



PRESS RELEASE

## RUSSELL ATHLETIC/WBCA Divisional National Coaches of the Year Announced

DENVER (April 2, 2012) – Baylor University head coach Kim Mulkey is the 2012 RUSSELL ATHLETIC/WBCA NCAA Division I National Coach of the Year, the Women's Basketball Coaches Association (WBCA) announced tonight during the second annual WBCA Awards Show.

The WBCA also announced the RUSSELL ATHLETIC/WBCA National Coaches of the Year in other collegiate divisions. Sue Ramsey of Ashland University was named NCAA Division II national coach of the year, Mia Smith of Illinois Wesleyan University was named NCAA Division III national coach of the year, Steve Brooks of Indiana Wesleyan University was named NAIA national coach of the year, and B.J. Smith of Highland Community College was named junior/community college national coach of the year.

"The WBCA congratulates Kim Mulkey on being named the 2012 RUSSELL ATHLETIC/WBCA NCAA Division I National Coach of the Year," said WBCA CEO Beth Bass. "She was selected by her peers and is deserving of this honor after a terrific season. On behalf of the WBCA and its members, I want to say thank you for being a great leader for our student-athletes, Kim!"

"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 named Coach of the Year and applaud their successes."

Mulkey, in her 12th year as head coach of the Baylor Lady Bears, has guided her team to a perfect 39-0 record, Big 12 championship and ninth straight NCAA tournament 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 will look to lead her team to an NCAA Championship and perfect 40-0 season Tuesday (April 4.) Should the Lady Bears find success in the championship game, Mulkey's team will become the first in NCAA Division I women's basketball history to reach a 40-0 record.

Ramsey's Ashland Eagles won the GLIAC championship, becoming the first basketball team in school history to reach the achievement. The 2012 WBCA Carol Eckman Award winner and GLIAC Coach of the year recipient led her team to a perfect regular-season record and the NCAA Division II National Championship Game. The 17-year head coach and her team recorded a 33-game winning streak – the longest of any athletic program in Ashland history.

Smith finished her 14th year as head coach of the Illinois Wesleyan Titans in

prestigious fashion, earning four coach of the year honors – RUSSELL ATHLETIC/WBCA NCAA DIII, Schelde North America/Women's DIII News, D3hoops.com Central Region and College Conference of Illinois and Wisconsin (CCIW). A deserving recipient of recognition, Smith led her team to a national championship title – the first in the program's history – and a 28–5 overall record.

Brooks coached Indiana Wesleyan to a second straight Mid-Central College Conference championship and No.4 ranking in NAIA Division II. The Wildcats advanced to the quarterfinals of the national tournament and finished with a 33–3 overall record.

Smith finished his first season as head coach at Highland Community College with a 28–4 record and NJCAA Division II District B finals appearance. The Scotties not only enjoyed their most successful season in history – cracking the top 10 national rankings – but also their first winning season since 1984 and a second–place finish in the Jayhawk East Conference.

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 marks the 30th year the awards have been given in the junior/community college and NCAA divisions, while the WBCA has honored an NAIA coach of the year for 28 years.

#### About RUSSELL ATHLETIC:

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#### 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).