

# Softball Magazine's 2010 DII TOP 12 SENIORS

by Bill Ballew

**N**ever has the Division II level been more competitive than it is in 2010. With that strong play has come numerous outstanding performances by student-athletes in all classes. The senior class is one of the strongest in recent memory, and a dozen have stood out with impressive individual showings on winning teams. (Players are listed alphabetically.)

**Miranda Campbell, 3b, Emporia State:** The Hornets reeled off 23 straight victories earlier this season, from March 7-April 16, and ranked fourth in the NFCA National top 25 during the final week of April. Campbell led the charge by leading the nation with a .525 batting average and .632 on-base percentage and ranking third in RBI per game. In mid-April, she was named the Louisville Slugger/NFCA National Player of the Week after going 11-for-19 over eight games, with eight runs, 11 RBI, two home runs, 11 walks and two steals. She also led the MIAA in nine offensive categories, and was batting a ridiculous .576 with runners in scoring position. Campbell's performance is not unexpected, based on her recent accomplishments. An All-MIAA performer and All-Region recipient as a freshman, she was named Most Outstanding Player at the North Central Regional and to the all-tournament team at the World Series as a sophomore before earning second-team All-America honors from both the NFCA and CoSIDA as a junior. With Campbell's consistently high productivity, ESU is in the national championship hunt once again.

**Breanne Gleason, p, New Haven:** The Chargers entered the end of April having ranked atop the East Region poll for five straight weeks and resided 11th in the NFCA National top 25. The right arm and potent bat of Gleason has had much to do with that success. Already a four-time Northeast-10 Conference Pitcher of the Week, she owned a 23-3 record with a 1.29 ERA, allowing only 95 hits and striking out 191 batters in her initial 168 1/3 innings of work. She also contributed offensively by leading the Chargers with 37 hits and adding a .381 batting average, six doubles, six home runs and 25 RBI, which ranked second on the team. Gleason was the Northeast-10 Conference Pitcher of the Year in 2009 and earned third-team All-America recognition from Daktronics after tallying a league-best 31 victories, good for third in D-II. As a freshman, Gleason led the UNH with 54 hits, 16 doubles, five home runs and 85 total bases while winning 21 games in the circle. She

added 17 triumphs in 2008 as a sophomore, and currently owns the school mark with 92 career wins. A few more victories could be in the offing by the time the 2010 campaign concludes.

**Casey Hanes, p, Wayne State:** The Warriors were ranked first in the Midwest Region with a 38-9 record through April 21, with Hanes recording 31 of the team's victories. As dominant as any D-II pitcher, the righthander ranked second in the nation in wins, ERA (0.62) and strikeouts (257), while placing third with 11 shutouts and an average of 3.83 hits allowed per seven innings. Tabbed the Louisville Slugger/NFCA D-II National Pitcher of the Week on April 14, she followed that performance by going 4-0 with 40 strikeouts a week later. Hanes started her collegiate career at Lenoir-Rhyne and compiled a school-record 30-9 mark as a freshman while her 0.42 ERA ranked second in the nation at the D-II level. She transferred to Wayne State after posting a 24-7 mark with the Bears in 2007. After redshirting in 2008, Hanes received numerous awards in her first season with the Warriors, including Daktronics All-America second-team recognition and Great Lakes Intercollegiate Athletic Conference Pitcher of the Year.

**Sam Ingersoll, ss, West Chester:** The Golden Rams reached the PSAC Softball Tournament for the first time in school history thanks in large part to the performance of Ingersoll. The West Chester shortstop paced her club in most offensive categories, including a .497 batting average, .930 slugging percentage and .564 on-base percentage. She also topped the team with 71 hits, 17 doubles, 13 home runs and 63 RBI to lead the Golden Rams to a 29-15 record heading into the conference tournament. The senior transferred to West Chester after



Casey Hanes



Breanne Gleason

playing her first two collegiate campaigns at the University of North Carolina. In 2009, her first season with the Golden Rams, she emerged as one of the PSAC's top defensive infielders, led WCU in doubles and extra-base hits while batting .366, and was named to the All-PSAC East second team. Ingersoll's senior showing had West Chester ranked seventh in the Atlantic Region poll with a solid shot at earning a spot in the NCAA D-II Tournament.



Sam Ingersoll

photo credit - Barbara Johnston



Ashley Jones

**Ashley Jones, p, Palm Beach Atlantic:** The Sailfish are still in their infancy at the D-II level but that hasn't kept the team from making an impression. In addition to opening the 2010 season with a 31-10 record, a PBA student-athlete received national acclaim for the first time when Jones was tabbed the Louisville Slugger/NFCA D-II National Pitcher of the Week for February 22-28. The senior from Jensen Beach, Florida, went 3-0 while tossing her second career no-hitter: a seven-inning outing with 14 strikeouts against Flagler College. She returned to the circle in the second game of the doubleheader and did not allow a hit in the first five innings. A day later, against Mercyhurst College, Jones added 10 strikeouts in a 6-0 shutout for the Fish. Jones has been the ace of the Sailfish staff and one of the top pitchers in the South Region for the past three years. After going 10-13 as a freshman in 2007, she turned things around by posting a 17-10 record in 26 starts as a sophomore and then established school records for wins (22), complete games (27), shutouts (10), saves (3), innings pitched (223 2/3) and strikeouts (281) as a junior. Through April 21, Jones was on pace to top many of those numbers while going 20-7 with a 1.07 ERA and 22 complete games in her first 184 innings.

**Sherise Musquiz, p, Hawaii Pacific:** On April 18, Musquiz tossed a seven-inning complete game shutout over Hawaii-Hilo to tie the HPU record for career (77) and season (23) wins for a pitcher. The ace of the Sea Warriors has set the tone for the team throughout the 2010 season, as evidenced by her performance in the Mizuno Tournament of Champions in late March. Musquiz posted three wins in the event, including both victories over UC-San Diego and Cal State Bernardino on March 26. Yet that scenario serves only as an example of what is expected from the senior. The California native led the Sea Warriors' pitching staff with 14 wins and 146 innings pitched as a freshman. She improved to 19-3 with a team-low 1.52 ERA in 2008 and earned first-team All-Pac West honors. Musquiz received the same recognition as a junior in 2009 while posting a 21-4 record and leading the conference with a 1.19 ERA. Musquiz saved her best for her final season, which has the Sea Warriors in the hunt for a trip to the World Series after winning 37 of their first 43 games and opening conference play with a 22-4 record.



Sherise Musquiz

**Katie Petersen, p, Midwestern State:** A 12-game winning streak and 22 victories in 24 outings not only gave the Mustangs the top ranking in the South Central Region in late April, it also allowed MSU to equal its team record with 44 wins in a single slate with three regular-season contests as well as the post-season left to play. The Mustangs have risen to the top in the Lone State Conference with the consistent presence of Petersen in the circle. In her first 24 games, including 20 starts this season, Petersen owned a 21-2 record and a 1.14 ERA. She also had 185 strikeouts in 141 innings and 17 complete games. The Plano, Texas, native had an immediate impact on the program by going 25-12 with a 2.03 ERA in 2007 to earn LSC Freshman of the Year honors. She added to her accomplishments as a sophomore with a school-record 11 shutouts and 1.28 ERA prior to pitching the first perfect game in MSU history in a win at Southwestern Oklahoma on March 3, 2009. A second perfect game followed earlier this season, in a 1-0 win over Western New Mexico on February 19, which set the stage for what may prove to be the best season ever in Mustang annals.

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**Tara Mickelson, 3b/c, Metro State:** The Roadrunners won the Rocky Mountain Athletic Conference regular season crown this spring by putting together one of the best seasons in league history. Metro State was averaging more than eight runs per game and reeled off an eight-game winning streak in mid-April by outscoring the competition 89-7. One of the keys to the Roadrunners' success was the play of Mickelson in the middle of the lineup. The 2009 first-team All-American paced her squad with 13 home runs, 45 RBI and 82 total bases while hitting at a .385 clip. Her average of .38 home runs per game ranked seventh in the nation, while her .865 slugging percentage and average of 1.29 RBI per outing placed 11th in the country. Mickelson was named the RMAC Player of the Week on April 6 after she guided the Roadrunners to three wins in four tries at Colorado Mines. During the series she went 7-for-12 with four runs scored, three doubles and two walks despite facing the RMAC's ERA leader. Prior to her arrival at Metro State, Mickelson played two seasons at Division I Indiana University-Purdue University-Fort Wayne, where she earned first-team All-Summit League honors in 2008.

**Alyssa Shirey, c, Valdosta State:** Leave it to Shirey to make the most of Senior Day. On April 17, the Blazers' catcher hit three home runs while going 4-for-5 with six RBI and three runs scored during a double-header sweep over West Georgia. Shirey has made big days a big part of her career. Earlier this season she hit .417 during the first week of April and posted a .500 on-base percentage to earn Gulf South Conference Player of the Week honors. Proving to be a bit of a showman, against North Alabama on March 21, Shirey came to the plate with two outs and two runners on base. After hitting a long foul, Shirey asked the crowd for cheers, and then hit a three-run bomb to claim the lead and guide the Blazers to a come-from-behind victory and a doubleheader sweep. The



Katie Petersen



Tara Mickelson



Alyssa Shirey



**Leslee Smith**

photo credit David Beall

Fairmont City, Pennsylvania, native has led the Blazers this season in the Triple Crown categories with a .415 batting average, 17 home runs and 48 RBI. She also has topped the team with an .862 slugging percentage and an on-base percentage of .497.



**Kelsey Thompson**

**Leslee Smith, 1b, North Georgia:** The Saints improved their 2010 record to 45-0 by winning their second straight Peach Belt Conference tournament after repeating as the league's regular-season champion. The nation's top-ranked D-II team has been led by Smith, who earned first-team All-PBC honors for the third time in her career. The infielder paced the Saints with 11 home runs, 51 RBI, 12 doubles, a .723 slugging percentage and 94 total bases. Three times this season she drove in at least four runs in a game, including a grand slam against UNC Pembroke on March 7 and a pair of two-home run performances, versus Francis Marion and Columbus State. Smith earned PBC Player of the Week recognition during the slate while finishing the regular season ranked third in the conference in RBI. The Saints lived up to the hype in 2009 and have done the same thing thus far in 2010. If North Georgia is to bring the national championship home to Dahlonega this spring after finishing third in the nation last year, Smith will be a big reason why.

**Christie Softy, ss, C.W. Post:** One of the collegiate ranks' top sluggers, Softy is making the most of her final campaign in Cape Cod. On April 20, she blasted a walk-off grand slam to left-center in the bottom of the sixth to cap a 3-for-4 performance with six RBI and a doubleheader sweep over NYIT. Earlier in April, on the 13th, she was recognized as the East Coast Conference Player of the Week after going 9-for-21 with nine RBI and seven runs scored. Softy also reached the pinnacle in the Pioneers' all-time charts when she broke the school record in a game against Molloy with her 35th career home run and then established the RBI mark versus Mercy by driving in her 170th run. C.W. Post entered the final week of April with an impressive 33-9 record, with Softy pacing the Pioneers with 10 home runs, 48 RBI and a .684 slugging percentage.

**Kelsey Thompson, c, Minnesota State:** Thompson started to dominate once play in the Northern Sun Conference began. The hard-hitting catcher paced the Mavericks in doubleheader sweeps over Minnesota-Duluth, Bemidji State and Wayne State by hitting .421 with three home runs, three doubles and eight RBI in the six contests. Her performance helped Minnesota State climb to third in the Central Region rankings, with Thompson leading the team in batting average (.442), hits (38), doubles (8), home runs (5), RBI (27), slugging percentage (.709) and on-base percentage (.534). After playing her first two collegiate campaigns at St. Cloud State, Thompson was named an All-America Scholar-Athlete by the NFCA while sitting out the 2008 season. She received the honor a second time in 2009 while posting 13 multi-hit games and tying the Maverick single-season mark with 13 home runs. More accolades are likely headed her way by the time her senior slate comes to a close.



**Christie Softy**

photo credit Joe Rogate