

# *Sports Information*

---

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
Tuesday November 17, 2009  
FGCU Athletics

Contact: Michael Hill  
mhill@fgcu.edu  
(239) 590-7064

## **Eagles Duo Receives A-Sun Postseason Honors**

**MACON, Ga.** – After finishing the 2009 regular season with a 15-5 conference record (16-12 overall), the FGCU volleyball team begins to collect post-season hardware. Junior Jelena Simic earned First Team All-Atlantic Sun honors, while senior Chandra Lefever earned an All-Atlantic Sun Second Team selection.

2009 Preseason All-Conference Player of the Year Alex Kelly earned Player of the Year honors for the second consecutive season, after finishing 35th in the NCAA in hitting percentage (.365), 15th in kills per set (4.46) and ninth in points per set (5.22) and led the A-Sun overall with 419 kills, 491 points (5.22 per set), ranked second with a .365 hitting percentage and 10th in digs with 333 (3.54 per set). In A-Sun matches, the junior middle hitter finished first with 333.0 points (5.12 per set), a .360 hitting percentage and 281 kills (4.32 per set). Kelly also earned First-Team All-Atlantic Sun honors, as well as three Atlantic Sun Player of the Week awards during the season (10/05, 10/12 and 11/09), to go along with two Top Performer selections from the Collegiate Volleyball Update. Also for the second consecutive season, the Kansas City, Mo. native owns the distinction as the only player in the conference to win the A-Sun Player of the Week award three times.

Lipscomb Head Coach Brandon Rosenthal earned Coach of the Year with four all-conference performers and a school record 23-match winning streak. Rosenthal led Lipscomb to the last two Atlantic Sun Championship finals, winning the title in 2007 and increasing his win total in each year with the Lady Bisons to a record 26 in 2009, up from 21 in 2008. Junior Stefine "Jake" Pease joined Kelly with First-Team All-Atlantic accolades after quarterbacking the Lady Bisons to their success during the 2009 season. The Berryton, Kan. native collected two A-Sun Player of the Week Awards on Sept. 21 and Nov. 2 and led the A-Sun overall with 1126 assists (11.98 per set) and finished first in A-Sun matches with 770 assists (11.85 per set). Pease also ranked seventh in the NCAA in assists per set (11.98).

Reigning Defensive Player of the Year Shelley Walroth holds single season and career dig marks at Jacksonville, as the Cincinnati native finished the regular-season with a match-high 27 digs against Mercer, and moved into seventh place on the all-time NCAA digs list with 2,426. The senior libero led the A-Sun overall with 555 digs (5.72 per set) and finished first in A-Sun matches with 415 digs (5.68 per set). Walroth earned First-Team All-Atlantic Sun honors, to go along with an Atlantic Sun Player of the Week award on Sept. 8 and a Top Performer selection from the Collegiate Volleyball Update on Oct. 20. The psychology major also ranked fifth in the NCAA in digs per set (5.72).

Fellow Dolphin Brooke Singleton joined Walroth on the First-Team All-Atlantic Sun squad. The Roseville, Ill. native had an astounding senior season at Jacksonville where she ranked ninth

overall in kills with 297 (3.06 per set), in service aces with 32 (0.33 per set) and in points with 345.5 (3.56 per set). Singleton, a middle blocker, also finished ranked 10th in the A-Sun in kills with 231 (3.16), ninth in service aces with 24 (.33) and 10th in points with 267.5 (3.66). The exercise science major also earned an Atlantic Sun Player of the Week award on Oct. 19.

Jacksonville's SunTrust River City Rumble rival features a player who earned Freshman of the Year honors in UNF's Paige Pridgeon. The outside hitter had an outstanding 2009 campaign in which she ranked as the only freshman ranked in the top-10 in kills with 350 (3.12 per set). Pridgeon led the Ospreys and the conference overall in service aces with 50 (0.45 per set) and in A-Sun matches, the Tallahassee, Fla. native finished first in services aces with 40 (0.51), ranked seventh in kills with 265 (3.40 per set) and amassed 315 points (4.04 per set), good for fourth. Pridgeon also ranked second on the team in digs with 271 (2.63 per set) and tallied 376.5 points (3.66 per set) overall.

Belmont, FGCU and Campbell also each had representation on the First-Team All-Conference squad. The Bruins' Maggie Johnson had an outstanding season in which the sophomore outside hitter led Belmont in kills for 21-of-29 matches, and ranked fourth overall in kills with 408 (3.49) and in points with 463 (3.96 per set). Johnson native also finished ranked third in A-Sun matches in kills with 275 (3.57 per set) and fifth in points with 310.5 (4.03 per set). On the year, the Naperville, Ill. had seven matches with at least 18 kills, 39 total blocks and tied her career-high of four blocks twice.

The Eagles' representation on the First-Team All-Atlantic squad comes courtesy of junior Jelena Simic, who started and played in 25 of FGCU's 26 matches. Through those matches, the middle hitter ranked third overall with 364 kills (3.68 per set) and 398.5 points (4.03 per set). In A-Sun matches, Simic finished second with 288 kills (3.79 per set) and 314.0 points (4.13 per set). The Lazarevac, Serbia native led the Eagles in total attacks, kills, and kills per set, recorded 19 or more kills in six matches this season, racking up a noteworthy season-high 25 kills at Jacksonville on Sept. 25.

"Jelena has done so many different things for us this year and she is a very deserving All-Conference selection," said head Coach Dave Nichols. "She has had to handle a lot of passing duties, and we have used her hitting both front row and back row. She is an incredibly dynamic hitter for her size- pound for pound she has to be one of the hardest hitters in the country! She has had a lot of matches where her all around play has carried us."

The Camels placed senior middle blocker Ashley Weers on the all-conference first-team as the Littleton, Colo. native notched individual match and season career-highs in kills, attack percentage, blocks and points, collected a block in 27 of 29 matches she played in, ranks among Campbell's all-time top-10 in total (6th), solo (9th) and assisted (6th) blocks and posted 12 10+ kill matches. Weers ranked 28th in the NCAA in hitting percentage (.368), led the A-Sun overall with a .368 hitting percentage and ranked second in A-Sun matches with a .360 hitting percentage. For her performance during the season, the Littleton, Colo. native twice earned A-Sun Player of the Week awards on Aug. 31 and Sept. 28.

The Bruins, Owls, Eagles, Lady Bisons, Dolphins and Ospreys all packed the second-team all-conference, with Belmont placing two players on the squad. Junior Megan Clements filled the libero position and joined sophomore setter Channing Salava with Second-Team All-Atlantic honors. Kennesaw State earned its first-ever berth into the conference championship after putting together a 17-11 overall record and a mark of 11-9 in conference play, placing junior outside hitter Sabrita Gulley on the squad. FGCU featured senior setter Chandra Lefever on the all-conference squad as the Fort Morgan, Colo. native earned Second-Team All-Atlantic accolades. Lipscomb's representation on the team comes courtesy of junior outside hitter Meghan Hinemeyer as she joined Jacksonville senior middle blocker Nicki Kent and junior middle blocker Kaley Read, who picked up second-team honors for the Ospreys.

"Chandra has had an great second half and if our passing had been better in the first half I

think she would have been first team," said Nichols. Her leadership, decision-making, and all around game have gotten better and better each week. She's had an absolutely amazing season when you consider the fact that she's a full-time Mom, a full-time nursing student, works all kinds of shifts where she works all night, and is still able to bring energy to every practice and competition. I am so proud of her."

UNF libero Nicole Baran, Stetson setter Kelli Carneal, Lipscomb outside hitter Kaycee Green, Jacksonville outside hitter Alison Loeppky, Campbell outside hitter Jordan Reaves, and USC Upstate outside hitter Mindy Quimby and setter Emily Sanders join Freshman of the Year Paige Pridgeon on the Freshman All-Conference Team.

The Atlantic Sun Conference is an 11-member league committed to Building Winners for Life. The A-Sun stands for achievement with integrity in both the academic and athletic arenas, with a focus on the balance between the two for our student-athletes. Headquartered in Macon, Ga., the A-Sun boasts six of the top eight media markets in the Southeast. The A-Sun includes a blend of the most prestigious and dynamic private and public institutions in the region: Belmont University, Campbell University, East Tennessee State University, Florida Gulf Coast University, Jacksonville University, Kennesaw State University, Lipscomb University, Mercer University, University of North Florida, University of South Carolina Upstate and Stetson University.