



# Northwest-Shoals

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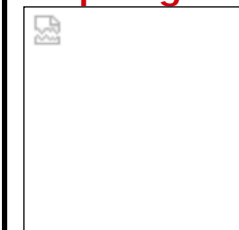
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**Warrick Mastin**  
**BASKETBALL MEN**

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### NORTHWEST-SHOALS BASEBALL ARTICLE

## Northwest-Shoals 2007 Preview

Northwest-Shoals  
2-7-07

2007

### SEASON PREVIEW

Northwest-Shoals is coming off its first Northern Division Championship in over ten years and has several key players back from last year's team. However, the Patriots did lose All Region players Justin McClanahan and Eric Moore. McClanahan and Moore broke several offensive records including McClanahan's 25 career homeruns and Moore's 79 career stolen bases. Several talented returning players and a great group of freshmen hope to break some records of their own and more importantly help the Patriots make their first trip to Grand Junction, Colorado for the NJCAA World Series.

The Patriots have twelve sophomores on the roster including three pitchers and nine position players. These sophomores include right-handed pitchers Andrew Dickinson & Chris Russell, both of whom have signed with Troy University and lefty Mason Terry, who signed with UNA. Position players include first baseman Thomas Morrison, who signed with Columbus State, and shortstop Shawn Diehl. Two guys have transferred in including Zac Kennedy, a UAB commitment and Max Rhodes. Returning outfielders include Jacote Ward, Jamie Drinkard and Jordan Ingram. Catcher, Brian McCormick and middle infielder Brad Isbell both return after taking medical red shirts last year. These young men will take the lead, as the Patriots get ready for another successful year.

### Pitching:

The Patriots return 3 Conference starters from last year including Chris Russell, Andrew Dickinson and Mason Terry. These three guys should anchor a very talented pitching staff. The Patriots also have seven very talented freshmen that will be counted on to carry a significant load if the Patriots hope to have the same success that they are accustomed to having. Travis Stewart, Brett Foskey, Jake Quigg and Shawn Herring could all see time in the conference rotation and Matt Fowler, Joel Sessions and Neal Brown will play major roles out of the bullpen. The development of this group will be important to the success of the Patriots this year.

### Infield:

The Patriots will once again need to be very strong defensively to assist a very talented pitching staff. However, they will have to rely on mostly newcomers on the infield this spring. Shortstop, Shawn Diehl is the only returning player on the infield from last year's team. There are several capable players at each position, including UAB transfer Zac Kennedy at second base, along with freshman Mike Austin and red shirt sophomore Brad Isbell. Third base also has several capable players including freshmen Seth Knight, Jake Quigg and mid-year transfer Max Rhodes. Last year's DH Thomas Morrison will take over the everyday duties at first base and will be assisted by freshman Travis Stewart. There is depth at each position and it will be interesting to see how this group develops over the next couple of months.

### Outfield:

Three sophomores return from last year including, Jacote Ward (All Conference), Jamie Drinkard & Jordan Ingram. Ward will start in right field and will be joined by red shirt freshman Philip Zirbes. Both guys possess very strong arms and are very good defenders on the corner. Drinkard has moved to centerfield and will be joined by red shirt freshman Ronny Abernathy. Ingram will battle for time in left field along with freshmen Matt Fowler & Shawn Herring. Several guys are still battling for playing time in the outfield. Offense will be the deciding factor in determining playing time over the next couple of months. The Patriots should once again have a good mix of power and speed roaming the outfield at Patriot Park

Catcher:

The Patriots were down to one catcher at the end of the fall. Fortunately the Patriots now have 3 solid guys that will rotate behind the dish. Red shirt sophomore Brian McCormick is the front-runner to handle most of the load. McCormick does a great job of handling the pitching staff and will provide the Patriots with another solid bat in the middle of the line-up. Freshman, Clint Isbell has been moved from third base to behind the plate and is making improvements everyday. Mid year transfer, Matt Lyle will provide the Patriots will a solid back up and posses a very strong throwing arm.

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