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Advanced Writing and Reporting

Brief to Full Article

11/14/2025

PART I:

WBB Panthers ranked No.1 in Preseason Poll Heading into the Season

By Kaiky dos Santos

Women's Basketball are No. 1 in the St. Louis Intercollegiate Athletic Conference for the first time in program's history.

The Panthers earned 3 first-place votes from other coaches in the conference to top the preseason poll heading into the 2025-2026 season. That put Ramiro Dominguez's squad ahead of conference rivals and traditional SLIAC title runner ups like Webster and Westminster, with both respectively ranking No. 2 and No.3.

"I think some people still think we got lucky for three days during the tournament last year," Dominguez said. "but they [the players] don't take anything for granted. They know they put a gigantic target on their backs by being good, and with that privilege comes a lot of responsibility."

The WBB Panthers never started a year ranked No. 1 once before, nor received any first place votes.

It's another milestone for both Dominguez and the team. Dominguez's path to building his successful program has been rising since the 2022-2023 season, when he earned his first coach of the year nomination, followed by another in 2024-2025. And the Panthers had never won the SLIAC tournament in history, the No.1 is another trail of the legacy this group is leaving in Principia's history.

A major part of that rise comes from the Panthers' stacked roster that piled up accolades on their way to last season's historic achievement. Senior guards Lamiya Terrel and Ariana Williams, earned spots in the all-defensive team. They're joined by senior guard Taylor Brown and forward Trinniti Matthews, who earned all-conference 2nd team and tournament MVP honors, in that order. With four decorated upperclassmen leading the lineup, Dominguez said the roster now has the maturity and the competitiveness needed to defend their position at the top.

"I expect our experience to really show, we have five seniors starting," said one of the two team captains, Taylor Brown. Along with that she added that the group is heading into the season "stronger than ever," as they grow together each day because of how well they know each other after years of playing side by side.

Alongside the growth, the panthers' chemistry is also matched by a growing identity in how they play under Dominguez. "The general expectation is definitely hustle and running fast, running the floor consistently... if we get a steal you're running straight to the basket, there's no stopping," said team captain, Ariana Williams.

Dominguez said that identity has been strengthened by the team's conditioning and preparation before the first practice. Players arrived on campus in August already "battle tested and in game shape, which he said allows the Panthers to run a faster pace on both ends of the floor and operate with a level of confidence they didn't have in prior years. He believes that maturity will be crucial in tight games, especially as the Panthers face opponents who see them as the team to beat.

Despite all the excitement around the No.1 ranking, the Panthers understand the pressure that comes with it. Dominguez said the outside perception that last year's title run was luck still fuels the group, but their response has been to embrace responsibility rather than shy away from it. "When you're No.1 everybody is coming for you" Brown said.

PART II:

Brief:

After the historic mark in 2024 achieved with the first ever Saint Louis Intercollegiate Conference title, the Principia women's basketball team step into the season looking to build a streak. After years of building leading to this moment, the Panthers were ranked No. 1 in the conference preseason poll for the first time in program history. "I'm excited for the season, we are pretty much the same team so I'm ready to build on top of that," said team captain, Taylor Brown. The ranking is based on the votes of rival coaches within the conference, a judgement justified by the Panthers with two strong wins and the Laura Williams Memorial Classic title.

Questions I wanted to answer in the article

- Why did the Principia women's basketball team earn the No.1 ranking in the SLIAC poll
- What changes or improvements from last season explain the program's rise
- How do players and coaches feel about the new pressure that comes with ranking
- What now fuels the team after last year's championship
- How is the team approaching the upcoming season differently now that they are the team to beat

Questions I still need answered

- How do newcomers/first-years fit into the roster and system
- Are there specific statistical improvements (pace, turnover margin, defensive rating as examples) the coach thinks will define the season
- What does the coach consider the biggest threat in the conference this year

People I spoke to

- **Ramiro Dominguez - Head Coach**
 - **Contacted:** Nov. 12
 - **Interviewed:** Nov. 13

- **Taylor Brown - Team Captain**
 - **Contacted:** Nov. 13
 - **Interviewed:** Nov. 13
- **Ariana Williams - Team Captain**
 - **Contacted:** Nov. 13
 - **Interviewed:** Nov. 13

Context and Background Search

- **Prin Athletics** – team news, standings, returning roster
- **SLIAC website** – preseason poll, records, conference rivals

Statement of Tools and Style Resources

- **AP Style Book** – No. 1, all-conference and etc
- **ChatGpt** – Revision