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Grand Valley State Tabbed 2003 Preseason Favorite By GLIAC Football Coaches

Defending National Champions Garner Eight First-Place Votes in Preseason League Balloting

BAY CITY, Mich. -- Grand Valley State University was picked to win the 2003 Great Lakes Intercollegiate Athletic Conference (GLIAC) football title by the head football coaches of the league in preseason balloting.

Grand Valley State, the NCAA Division II and two-time league defending champion, outdistanced Saginaw Valley State University by just three points in the voting (117-114). The Lakers garnered eight first-place votes, while the Cardinals nabbed the four remaining top votes.

The poll was released in conjunction with the league's football media day luncheon held on the campus of Grand Valley State in Allendale, Michigan.

The league's 12 head coaches participated in the balloting, but were not allowed to vote for their team. The first-place team on each ballot received 11 points, while second received 10 points, etc.

The University of Findlay placed third in the balloting with 92 points. The Oilers finished in a second-place tie with Saginaw Valley State with 8-2 records in conference play last season. Northern Michigan University placed fourth in the poll, three points ahead of Ferris State University (83-80). The Bulldogs, edged out sixth-place Northwood University by one point.

The University of Indianapolis placed seventh, just one point in front of Hillsdale College (61-60). Ashland University (38), Michigan Tech University (28), Wayne State University (26), and Mercyhurst College (14) round out the poll.

Grand Valley State won its second consecutive conference title last season with a perfect 9-0 mark. GVSU advanced to the NCAA Division II championship game, where the Lakers defeated Valdosta State University (Ga.), 31-24. Saginaw Valley State also advanced to postseason play last season, falling to Indiana University (Pa.), 27-23 in the opening round. Last season marked just the third time that the GLIAC (formerly the MIFC) placed two teams in the Division II tournament since 1994.

For more information about GLIAC football please check the GLIAC football web page at: www.gliac.org/.

2003 GLIAC Preseason Football Coaches Poll

<i>School (first-place votes)</i>	<i>Points</i>
1. Grand Valley State (8)	117
2. Saginaw Valley State (4)	114
3. Findlay	92
4. Northern Michigan	83
5. Ferris State	80
6. Northwood	79
7. Indianapolis	61
8. Hillsdale	60
9. Ashland	38
10. Michigan Tech	28
11. Wayne State	26
12. Mercyhurst	14

2002 GLIAC Final Standings

	GLIAC Overall			
	W	L	W	L
Grand Valley State	9	0	14	0
Saginaw Valley State	8	2	9	3
Findlay	8	2	9	2
Northwood	7	3	7	4
Northern Michigan	6	4	6	5
Ferris State	4	5	5	5
Indianapolis	4	6	5	6
Hillsdale	4	6	4	7
Michigan Tech	3	7	3	7
Wayne State	3	7	3	8
Ashland	2	8	2	9
Mercyhurst	1	9	2	9