

## HORIZON LEAGUE ANNOUNCES #HLMBB PRESEASON ALL-CONFERENCE TEAM, POLL

INDIANAPOLIS -- Northern Kentucky's Drew McDonald has been tabbed Horizon League Preseason Player of the Year and Oakland has been named the 2017-18 Horizon League men's basketball preseason favorite by a vote of the League's head coaches, sports information directors and media representatives.

A first-team all-conference selection a season ago, McDonald led Northern Kentucky to the Motor City Madness title and a berth into its first NCAA Tournament at the Division I level. The junior forward tallied 11 double-doubles and scored in double figures 30 times in 2016-17. McDonald ranked fifth in scoring (16.9) and fourth in rebounding (7.6) during Horizon League games last season.

McDonald is joined on the preseason all-conference first team by Oakland's Jalen Hayes and Martez Walker, UIC's Dikembe Dixson and Youngstown State's Cameron Morse. Corey Allen and Jaleel Hogan of Detroit Mercy were voted to the preseason all-conference second team along with Northern Kentucky's Lavone Holland II, Kendrick Nunn of Oakland and Tai Odiase of UIC.

Oakland was the overwhelming team pick, capturing 31 first place votes in the poll. The Golden Grizzlies posted a 14-4 Horizon League record last season and were the No. 1 seed at Motor City Madness. The defending regular season champion won 25 games a season ago and advanced to the second round of the NIT while boasting one of the nation's most efficient defensive units.

Northern Kentucky received 10 first-place votes and was voted No. 2 in the preseason team rankings after its NCAA Tournament appearance last season. UIC, the youngest team in the nation last year according to KenPom.com, tallied three first-place votes and slotted in at No. 3. Detroit Mercy also received a first-place vote and finished fourth in the poll.

Hayes, a two-time all-league selection, enters his senior season with more than 1,200 career points and nearly 750 career rebounds for the preseason favorite Golden Grizzlies. He posted nine double-doubles in Horizon League play and finished third in scoring (17.9) and second in rebounding (9.2) during conference games. Hayes secured 10 or more rebounds 11 times and earned NABC First-Team All-District accolades last season.

Walker led the Golden Grizzlies in scoring last season and finished as the fourth-best scorer in the Horizon League at 17.8 points per game. A second-team all-conference performer last year season, the wing man netted 20 or more points in 15 contests including a career-high of 30 in the win against Georgia. The senior connected on 71 3-pointers in 2016-17 and converted 83.1 percent of his free throw attempts.

Dixson will return to the court after suffering a season-ending knee injury early last season. The sophomore was averaging 20.3 points and six rebounds per game in 10 contests prior to his injury. The forward netted at least 30 three times and had five 20-point games during the nine full games he completed in 2016-17. Dixson was unanimously named Horizon League Freshman of the Year in 2016.

Morse paced all Horizon League players with his 23.2 points per game average last season in conference action, leading the league by more than two points per game. He enters his senior season with 1,421 career points and boasts four 40-point games in his career. Morse poured in 711 points last season and needs just 571 to become the 12th member of the Horizon League 2,000-point club. The two-time all-conference selection also was named to the NABC All-Region First Team a year ago.

The 2017-18 season tips off Friday, November 10 with nonconference play. The 2018 Horizon League Men's and Women's Basketball Championships - Motor City Madness - will be played March 2-6 at the brand new Little Caesars Arena in Detroit. The third edition of Motor City Madness again will feature all 10 teams on both the men's and women's side vying for the League's automatic berth into the NCAA Tournament.

### PRESEASON TEAM POLL

TEAM (1ST PLACE-VOTES)	POINTS
Oakland (31)	453
Northern Kentucky (10)	414
UIC (3)	347
Detroit Mercy (1)	273
Wright State	259
Green Bay	249
Youngstown State (1)	209
Milwaukee (1)	161
Cleveland State	125
IUPUI	95

### PRESEASON ALL-CONFERENCE TEAM

PRESEASON PLAYER OF THE YEAR	
Drew McDonald, Northern Kentucky	
FIRST TEAM	NOTES
Drew McDonald, Northern Kentucky	16.9 ppg, 7.6 rebs
Jalen Hayes, Oakland	17.9 ppg, 9.2 rebs
Martez Walker, Oakland	17.8 ppg overall
Dikembe Dixson, UIC	20.3 ppg, 6 rebs (all gms.)
Cameron Morse, Youngstown State	23.2 ppg led HL
SECOND TEAM	Notes
Corey Allen, Detroit Mercy	15.4 ppg, 16-17 HL FOTY
Jaleel Hogan, Detroit Mercy	16.9 ppg, 6.9 rebs
Lavone Holland II, Northern Kentucky	14.5 ppg, 4.1 ast overall
Kendrick Nunn, Oakland	15.5 ppg at Illinois in 15-16
Tai Odiase, UIC	3.2 blks, 16-17 HL DPOTY

*All stats are 16-17 Horizon League games only, unless noted.*