



PRESS RELEASE

Lisa Fortier named 2015 Spalding Maggie Dixon NCAA Division I Rookie Coach of the Year

TAMPA BAY, Florida (April 6, 2014) – Gonzaga University's Lisa Fortier is the 2015 recipient of the Spalding Maggie Dixon Division I Rookie Coach of the Year Award, the Women's Basketball Coaches Association (WBCA) announced tonight at the Fifth Annual WBCA Awards Show. This distinguished award honors a WBCA Division I head coach who has led his or her team to a successful season during his or her first year at the helm.

"Success in your first year as a head coach is incredibly challenging. Lisa Fortier's inaugural season as head coach at Gonzaga showcased what a talented coach and leader she is," said WBCA Executive Director Danielle Donehew. "We celebrate her efforts and effectiveness in quickly commanding all aspects of managing a program as well as positively mentoring her student-athletes. We look forward to following her teams for many years to come. The WBCA is also grateful to Lisa for her leadership and service off the basketball court as a member of the WBCA Board of Directors. Her efforts to enhance the coaching profession and grow the game of women's basketball are remarkable. We are pleased to present Lisa Fortier with the Maggie Dixon Rookie Coach of the Year award."

"Coach Fortier's stellar inaugural season at Gonzaga and her smooth transition at the helm of a Division I program represent what the award and Coach Dixon embody," said Paul Sullivan, Senior Vice President of Spalding, who sponsors the award. "Coach Fortier's hard work, passion for the game and successful coaching have rightly earned her the 2015 Spalding Maggie Dixon Division I Rookie Coach of the Year. Congratulations to Coach Fortier."

After spending the last seven years at Gonzaga University as an assistant coach, Fortier made an immediate impact upon being promoted as the program's head coach. In her first year at the helm of the program, the rookie coach guided Gonzaga to a 26-8 record and an appearance in the NCAA Sweet 16. A native of Grass Valley, Calif., Fortier oversaw one of the nation's more efficient offenses, including the fourth-best free-throw shooting team at 77.3 percent. The Bulldogs outscored opponents by 10.0 points per game.

Fortier first got into the coaching scene as a coordinator of basketball operations in 2004 for Gonzaga. After two years, Fortier coached for one year as an assistant coach at the University of Northern Colorado before returning to Gonzaga in 2007. Since Fortier rejoined the staff in 2007, Gonzaga has won eight-consecutive West Coast Conference regular-season titles and has amassed a 232-51 record (.820), including a 114-10 mark in conference play (.919).

The Maggie Dixon Rookie Coach of the Year Award is named in honor of the late Maggie Dixon, former Army head coach, whose success during her inaugural year at the Army helm was remarkable. The Black Knights won the Patriot League title in 2006 and Dixon was named the Patriot League Coach of the Year after leading Army to the NCAA Tournament for the first time at the NCAA Division I level. Coach Dixon passed away on April 6, 2006, just a few weeks following their appearance in the NCAA Tournament.

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About Spalding:

A division of Russell Brands, LLC, Spalding is the largest basketball equipment supplier in the world, and America's first baseball company. Spalding is the official basketball of the National Basketball Association (NBA) and Women's National Basketball Association (WNBA), the official backboard of the NBA and NCAA, and the official baseball of the Little League World Series. In addition to being a leading producer and marketer of basketballs, footballs, volleyballs and soccer balls, Spalding produces softballs under the Dudley brand. The SPALDING® and DUDLEY® trademarks are owned by Russell Brands, LLC. For more information, visit www.spalding.com.

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.