish and 14-4 league showing in 2001-02. She has a 60-47 record at LSSU heading into her fifth season. Two-time All-GLIAC first-team forward Alice Duesing, who averaged 20.1 points, 7.3 rebounds and 3.1 assists last season, will again be a scoring threat from anywhere on the court. Danielle Pettingill (5-5, senior guard), Allyson Conaway (6-0, junior forward) and Anne Leonard (5-11, senior forward) are also returning starters. The strength of the Laker team, however, is its depth, including sophomore forward Carrie Myers (6-0) and junior guard Becca Johnson (5-7).

Mercyhurst College: Second-year head coach Bo Kuntz's team will try to rebound from an injury-plagued 6-20 mark a year ago, which included just two wins in 17 GLIAC contests. Mercyhurst ended the season with six straight losses, then graduated its top three scorers. Four seniors return, including guards Katie Lorincz and Holly Horton. Lorincz started all 26 games, averaged 11.0 ppg, and dished out a team-high 103 assists. Horton averaged 4.7 ppg and converted nearly 84% of her free throws. Junior forward Krista Ross led the team in scoring with 13.1 ppg, rebounding (7.5 rpg), shot nearly 80% from the line, and started all but one game.

Michigan Tech University: MTU lost four starters from a year ago, but returns its leading scorer and a solid supporting cast who will have the Huskies shooting for their eighth GLIAC title and 11th NCAA Tournament appearance since 1990-91. Junior All-GLIAC North Division first-team pick Andrea Novak averaged 14.7 points and 5.0 rebounds per game last year and will again be counted on to be the team's go-to player. Junior point guard Jill Lehner (7.2 ppg) and senior Annie Madden (4.5 ppg) are the top returnees in the backcourt. Added experience in senior forward Emily McClone (4.1 ppg) and junior center Megan Schaller (2001-02 redshirt) should have fifth-year coach Darla Olson (96-24) on pace for her fifth consecutive winning season and the program's 15th straight above .500.

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Northern Michigan University: Northern Michigan fans will need a game program to identify the 2002-03 team. Six letterwinners, including All-American and GLIAC Player of the Year Marisa DellAngelo, are gone from last year's 20-9 team that finished second in the GLIAC North and qualified for the NCAA II Regional for the 11th time. However, look for the 'Cats to again be a contender. Mike Geary has won 20, or more games, for eight straight seasons and has compiled a 319-93 record in 14 years at NMU. Three-time letterwinner Elena Keranen (11.2 ppg/6.5 rpg) heads the list of returnees. She was named to the All-GLIAC North Second Team last year. Sophomore Tiffany Grubaugh redshirted last year after transferring from Wayne State where she was named GLIAC Freshman of the Year after scoring 358 points (13.3). Also look for two Division One transfers to make an impact. 6-2 junior center Jessica Nohl is a transfer from Ball State and 5-9 junior guard Emily Samuelson is a transfer from Western Michigan.

Northwood University: Head Coach Kelli Parker enters her third season (15-36) at the helm of the NU women's basketball program. Parker is hoping to turn a corner this year and compete among the top teams in the GLIAC. The road will not be easy after losing four starters - three to graduation. The Timberwolves are coming off a 6-19 season in which they won two of 18 GLIAC games. Northwood will be a young team this season featuring just two seniors. La'Tonya Crawford missed a portion of 2001-02 with an injury. Crawford played in 17 games and averaged 3.2 points per game. Holly Oosterheert returns after missing last season with a medical redshirt. Oosterheert averaged 3.5 points during the 2000-01 season. The frontcourt also features junior Kyleen Hipp who played in the high post and along the perimeter last season, ranking third on the team, averaging 7.8 points per game. The backcourt returns sophomores Landree Sarata and Kate Deupree and also junior Payshence Erb.

Saginaw Valley State University: The Cardinals return three players from last season, adding fourteen new faces, comprising one of the school's largest recruiting classes. The Cardinals will look to their three senior tri-captains, Erin Johnson, Angie Stewart, and Melissa Giancola for leadership. Johnson started all but one game last season for the Cardinals and finished second on the team with 32 minutes per game, while averaging 10.3 points per game. Stewart made 13 starts for the Cardinals last season and looks to be counted on for some important minutes this season. She finished third on the team in assists last year with 57. A strong physical presence will be added with the addition of the 6-1 Giancola.

Wayne State University: Third-year head coach Gloria Bradley says Wayne State is ready to make an impact at the top of the GLIAC. Wayne State returns four players from last year's 16-11 (9-8 GLIAC) squad, comprised of the top three scorers in Keneisha Moss (15.8 ppg), Jessica King (12.3) and Ebony Vincent (8.2) along with Nikki Jackson, a 2002 GLIAC All-Academic selection. Moss, a two-time GLIAC South Player of the Week (Dec. 3, Feb. 11), was the Warriors' leading scorer in 14 games. King, who started all 27 games last year, is the Warriors' deadliest outside shooter and was second on the team with 54 steals. With an up-tempo style of play in which the offense is dictated by the defense, the Warriors will build their offense with the deep threat from a year ago and a new, fresh look down low. The Warriors will look to gain momentum on last year's deep-shooting success. The team finished the season fourth in the nation in three-pointers per game (8.04) and shattered the school record for three-pointers in a season with 217, the old record was 150 (1997-98). King led WSU with her school record 68 long-bombs on the season.