

**Attention: Managing, News and Sports Editors**

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**Basketball to be added to BenU Springfield sports offerings starting with 2012-2013 season**

**Springfield, Illinois** ~ A new conference. And now, two new sports.

Benedictine University at Springfield will offer intercollegiate men's and women's basketball beginning with the 2012-2013 season as part of its move to the American Midwest Conference (AMC).

The expansion of Benedictine athletics into basketball is a further sign of the University's commitment to the new conference and to the greater Springfield area.

"We are looking forward to basketball filling our athletic department gap during the winter months and providing an additional student life opportunity for our students," said Kevin Broeckling, Dean of Student Affairs at Benedictine University at Springfield.

"We also anticipate the creation of a cheer team to go along with our men and women's basketball schedule," he added. "We believe these actions will provide a new level of excitement and activity to our campus and are another step as we continue to grow Benedictine University in Springfield."

Benedictine University at Springfield was recently accepted as a member of the AMC. Other conference members are Columbia College (Columbia, Mo.), Hannibal-LaGrange University (Hannibal, Mo.), Harris-Stowe University (St. Louis, Mo.), Park University (Parkville, Mo.), Stephens College (Columbia, Mo.) and William Woods University (Fulton, Mo.).

## **Benedictine University at Springfield Page Two – Basketball**

The AMC features sponsors 15 intercollegiate sports – volleyball, men’s and women’s soccer, men’s and women’s cross country, men’s and women’s basketball, men’s and women’s indoor track, softball, baseball, men’s and women’s golf, and men’s and women’s track and field.

Columbia and McKendree shared the AMC men’s basketball regular-season title in 2010-2011 with 12-2 records, but Park upset McKendree on the road 72-59 to earn the conference’s bid to the NAIA tournament. Columbia, which was ranked No. 18 in the final NAIA Division I poll, and McKendree received at-large bids to the tournament.

McKendree left the conference after the 2010-2011 school year as part of its move to NCAA Division II status.

Columbia also won the AMC women’s regular-season title, and completed a perfect run through the league by claiming the conference tournament championship. Columbia and William Woods both received bids to the NAIA tournament.

Benedictine University at Springfield is expected to begin a search for a men’s and women’s basketball coach immediately.

“Our entry into the American Midwest Conference is a huge step for BenU athletics, and coupled with the completion of our probationary year as a NAIA member, will lead to exciting postseason opportunities and rivalries within our new conference,” Broeckling said.

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Benedictine University at Springfield is an independent Roman Catholic institution located in the Illinois state capital. Founded in 1887, Benedictine provides 17 undergraduate majors, five graduate and one doctorate program in Springfield, in addition to a wide range of athletic opportunities for students through membership in the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA).