

Five Mountaineers Named All-SoCon

Written by Ben Winterrowd
Tuesday, 06 May 2014 10:20

The Southern Conference's softball coaches recognized five Appalachian State University student-athletes on its 2014 all-conference teams, the league

announced on Tuesday.

Junior outfielder Dani Heichen (Pembroke Pines, Fla./Pembroke Pines Charter) and junior second baseman Cynthia Gomez (Oxnard, Calif./Pacifica) were both named first team all-conference.

Senior first baseman Lindsay Loudermilk (Bluff City, Tenn./Sullivan East) and junior catcher Sarah Warnock (Jamestown, N.C./Southwest Guilford) were named second team all-conference, while freshman shortstop Cara Parker (Lake Park, Ga./Lowndes) earned all-freshman honors.

Heichen finished the regular season with her best season at the plate out of the lead off spot. Currently the Pembroke Pines, Fla. native is in the midst of a career-long 17-game hit streak during which she has raised her averaged 62 points from .281 to .343. The junior scored 25runs and also stole 18 bases on the season. The 18 stolen bases gives Heichen 48 for her career which is good for eighth all-time in program history. On April 14th, Heichen was rewarded with the conference's 'Player of the Week' honor after a week in which she batted .650 and went 13-for-20 at the plate. Heichen also led the Mountaineers in average during league play hitting at a .419 clip.

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Gomez, like Heichen, also finished the year with her best season at the plate. The junior infielder finished with a .328 average and drove in 11 runs – including hitting her first career home run against Georgia Southern on April 6th. Gomez finished 2014 with 12 multi-hit games and stole seven bases. With what became a potent offensive lineup, Gomez successfully layed down eight sacrifice bunts and hit one sac fly. The Oxnard, Calif. native hit .367 in conference play.

Loudermilk began to heat up as the season went along. Playing in 45 games, Loudermilk raised her average 72 points from April 5th to the end of the season from .188 to .260. The senior hit two home runs and drove in 28 runs while primarily playing first base. The Bluff City, Tenn. native hit her first career grand slam in a crazy game against UNCG in which Appalachian set program records for runs (19), RBIs (18) and hits (20). Loudermilk reached base safely in 15-straight games, including a five-game hitting streak. In league play, Loudermilk hit .370 with three doubles and a home run.

Warnock led the team in average for most of the season and finished with a .343 average. The Jamestown, N.C. native tied her career-high in home runs with three. The junior hit nine doubles this year and brought her career total to 32 – good for fourth all-time. Warnock drove in 23 runs, while primarily hitting third in the order and scored 25 runs and was a perfect six-for-six in stolen bases. The junior was a rock behind the plate for the Mountaineer pitching staff, whether it was keeping opposing hitters off balance or blocking balls in the dirt, Warnock was an all-around cornerstone to the Apps.

Parker garnered all-freshman honors after one of the best seasons from a freshman in program history. The Lake Park, Ga. native finished the regular season with a team-high 10 home runs, 29 RBIs, 28 runs, .659 slugging percentage and 19 walks. Parker also hit .326, which was good

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for fifth on the team. Primarily playing shortstop, Parker made dazzling plays in the field and on more than one occasion showed off her range and cannon arm. Parker was also tied with Warnock with nine doubles and tied Whitney Johnson (Dunn, N.C./NC School of Math and Science) with two triples.

The Mountaineers are set to travel to Greensboro, N.C. for the 2014 Southern Conference Softball Championships from May 7-10. App State enters the tournament as the No. 7 seed and will play No. 2 Chattanooga at 10 a.m. on Wednesday.

First Team

Pitcher: Sarah Purvis, Georgia Southern

Pitcher: Mollie Hanson, Samford

Catcher: Lindsay Thomas, UNCG

First Base: Katelyn Bedwell, UNCG

Second Base: Cynthia Gomez, Appalachian State

Third Base: Callie Brister, Samford

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Shortstop: Kourtney Thomas, Georgia Southern

Outfield: Dani Heichen, Appalachian State

Outfield: Megan Dowdy, Samford

Outfield: Carleigh Nester, Elon

Designated Player: Taylor Rogers, Georgia Southern

Utility: Nicole Thomas, UNCG

Second Team

Pitcher: Lauren Collier, Furman

Pitcher: Katie Henderson, Chattanooga

Catcher: Sarah Warnock, Appalachian State

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First Base: Lindsay Loudermilk, Appalachian State

First Base: Morgan Robinson, Georgia Southern

Second Base: Dominique Madruga, UNCG

Third Base: Sarah Beth Roberts, Chattanooga

Third Base: Kara Salvo, Western Carolina

Shortstop: Abby Adams, Samford

Outfield: Alaina Hall, Elon

Outfield: Nikki Legg, Furman

Outfield: Courtney Price, Western Carolina

Designated Player: Elise Smith, Furman

Utility: Caroline Wilder, Samford

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All-Freshman Team

Cara Parker, Appalachian State

Alaina Hall, Elon

Andrea Abatiello, Furman

Elise Smith, Furman

Emily Snider, Georgia Southern

Morgan Robinson, Georgia Southern

Taylor Rogers, Georgia Southern

Grey Adams, Samford

Courtney Price, Western Carolina

Kara Salvo, Western Carolina

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Player of the Year

Katelyn Bedwell, UNCG

Pitcher of the Year

Sarah Purvis, Georgia Southern

Freshman of the Year

Taylor Rogers, Georgia Southern

Coach of the Year

Annie Smith, Georgia Southern