Appalachian State University is a near unanimous choice of the Southern Conference's coaches to win the 2010 SoCon football championship, the conference announced on Monday.

Appalachian received first-place votes from 7-of-9 SoCon coaches in the conference's preseason poll. Coaches are not permitted to vote for their own teams, meaning that only one of eight possible votes was cast for a team other than ASU.

The Mountaineers are in search of their sixth-straight SoCon title, which would match the conference record for consecutive championships set by Georgia Southern from 1997-2002. The Apps return 20 starters (nine on offense, seven on defense and four specialists) from last year's squad that went 11-3 overall, including a second-straight perfect 8-0 SoCon record, and finished ranked No. 3 in the major national polls.

Appalachian also had a league-high 13 representatives on the SoCon's preseason all-conference squads, nearly twice as many as Samford, which landed the second-most players on the squad with seven.

Ten of ASU's 13 preseason all-conference honorees are first-team selections, led by Walter Payton Award candidate Devon Moore at running back and its trio of Buck Buchanan Award candidates on defense: end Jabari Fletcher, linebacker D.J. Smith and defensive back Mark LeGree.

Joining Moore, Fletcher, LeGree and Smith on the first team are offensive linemen Brett Irvin and Pat Mills, tight end Ben Jorden, wide receiver Brian Quick, defensive end Lanston Tanyi and place kicker Jason Vitaris. ASU's second-team selections include offensive linemen Daniel Kilgore and Matt Ruff and defensive back Ed Gainey.

Appalachian officially begins preparations for the 2010 campaign on Friday, Aug. 6 when it opens fall practices. The season opener is Sept. 4 at SoCon-rival Chattanooga. The opener will be televised regionally on SportSouth and kicks off at 3 p.m.
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2010 SoCon Football Preseason Coaches Poll

Place	School (First-place votes)	Points
1.	**Appalachian State (7)**	**63**
2.	Elon (2)	58
3.	Furman	41
4.	Samford	39
5.	Chattanooga	37
6.	Wofford	36
7.	Georgia Southern	25
8.	The Citadel	14
9.	Western Carolina	11

NOTE: Coaches were not permitted to vote for their own team
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2010 Southern Conference Football
Preseason All-Conference Teams
Offensive Player of the Year: Scott Riddle, Sr., QB, Elon
Defensive Player of the Year: Bryce Smith, Sr., LB, Samford
First Team Offense
QB Scott Riddle, Sr., Elon
RB Devon Moore, Sr., Appalachian State
RB Chris Evans, Sr., Samford
OL Brett Irvin, Sr., Appalachian State
OL Pat Mills, Sr., Appalachian State
OL Thomas Gray, Sr., Samford
OL Chris Harr, Sr., Chattanooga
OL Pat Illig, Sr., Wofford
TE Ben Jorden, Jr., Appalachian State
WR Adam Mims, Sr., Furman
WR Brian Quick, Jr., Appalachian State

First Team Defense
DL□□□□ Jabari Fletcher, Sr., Appalachian State
DL□□□□ Lanston Tanyi, Jr., Appalachian State
DL Brandon Ward, Sr., Elon
DL Brent Russell, So., Georgia Southern
LB□□□□ D.J. Smith, Sr., Appalachian State
LB Bryce Smith, Sr., Samford
LB Kadarron Anderson, Jr., Furman
DB□□□ Mark LeGree, Sr., Appalachian State
DB Cortez Allen, Sr., The Citadel
DB Buster Skrine, Sr., Chattanooga
DB Mitchell Bell, Sr., Western Carolina

First Team Specialists
PK□□□□ Jason Vitaris, Sr., Appalachian State
P Bob Hooper, Sr., Samford
RS Adam Mims, Sr., Furman

Second Team Offense
QB B.J. Coleman, Jr., Chattanooga
RB Tersoo Uhaa, Jr., Furman
RB Mike Rucker, Sr., Wofford

OL□□□□Daniel Kilgore, Sr., Appalachian State
OL Clark Bishop, Sr., Wofford

OL□□□□ Matt Ruff, Jr., Appalachian State
OL Rodney Austin, Jr., Elon
OL Ryan Lee, Jr., Furman
TE Alex Sellars, Sr., The Citadel
WR Riley Hawkins, Jr. Samford
WR Marquell Pittman, Sr., Western Carolina

Second Team Defense
DL Jordan Gibson, Sr., Elon
DL John Michael Clay, Jr., Samford
DL Josh Williams, So., Chattanooga
DL (tie) Ameet Pall, Jr., Wofford

DL (tie) Eric Eberhardt, Jr., Wofford
LB Joshua Jones, Jr., Elon
LB Ryan Consiglio, Jr., Chattanooga
LB Mike Niam, Jr., Wofford
DB Terell Wilson , Sr., Elon
DB Max Lerner, Sr., Furman
DB Ed Gainey, Jr., Appalachian State
DB Laron Scott, Jr., Georgia Southern

Second Team Specialists
PK Blake Bostic, Sr., Western Carolina
P Mike Hammons, Jr., Chattanooga
RS Richie Fordham, Jr., Samford

NOTE: Coaches were not permitted to vote for their own players.