



PRESS RELEASE

## WBCA to Present Val Ackerman with President's Award at National Convention

ATLANTA, Ga. (March 22, 2005) -- The Women's Basketball Coaches Association (WBCA) has selected former WNBA President and newly elected President of USA Basketball, Val Ackerman as the recipient of the WBCA President's Award. This distinguished award is presented and chosen by the active president of the WBCA to an individual who has given a tireless commitment to the development of women's basketball.

"There are many individuals who have contributed to the advancement of women's basketball, and Val has been at the very forefront in the new millennium," said Wendy Larry, WBCA President and Old Dominion University head women's basketball coach. "She has given unselfishly to the sport and it is my privilege to honor her with this award."

"Val has been an extraordinary ambassador of our sport," said WBCA CEO Beth Bass. "She has been extremely instrumental in the evolution of the women's professional game here in the United States. Wendy has chosen an outstanding candidate for this award."

Val Ackerman, founding President of the Women's National Basketball Association (WNBA), was recently elected President of USA Basketball for the 2005–2008 quadrennium by the USA Basketball Board of Directors. Ackerman is the first female President of USA Basketball.

Following eight historic seasons as President of the Women's National Basketball Association, Ackerman stepped down from her position February 1, 2005.

Named WNBA President on August 7, 1996, Ackerman presided over the first WNBA game on June 21, 1997 when the league debuted with eight teams. The launch of the WNBA earned Ackerman accolades across the sports landscape and the league has since averaged more than 9,300 fans per game over the course of its eight seasons. The league currently has 13 teams with games televised nationally on the ABC, ESPN2 and Oxygen networks. The WNBA benefits from a strong roster of 17 marketing partners developed during Ackerman's tenure, including Procter & Gamble, Coca-Cola, Anheuser-Busch, American Express, General Motors and Gatorade.

Ackerman will be formally presented at the 2005 RUSSELL ATHLETIC/WBCA National Coach of the Year Luncheon on Tuesday, April 5 at the Indianapolis Marriott Downtown. The luncheon is part of the 2005 WBCA National Convention, held in conjunction with the NCAA Division I Women's Final Four in Indianapolis, Indiana.

Among the past recipients of this award include Betty Jaynes (WBCA), John LaBadd (Sears), Carol Stiff (ESPN) and Robin Roberts (ABC News).