



PRESS RELEASE

## Purdue's Valek Named Frances Pomeroy Naismith Award Recipient

Atlanta, Ga. (March 18, 2004) -- The Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame announced that Erika Valek of Purdue University has been selected as the recipient of the Frances Pomeroy Naismith Award. The award is presented to the nation's most outstanding NCAA Division I female basketball player standing at 5'8" or under that excels in both athletics and academics.

Erika Valek is a 5'6" senior guard with the Big Ten Tournament Champion Purdue Boilermakers. She leads the team with 125 assists, 58 steals and is third in scoring, averaging 8.5 points per game. Valek has started every game in her career at Purdue and is the all-time leader in games started (128) and was named to this season's All-Big Ten Team. The Boilermakers are a No. 2 seed in the NCAA tournament and will begin play in the West Region on Sunday, March 21 at approximately 9:30 p.m. EST.

Valek will also participate as a member of the WBCA College All-Star Challenge Team, as part of the "WBCA Night of All-Stars" on Saturday, April 3 at Tulane University's Fogelman Arena. This year's senior college all-star team will take on USA Basketball Women's Senior National Team.

Valek will be presented her award on Sunday, April 4 at the State Farm Wade Trophy and State Farm/WBCA Players of the Year Luncheon presented by Jostens. The luncheon is a part of the WBCA National Convention which is held annually in conjunction with the Women's Final Four. The luncheon will be held at the Ernest N. Morial Convention Center in New Orleans.

The Frances Pomeroy Naismith Award is named in honor of James Naismith's daughter-in-law. A panel of representatives from the Women's Basketball Coaches Association (WBCA) selects the recipient. To earn the award, the recipient must demonstrate leadership, character, loyalty, all-around basketball ability and excellence in the classroom.

Founded in 1981, the WBCA promotes women's basketball by unifying coaches at all levels to develop a reputable identity for the sport and to foster and promote the development of the game in all of its aspects as an amateur sport or women and girls. For more information about the WBCA, please visit [WBCA.org](http://WBCA.org).

Previous Winners of the Frances Pomeroy Naismith Award

1984 Kim Mulkey, Louisiana Tech  
1985 Maria Stack, Gonzaga

1986 Kamie Ethridge, Texas  
1987 Rhonda Windham, Southern California  
1988 Suzie McConnell, Penn State  
1989 Paulette Backstrom, Bowling Green  
1990 Julie Dabrowski, New Hampshire College  
1991 Shanya Evans, Providence College  
1992 Rosemary Kisorek, West Virginia  
1993 Dena Evans, Virginia  
1994 Nicole Levesque, Wake Forest  
1995 Amy Dodrill, Johns Hopkins  
1996 Jennifer Rizzotti, University of Connecticut  
1997 Jennifer Howard, North Carolina State  
1998 Angie Arnold, Johns Hopkins  
1999 Becky Hammon, Colorado State  
2000 Helen Darling, Penn State  
2001 Niele Ivey, Notre Dame  
2002 Shelia Lambert, Baylor  
2003 Kara Lawson, Tennessee