



PRESS RELEASE

WBCA honors University of Oklahoma's Jan Ross with Carol Eckman Award

ATLANTA (February 27, 2013) – Jan Ross, assistant coach at the University of Oklahoma, is the winner of the 2013 Carol Eckman Award, the Women's Basketball Coaches Association (WBCA) announced today.

The Carol Eckman Award is presented annually to an active WBCA member coach who exemplifies Eckman's spirit, integrity and character through sportsmanship, commitment to the student-athlete, honesty, ethical behavior, courage and dedication to purpose. The award is named in honor of the late Carol Eckman, the former West Chester State College coach, who is considered the "Mother of the Women's Collegiate Basketball Championship." Eckman organized the first women's basketball championship at West Chester in 1969 and continued to garner recognition and support for the women's game until her death from cancer in 1985.

"Congratulations to Jan on being selected as the Carol Eckman Award recipient," said WBCA CEO Beth Bass. "Your commitment to women's basketball has been exceptional and you have done an astounding job in encouraging young women to have a deeper appreciation for the game."

Ross is currently in her 17th season as an assistant coach on the Oklahoma basketball staff. She has assisted in helping the Sooners win six Big 12 Conference regular-season titles, four Big 12 postseason championships and advance to 12 consecutive NCAA Tournaments, including the 2002 National Championship game and back-to-back national semifinal games in 2009 and 2010.

Ross' area of emphasis as an assistant coach includes coaching the Sooners frontcourt, recruiting and scouting opponents. She has played a huge role in the academic progress of the student-athletes and has helped Oklahoma post a team grade point average of 3.0 or better for 26 of the 32 semesters she has been with the program. The women's basketball program has produced 87 Academic All-Big 12 selections in 16 seasons and has had four student-athletes earn Academic All-America first team honors.

Ross began her coaching career at her alma mater, Oklahoma Christian University, where she served as assistant coach for five years. Following her time at OCU she became a head coach at Del City (Okla.) High School from 1991-95.

The Chickasha, Okla., native graduated from Oklahoma Christian University with a

bachelor's degree in mathematics and from the University of Oklahoma with a master's degree in sports administration. She still owns the Oklahoma Christian University school record for career steals (300) and was inducted into the OCU Athletic Hall of Fame in 2003.

Ross was diagnosed with cancer in April 2012. Throughout her fight with the disease, she kept as normal a life as possible, hardly taking any time off from work. She also purchased a pink ladder and planned to use it as a motivational symbol for her team, having each player write a six-word saying on the ladder that summarized the player's journey as an athlete. In her most recent checkup she was determined to be cancer free.

Oklahoma currently sits in a tie for third in the Big 12 Conference standings with a 9-7 record, while they are 19-9 overall.

Ross will be formally recognized during the third annual WBCA Awards Show, which will be held at 5 p.m. CT Monday, April 8, in the Ernest N. Morial Convention Center's New Orleans Theater. This event is part of the WBCA National Convention and is held in conjunction with the NCAA® Women's Final Four® in New Orleans.

Now in its 27th year, the Carol Eckman Award has recognized the following individuals in women's basketball: Sue Ramsey, Ashland University (2012), Joanne Boyle, University of California (2011); Kevin Cook, Gallaudet University (2010); Muffet McGraw, Notre Dame University (2009); Doug Bruno, DePaul University (2008); Theresa Grentz, University of Illinois (2007); Gail Goestenkors, Duke University (2006); Bonnie Henrickson, University of Kansas (2005); Deirdre Kane, West Chester University (2004); Marsha Sharp, Texas Tech University (2003); Barbara Stevens, Bentley College (2002); Juliene Simpson, East Stroudsburg University (2001); Kathy Delaney-Smith, Harvard University (2000); Susan Summons, Miami-Dade (Fla.) Community College (1999); Kay James, University of Southern Mississippi (1998); Amy Ruley, North Dakota State University (1997); Dr. Joann Rutherford, University of Missouri (1996); Ceal Barry, University of Colorado (1995); the late Sue Gunter, Louisiana State University (1994); C. Vivian Stringer, University of Iowa (1993); Dr. Jill Hutchison, Illinois State University (1992); Marian Washington, University of Kansas (1991); Maryalyce Jeremiah, Cal State Fullerton (1990); Linda Hill-MacDonald, University of Minnesota (1989); the late Kay Yow, North Carolina State University (1988); Jody Conradt, University of Texas (1987), and Laura Mapp, Bridgewater College (1986).

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. For more information on the WBCA, please visit WBCA.org.