



PALM BEACH
SPORTS.COM

NEWS

PALM BEACH COUNTY SPORTS COMMISSION

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

February 10, 2011

Contact: Kimberly Whetsel, Director of Marketing

561-233-3122

kwhetsel@palmbeachsports.com

Palm Beach County Sports Commission Announces Finalists for 2011 Annual Sports Awards



WEST PALM BEACH, FL – The Palm Beach County Sports Commission announces 15 finalists for the 2011 Annual Sports Awards. The Annual Sports Awards include Amateur Athlete of the Year, Coach of the Year, High School Athlete of the Year, High School Coach of the Year, Professional Athlete of the Year and Outstanding Sports Contributor of the Year. The recipients of the Annual Sports Awards will be recognized at the 2011 Palm Beach County Sports Hall of Fame Banquet held at the Palm Beach County Convention Center on Sunday, March 27 beginning at 5:30pm.

Finalists for the 2011 Annual Sports Awards are:

Amateur Athlete of the Year

Matt Greener, Jupiter, Baseball—Matt Greener, a 2006 graduate of Jupiter High School, was a standout baseball player at Cumberland University in Lebanon, Tennessee. Matt was the NAIA Player of the Year and first team All-American. He led Cumberland to an NAIA World Series Championship. In addition to playing third base, Greener led the NAIA with 116 hits, 101 RBI and 225 total bases. He hit in 61 of 66 games. He compiled a .466 batting average along with 27 home runs and 26 doubles.

Lester Jean, Boca Raton, Football—Lester Jean, a senior wide receiver for Florida Atlantic University (FAU), led the Sunbelt Conference with an average of 82.3 receiving yards per game. During the season, he made 64 catches for 988 yards and 8 touchdowns. Over his career, Lester played in 50 games for FAU, totaling 146 receptions for 1,992 yards and 15 touchdowns.

Brooks Koepka, Wellington, Golf—Brooks Koepka played golf at Cardinal Newman High School before competing at Florida State University (FSU). Brooks was the Atlantic Coast Conference (ACC) Freshman of Year in 2009 and ACC Player of the Year in 2010, leading FSU to third in the NCAA Championship finals, which is the school's highest finish ever. He led the team with 22 of 25 rounds scored at 75 or better and second on the team with 11 of 25 rounds scored at par or better. He also led the team in stroke average during the spring season (averaged 72.28 strokes in 25 rounds in nine tournaments) Brooks received the Palm Beach County Annual Sports Award for High School Athlete of the Year in 2007.

Coach of the Year

Kimmy Bloemers, West Palm Beach, Palm Beach Atlantic Softball—Under fourth-year head coach Kimmy Bloemers, the Palm Beach Atlantic softball team set many individual and team records along the way to their historic season finish. Coach Bloemers led the Sailfish to the program's first-ever appearance in an NCAA postseason tournament, which was the first team in any sport at Palm Beach Atlantic to accomplish this goal. Her team finished the 2010 campaign with a record of 36 wins and 13 losses.

Kevin O'Sullivan, Jupiter, University of Florida Baseball—The graduate of Jupiter High School was selected as the Southeastern Conference (SEC) coach of the year after leading his University of Florida baseball team to the College World Series. O'Sullivan directed the Gators to a 47-17 overall record that featured a 22-8 SEC record, winning the university's 11th SEC title. The Gators claimed the first two Super Regional meetings with Miami, FL to secure a College World Series berth in the event's final time at Rosenblatt Stadium. Prior to taking the head baseball coach position at Florida, O'Sullivan had stints as an assistant coach at Virginia, Clemson and Florida Atlantic University.

Mark Richt, Boca Raton, University of Georgia Football—The graduate of Boca Raton High School has a career record of 90 wins and 27 losses and two SEC Championships (2002, 2005) as the head football coach at the University of Georgia. Richt was named SEC Coach of the Year in both 2002 and 2005. His record against non-conference teams is 38-4 and his teams are 33-6 when playing in an opponent's home stadium. He is one of only five head coaches in SEC history to record four straight 10-win seasons (2002-2005). Prior to Georgia, Richt spent 15 years at Florida State University.

High School Athlete of the Year

Jacoby Brissett, William T. Dwyer HS, Football—As a senior, he led Dwyer to a 9-1 record, a District 15-4A championship, and to the 4A state semifinals, losing on a last minute field goal. He passed for 2,473 yards, 32 TD and one interception. He was the recipient of the 2010 Lou Groza High School Player of the Year award. He was selected to play in U.S. Army All-American Bowl in San Antonio.

Nick O'Leary, William T. Dwyer HS, Football—The senior tight-end caught 51 passes for 875 yards and 12 touchdowns. He was named first team All-American by Rivals.com and chosen to play in U.S. Army All-American Bowl in San Antonio. He led Dwyer to a 9-1 record, a District 15-4A championship, and to the 4A state semifinals. He was also a lacrosse all-star, scoring 73 goals and making 13 assists.

Kelvin Taylor, Glades Day HS, Football—The sophomore running back rushed for 2,463 yards and 34 touchdowns. He set a record for 5 touchdowns on 44 carries in the state championship game, leading Glades Day High School to its second straight state 1B title. He earned a state record, rushing for 437 yards in the state 1B regional game.

High School Coach of the Year

Jessie Hester, Sr., Football—Jessie Hester returned to his alma mater, Glades Central High School, as head football coach and in his first two years he led his teams to perfect regular seasons. This past season Coach Hester led Glades Central to a 9-1 record and a District 7-2A championship. Glades Central finished as the 2A state runner-up. Opposing teams only scored 8.4 points against the Glades Central defense. He guided the team to a record of 36-4 over three seasons. Coach Hester also led the Raiders to the playoffs for three consecutive years and appearances in two consecutive state championship games.

Randy Jackson, Palm Beach Gardens HS, Softball—Coach Jackson has led the Palm Beach Gardens High School softball team to four state championship softball tournaments within six years. The Lady Gators have brought home three state titles from those four appearances. After back-to-back championships in 2005 and 2006, Palm Beach Gardens High School most recently won the 2010 6A State Championships outscoring its five playoff opponents by a combined score of 27-4. They completed the season with a 27-6 overall record.

Pete Walker, Glades Day School, Football—Pete Walker has coached Glades Day School football for eight seasons (1997-1999 and 2006-2010). Coach Walker has been with Glades Day for three of its seven state championships (1980, 1982, 1986, 1995, 2006, 2009, 2010). After being down 21-0 halfway through the second quarter of the 2010 1B State Championship game, Coach Walker led his team to victory, earning back-to-back state titles for the first time in Glades Day School history. With a 10-4 overall record, the Gators marched into the post-season for the 12th straight year.

Professional Athlete of the Year

Jacoby Ford of the Oakland Raiders and Professional Golfer, Bernhard Langer, will share the honors of the 2011 Professional Athlete of the Year.

Jacoby Ford, Royal Palm Beach, Football (Oakland Raiders, WR)—After a stellar prep career at Cardinal Newman High School and Clemson University, Jacoby Ford was drafted by the Oakland Raiders in the 4th round of the 2010 National Football League (NFL) draft. Jacoby had an outstanding rookie season as a dynamic wide receiver and kick returner for the Raiders. Ford returned 53 kick-offs for an incredible 1,280 yards and 3 touchdowns. Ford's longest kick-off return went for 101 yards. As a receiver, he made 25 receptions for 470 yards (averaging 18.8 yards per catch) and scored 2 touchdowns. Ford's versatility was evident considering he also had 10 rushing carries for 155 yards and 2 touchdowns. Ford was a star in track and football at Cardinal Newman, while playing for legendary coach Sam Budnyk.

Bernhard Langer, Boca Raton, Golf—Bernhard is a native of Germany whose American home has been in Boca Raton for more than 20 years. In 2010, he won five times in 23 starts on the Champions Tour, leading the money list with \$2,648,939. He won back-to-back major championships with the Senior British Open in Carnoustie, Scotland and the U.S. Senior Open in Seattle, Washington. Langer also won the 2010 Allianz Championship, which took place in Boca Raton. Langer was named the 2010 Champions Tour Player of the Year.

Outstanding Sports Contributor

Palm Beach County Junior Golf Association (PBCJGA)—The Palm Beach County Junior Golf Association provides weekly playing opportunities each summer for Palm Beach County boys and girls between the ages of 8-18. In 2010, the PBCJGA added a college division for 19-22 years of age. For 50 years every boy and girl who grew up playing golf in Palm Beach County likely got started in PBCJGA events, including Palm Beach County Sports Hall of Fame inductees Mark Calcavecchia and Michelle McGann. The PBCJGA has awarded over \$75,000 in scholarships. President is PGA professional Mike McLellan.

The Annual Sports Award recipients will be joining the elite class of 2011 Hall of Fame inductees at the 35th Annual Palm Beach County Sports Hall of Fame Banquet. The Hall of Fame class of 2011 includes Super Bowl XLIV champion Heath Evans, Cardinal Newman High School standout wide receiver Chris T. Jones, along with LPGA Tour Championship and two-time U.S. Women's Open winner, Meg Mallon. Ken Green (golf), Remuise Johnson (football), Tom Mullins (coaching), Barbara Gillespie Nicklaus (softball), Kevin Patrick (football), Tom Twyford (fishing) and Jack Wullkotte (golf) complete the list of athletes and individuals being recognized for their achievements.

Jason Pugh, of ESPN 760, will serve as Master of Ceremonies for the evening. A native of Jacksonville, FL, Jason made his way down to Palm Beach County to play football at Florida Atlantic University. While attending FAU, he majored in Mass Communications with an emphasis in television and newspaper. Jason began his career at ESPN 760 in 2003 and debuted as an on-air radio personality in 2007. Pugh also worked for the Palm Beach Post from 2005-2009 and the

Florida High School Athletic Association radio network for high school football coverage. In 2010, Jason became part of an unparalleled partnership between ESPN 760 and WPTV News Channel 5, where his responsibilities include anchoring, producing, editing and shooting the sports segments on the 6pm and 11pm news as well the 5 Sports Live program on Sunday. The partnership between ESPN 760 and WPTV News Channel 5 has further expanded to include WFLX Fox 29 where Jason can be seen on the 10pm sports newscast on Friday-Sunday. Jason has quickly become a leader in the Palm Beach County sports journalism and media scene. The PBCSC is honored to have him host the 2011 Palm Beach County Sports Hall of Fame Banquet.

Tickets are available online at www.palmbeachsports.com or by calling the Palm Beach County Sports Commission at 561-233-3180.

About Palm Beach County Sports Commission

The Palm Beach County Sports Commission is a private, not-for-profit organization contracted by Palm Beach County to promote and market the county as a sports and sports tourism destination. The Commission brings sporting events and activities to the county, enhances economic impact, stimulates bed tax revenues (primarily in the off-season) and maximizes utilization of county facilities. The Commission offers a full range of event service support, corporate partnerships, sponsorships and a local membership program that supports its goals. Local, regional, national and international marketing efforts are ongoing by the Commission with sports organizations and event owners. The Commission also produces sports-related programs for the residents of Palm Beach County including the Palm Beach County Sports Hall of Fame, the Lou Groza Collegiate Place-Kicker Award and the Kids Fitness Festival of the Palm Beaches and awards. For more information on the Palm Beach County Sports Commission go to www.palmbeachsports.com.

-###-