

MEDIA RELEASE

Saskatchewan's Finest Athletes, Volunteers, Officials and Coaches Honoured at the Saskatchewan Sport Awards

Saskatchewan's premier athletes, volunteers, coaches and officials were recognized tonight at the Saskatchewan Sport Awards in Saskatoon. Hosted by Sask Sport Inc., a federation of provincial sport governing bodies, the event featured the 2010 Athlete of the Year Awards, Volunteer Recognition Awards, Coaches Awards and Officials Awards.

In total, 57 nominations for the Athlete of the Year Awards were received. From these nominees, three finalists were selected for each of the six categories: master, youth-male, youth-female, male, female and team. The active and affiliate members of Sask Sport Inc. and the Saskatchewan sports media voted for the award recipients in each category. The results were compiled and audited by the accounting and auditing firm of The Virtus Group. The award recipients for 2010 Athlete of the Year Awards are:

Master Athlete of the Year: Hylke van der Wal, Dalmeny, Saskatchewan Athletics

Youth Male Athlete of the Year: Michael Qing, Regina, Swim Saskatchewan Inc., and Special Olympics Saskatchewan

Youth Female Athlete of the Year: Renae Barks, Regina, Saskatchewan Rowing Association

Male Athlete of the Year: Jordan Eberle, Regina, Saskatchewan Hockey Association

Female Athlete of the Year: Colette Bourgonje, Prince Albert, Saskatchewan Wheelchair Sports Association

Team of the Year: University of Saskatchewan Huskie Men's Basketball Team, Huskie Athletics

The Saskatchewan Sports Award also featured several other categories whose recipients were previously announced:

Coach of the Year Award: Dean McGarry, Lloydminster, Judo Saskatchewan

Coach Dedication Award – Male: Frank McCrystal, Regina, University of Regina

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Coach Dedication Award – Female: Brenda Bennett, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan Baton Twirling Association

Volunteer Recognition Awards:

Jennifer Ellarma, Kindersley, Special Olympics Saskatchewan

Thomas Victor Taylor, Warman, Judo Saskatchewan

Officials' Awards:

Arleen Day, Silton, Saskatchewan Curling Association.

Blake Lyons, Outlook, Saskatchewan Athletics.

Biographies of all the recipients, finalists and nominees can found at www.sasksport.sk.ca/SportAwards.

“I am very proud of all the individuals who have been recognized at these awards. Whether athlete, coach, official, or volunteer, they all demonstrate the level of excellence that can be achieved with dedication and hard work. These are qualities that are crucial to success in sport and in life,” said Audra Young, President of Sask Sport Inc.

Former NHL player and coach, motivator and philanthropist Ted Nolan was the guest speaker at the awards night. Nolan was born and raised on the Garden River First Nation Reserve, along with 11 brothers and sisters. He played hockey with the Soo Greyhounds in the Ontario Hockey League, and was drafted to the Detroit Red Wings in 1978. He played 79 games in the NHL with Detroit and Pittsburgh. He started his coaching career with the Soo Greyhounds, and by 1997 he had won NHL coach of the year with the Buffalo Sabres. In 2004, Nolan started the Ted Nolan Foundation which is dedicated to shaping first nation youth into Canada's future leaders.

The Saskatchewan Sports Awards are sponsored by Global TV, McMaster Photographers, Coaches Association of Saskatchewan and the Canadian Sport Centre Saskatchewan.

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For more information visit www.sasksport.sk.ca/SportAwards or contact Pat Rediger at (306) 780-9307 or email prediger@sasksport.sk.ca.

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