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Comets Soccer Duo Win Pair of Conference Pre-Season Honors; UTD Picked 2nd In Polls

RICHARDSON, TX (August 18, 2005) - University of Texas at Dallas women's soccer players **Natalie Taylor** and **Kelli Jackson** have been named the American Southwest Conference Pre-Season Offensive and Defensive Players of the Year, in polling of the conference's coaches.

In addition, both the UTD men's and women's soccer teams were tabbed to finish second in the upcoming 2005 conference race. **The University of Texas-Tyler** was selected as the pre-season favorite in the men's chase over UTD, which actually garnered more first-place votes from the coaches. In the women's race, perennial powerhouse **Hardin-Simmons University** was predicted to repeat, though the Cowgirls edged UTD in the voting by just 10 points.

Taylor, a senior from Midland, TX (Lee HS) was the 2004 ASC Offensive Player of the Year after setting several school records last season, including scoring 22 goals and recording 52 points. Both numbers earned Taylor a spot among the nation's Top 25 in both categories.

Jackson, a sophomore from Tulsa, OK (Union HS), was the ASC Defensive Freshman of the Year last season after the Comets recorded 13 shutout victories and surrendered just nine goals over their 21-game season. Both players were first-team All-ASC last season.

The ASC men's pre-season favorite, University of Texas-Tyler, finished 13-3-0 last season and was 10-3-0 in conference. The Patriots picked up 220 points in the voting, including four first-place votes. UT-Dallas, the defending ASC champions (15-5-2, 11-0-2), were second with 184 points, although the team picked up six first-place ballots.

UT-Tyler will be in its third year of provisional membership in the NCAA Division III and is again not eligible to compete for the conference title. Games with UT-Tyler, however, do count as conference games.

On the women's side, UTD (16-3-2, 11-1-1) trailed Hardin-Simmons (19-2-1, 13-0-0) by just 10 points (191-181) in the voting, but HSU had 11 first-place votes while the Comets picked up just two. The Comets and HSU tied for the conference championship last season, playing to a 1-1 tie in a double-overtime championship game before the Cowgirls advanced with a penalty-kick shootout victory, 3-2.

Below are the final results of the ASC Pre-Season Soccer Polls (first-place votes in parenthesis):

MEN'S SOCCER	Pts.	WOMEN'S SOCCER	Pts.
1. Texas-Tyler (4)	220	1. Hardin-Simmons (11)	191
2. Texas-Dallas (6)	184	2. Texas-Dallas (2)	181
3. McMurry (1)	156	3. Texas Lutheran	161
4. Hardin-Simmons (1)	153	4. Mississippi College	142
5. Austin College	146	4. Texas-Tyler	142
6. University of the Ozarks (1)	121	6. East Texas Baptist	128
7. Schreiner	106	7. Austin College (1)	104
8. Mississippi College	99	8. Mary Hardin-Baylor	91
9. Texas Lutheran	95	9. University of the Ozarks	75
10. LeTourneau	65	10. LeTourneau	73
11. East Texas Baptist	60	11. McMurry	57
12. Mary Hardin-Baylor	59	12. Concordia-Austin	42
13. Louisiana College	24	13. Schreiner	37
14. Concordia-Austin	22	14. Louisiana College	21