



PRESS RELEASE

## WBCA Responds to Announcement of Tennessee Head Coach Pat Summitt's Diagnosis

CEO Beth Bass:

"Pat Summitt's name is synonymous with women's basketball, and the WBCA family is saddened by the news of her diagnosis. I use the term 'family' in the most sincere way, because even though the women's basketball coaching community may seem dysfunctional at times, we are a family and take care of our own. Regardless of our differences, we always come together, rally around and support each other in moments like these.

"Pat is a fierce competitor. Her decision to make this diagnosis public is a testament to her courage. She will face this challenge with the same tenacity and fortitude that makes her a champion. Because of this we are confident Pat will continue to be a formidable presence in women's basketball, a game she has played such a crucial role in growing, for many years to come.

"The thoughts and prayers of the WBCA family are with Pat Summitt and the entire Lady Vols nation."

WBCA President and Arizona State head coach Charli Turner Thorne:

"We ask that you extend your support to the Lady Volunteer Coaching staff during this difficult time. We encourage everybody to do their part to be respectful of Pat's health. While many of us are competitors on the court, we are all part of a big family that has always had a tradition of 'rallying around' our own. Well, put on your 'rally hat' and let's be supportive and positive towards a coach who has paved the road for so many of us!"

WBCA Past-President and Connecticut head coach Geno Auriemma:

"I was shocked and saddened to hear about the news regarding Pat Summitt's diagnosis. You don't necessarily associate dementia with people our age so this announcement really put things in perspective. Pat has great support from her family, friends and staff and I know they will help her immensely. There is no doubt in my mind that Pat will take on this challenge as she has all others during her Hall of Fame career – head on. I wish her all the best."

WBCA Past-President and Oklahoma head coach Sherri Coale:

"I think it's important to remember that while Pat is a basketball coach, the architect

of one of the most storied programs in the history of our sport, she is also a mother, and she's a daughter, and she's a friend. She's a person who life is happening to. It takes great, great courage to fight health issues; it takes even greater courage to fight them in front of the world. Pat's willingness to share this private battle speaks volumes about her strength and her character. She's modeled tenacity and endurance and optimism and faith for generations of athletes on the court. I know those athletes, we coaches, women's basketball fans, and sports fans in general will join in returning those gifts to her during this time of need. "

WBCA Past-President and DePaul head coach Doug Bruno:

"Coach Summitt has set the standard for all the coaches in our sport. We, all of us, try to build our programs to a level so that we can compete with the Lady Vols. When you play and try to beat Tennessee you demonstrate your respect for the excellence and competitiveness that Pat Head Summitt has built at Tennessee and for the sport of women's basketball. Coach Summitt is one of the ultimate competitors in the history of sport. We all wish her the best as she faces the challenge."

WBCA Consultant and Co-Founder Betty Jaynes:

"Pat is a close, personal friend who I have known for 35 years, and I am extremely distressed by the news of her diagnosis. Pat was in the room when we founded the Women's Basketball Coaches Association, and has been a steadfast supporter of the WBCA. She, and others like her, are the foundation upon which this organization and the sport of women's basketball are built. Pat has supported our profession throughout the years. Now it's our turn to support her as she faces this personal challenge. I hope Pat knows how many coaches and friends love her, and we will always have her in our thoughts and prayers."

WBCA CEO Beth Bass and consultant Betty Jaynes are available for additional comment by contacting Jack Watford, Director of Communications, at (770) 279-8027 ext. 112.