



PRESS RELEASE

## WBCA Announces Finalists for the 2012 RUSSELL ATHLETIC/WBCA Division I Coach of the Year

ATLANTA (March 22, 2012) – Muffet McGraw of Notre Dame, Brenda Frese of Maryland, Tom Collen of Arkansas, Curt Miller of Bowling Green, Kim Mulkey of Baylor, Coquese Washington of Penn State, Reagan Pebley of Utah State and Tara VanDerveer of Stanford are the 2012 RUSSELL ATHLETIC/WBCA National Collegiate Athletic Association Division I Regional Coaches of the Year, the Women's Basketball Coaches Association announced today.

The regional honorees – McGraw (region 1), Frese (region 2), Collen (region 3), Miller (region 4), Mulkey (region 5), Washington (region 6), Pebley (region 7), VanDerveer (region 8) – are finalists for the 2012 RUSSELL ATHLETIC/WBCA Division I National Coach of the Year award. The winner will be announced during the second annual WBCA Awards Show on Monday, April 2, in Denver. This event is part of the WBCA National Convention and is held in conjunction with the NCAA® Women's Final Four®.

"The WBCA congratulates these eight coaches on being named finalists for this year's Division I Coach of the Year award," said WBCA CEO Beth Bass. "Each coach was selected by their peers and is deserving of this honor for their terrific seasons. On behalf of the WBCA and its members, I wish all five of these finalists the best of luck at the WBCA Awards Show in Denver."

"Russell Athletic believes in the 'Power of Team' and no team can be successful without a powerful leader," said RUSSELL ATHLETIC Executive Vice President Gary Barfield. "Russell Athletic is pleased to honor the coaches nominated for National Coach of the Year and applaud their successes."

McGraw has led her Notre Dame Fighting Irish (32–3) to the Sweet Sixteen following a record-setting regular season. The veteran head coach – in her 25th year with the program – guided her team to a BIG EAST Conference regular season title and runner-up finish in the conference tournament. McGraw is also a finalist for the Naismith National Coach of the Year.

Frese, in her 10th season as head coach at Maryland, is taking her squad to the Sweet Sixteen for the fourth time in her career. Her ninth consecutive 20-win team boasts a 30–4 record and an ACC Championship title. This season, Frese collected her 300th career victory.

Collen's Arkansas Razorbacks posted a program-best SEC regular-season record (10–6) and tied for fourth place in the conference standings. Adding to their list of "firsts," Collen's team landed an at-large bid to the NCAA Tournament for the first time

during his five-year tenure as head coach of the team.

Miller earned Mid-American Coach of the Year honors for the sixth time – the most of any MAC coach – in his 11 years at Bowling Green. Miller's squad earned a regular-season title in the MAC and collected a 24–7 overall record after its trip to the Women's National Invitation Tournament.

Mulkey, in her 12th year as head coach of the Baylor Lady Bears, has guided her team to a perfect 36–0 record, Big 12 championship and Sweet Sixteen berth. The Big 12 Coach of the Year's squad earned a No. 1–overall seed in the NCAA Tournament for the first time in program history. Mulkey is also a finalist for the Naismith Coach of the Year award.

Washington's Penn State Lady Lions earned a regular-season Big Ten title, while she nabbed the conference's Coach of the Year honor. Also named to the United States Basketball Writers Association (USBWA) Coach of the Year watch list, Washington led her squad to its second-straight NCAA tournament appearance where they have advanced to the regional semifinals for the first time in her five years with the program and first time since 2004.

Pebley guided her Utah State Aggies to a school-record 21–10 record, marking the first time the program has surpassed the 20-win benchmark. The ninth-year head coach took her team to the Women's National Invitation Tournament (WNIT) for the second consecutive year, following a semifinals appearance in the Western Athletic Conference Tournament.

VanDerveer – a finalist for the 2012 Naismith Women's College Coach of the Year award – and her Stanford Cardinal boast a 33–1 overall record and spot in the Fresno Regional Semifinals. The 33-year veteran head coach has taken her team to 25 consecutive NCAA Tournaments. After winning the Pac-12 regular season and conference tournament titles, VanDerveer was honored as the Pac-12 Coach of the Year.

RUSSELL ATHLETIC and the WBCA present the national coach of the year award annually in each of the five WBCA membership divisions (NCAA Divisions I, II and III; NAIA; junior/community college and high school). This is the 30th year of this honor, which has been selected by the WBCA since 1983.

#### About RUSSELL ATHLETIC:

For more than 100 years, Russell Athletic, a division of Russell Brands, LLC, has supplied America's athletes and teams with the latest innovations to help them perform at their best and is a leading supplier of team uniforms at the high school, college, and professional level. Russell Athletic activewear and college licensed products are broadly distributed and marketed through department stores, sports specialty stores, retail chains, and college bookstores. For more information, please visit [www.russellathletic.com](http://www.russellathletic.com). Russell Athletic® is a trademark of Russell Brands, LLC. Russell Athletic, Proven on the Field of Play

#### About the WBCA:

Founded in 1981, the Women's Basketball Coaches Association 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 as a sport for women and girls. The WBCA is pleased to join the women's sports community in commemorating the 40th anniversary of Title IX, which was passed by Congress on June 23, 1972, and provides females with equal opportunities in athletics in the U.S. For more information on the WBCA, please visit [wbca.org](http://wbca.org).