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Authors	Gardiner, Jay
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For Information, Contact:

Jay Gardiner, Interim Commissioner

404.364.8414 or jgardiner@oglethorpe.edu

Eight Division III Southeastern Colleges Form Southern Athletic Association

(ATLANTA) – Eight Division III southeastern colleges have joined together to form a new athletic conference beginning with the 2012-13 season. The new conference will be named the Southern Athletic Association (SAA).

Spanning six states, the Southern Athletic Association includes Birmingham-Southern College in Alabama, Centre College in Kentucky, Hendrix College in Arkansas, Millsaps College in Mississippi, Oglethorpe University and Berry College in Georgia, and Rhodes College and Sewanee: The University of the South in Tennessee.

The Southern Athletic Association is committed to fostering athletic competition and cooperation among academically selective, residential liberal arts colleges located in the southeastern region of the United States. The geographic focus will result in reduced travel time and fewer missed classes, while still allowing for a strong conference of like-minded institutions, all of which integrate competitive athletics into the whole of the student's educational experience.

Jay Gardiner, athletics director at Oglethorpe, will serve as the Southern Athletic Association interim commissioner. Oglethorpe president Lawrence Schall will serve as convener of the conference's Presidential Council during the 2011-12 academic year while Brian Chafin, athletics director at Centre, will serve as convener of the Athletics Director Council in 2011-12.

