

Louisville junior righthander Jeff Thompson was honored as BIG EAST Conference Pitcher of the Year while a school record-tying 10 Cardinals earned All-BIG EAST accolades during Tuesday night's BIG EAST baseball awards ceremony at the Sheraton Sand Key Resort.

A First Team All-BIG EAST honoree, Thompson (Greenville, Ind./Floyd Central HS) was 10-1 with a 2.09 ERA and 97 strikeouts in 14 starts and 90.1 innings pitched this season. The conference leader in wins and strikeouts, Thompson has won each of his last four starts and ranks third in the league in ERA while opposing batters are hitting just .174 against him. The 10 wins rank second on the Cardinals' single season leaderboard, while his 97 strikeouts are the fifth most by a Louisville pitcher in a season. Thompson is the fifth Louisville player to be named BIG EAST Pitcher of the Year in the last seven seasons joining Justin Amlung (2012), Thomas Royse (2010), Justin Marks (2009) and Zack Pitts (2007).

Joining Thompson as First Team All-BIG EAST selections were junior designated hitter Jeff Gardner and sophomore righty closer Nick Burdi. The Cardinals, who equaled last year's record-setting 10 All-BIG EAST selections, had four players named Second Team All-BIG EAST on Tuesday -- junior righthanded pitcher Chad Green, junior outfielder Coco Johnson, sophomore shortstop Sutton Whiting and junior third baseman Ty Young. Earning Third Team All-BIG EAST honors from Louisville were senior second baseman Nick Ratajczak and junior outfielders Adam Engel and Cole Sturgeon.

Gardner (Louisville, Ky./Whitefield Academy), a Second Team All-BIG EAST selection last season, led the Cardinals with nine home runs while hitting .341 with 40 RBI, 11 doubles and a .659 slugging percentage. Burdi (Downers Grove, Ill./Downers Grove South HS) led the BIG EAST with 14 saves to go with a 3-2 record and had 55 strikeouts while allowing just two earned runs in 28.1 innings for a miniscule 0.64 ERA.

Green (Effingham, Ill./Effingham HS, who teamed with Thompson to give Louisville the league's best starting duo, was 9-2 with a 1.63 ERA and 63 strikeouts in 14 starts and 88.1 innings pitched. Johnson (Benton Harbor, Mich./Central Arizona) hit .331 with six home runs, 43 RBI, 10 doubles and 20 stolen bases as the Cardinals' everyday leftfielder. In his first season as the Cardinals' starting shortstop, Whiting (New Wilmington, Pa./Louisville Ballard HS) hit .320 with one home run, 28 RBI and 21 stolen bases. Young (Coatesville, Pa./Malvern Prep) a two-time All-BIG EAST selection, was Louisville's top overall hitter with a .372 average to go with four home runs, 55 RBI, 13 doubles, seven triples, 49 runs scored and 26 stolen bases.

Ratajczak (Joliet, Ill./Gulf Coast CC), a two-time All-BIG EAST honoree who has started 119 straight games at second base, hit .281 with two home runs, 28 RBI, 26 walks and 18 HBPs while ranking as the nation's toughest player to strikeout with only eight in 217 at-bats. Engel (Cincinnati, Ohio/Loveland HS), another two-time conference player, led the BIG EAST and ranked third in the nation in stolen bases with 39 while hitting .242 with 28 walks, 17 HBPs, 23 RBI and 47 runs scored while starting every game in centerfield. Sturgeon (Owensboro, Ky./Owensboro Catholic HS), also a two-time All-BIG EAST selection, hit .339 with a home run, 32 RBI, 18 walks and 12 stolen bases as Louisville's everyday rightfielder.

