



Canada West Universities Athletic Association

2009-10 Media Release

Thursday, March 4, 2010

Canada West proudly announces the men's basketball individual major award winners and All-Stars, as selected by head coaches across the conference.

Voted the league's MVP in Canada West during 2009-10 is UBC Thunderbirds star **Josh Whyte**.

One of the premier guards in the country, Whyte led the UBC Thunderbirds to the No. 1 ranking in CIS and first place overall in Canada West with a 17-1 regular season record. A fourth-year Arts student from Calgary, he is a leader on the court for the top-ranked T-Birds at both ends of the floor, ranking fourth in scoring with 19.1 points per game, sixth in field goal percentage (53.8%) and assists (4.2), fifth in steals (2.4), and had the second-best assist-to-turnover ratio in the conference at 1.7. Whyte also chipped in with five rebounds per game and put up all of these numbers while playing only 28.8 minutes per game. The combination of his playmaking and finishing on offence was a big reason why UBC ranked second in the Canada West in scoring offence (85.8 points per game) and first in field goal percentage (47.4%) and scoring margin (+17.7). He is also one of the top defenders in the league, anchoring a T-Bird squad that held opponents to a league low 38.0% field goal shooting and 68.1 points per game.

"Josh has had an outstanding year for us. After representing Canada at the FISU Games last summer, he came home with new inspiration and dedication to basketball," said T-Birds head coach Kevin Hanson. "Josh has made himself stronger and fitter and this has paid off with big dividends. He has been our leader on both the offensive and defensive sides of the ball, our most inspirational player, and has led our team in almost every statistical category. He has had a huge impact on our team's success."

University of Alberta starting guard **Jordan Baker** is the conference choice for Rookie of the Year.

At 6'7", 205 pounds, the 18-year-old son of former Alberta standouts Doug and Trix Baker is an imposing figure on the court. In his freshman year, Baker led Alberta with 13.7 points per game, 17th overall in Canada West, and was second in Canada West with 9.1 rebounds per contest. With a young roster, Baker and the Golden Bears went 10-10 on the season, qualifying for the post-season and showing they have the talent to move up in coming years.

Head coach Greg Francis, in his first year as Alberta bench boss, said, "Jordan has found a way to impress our coaching staff each and every day, and in practice and games. He has a great feel for the game of basketball, but it is rare to find an athlete that plays as hard as he does as a rookie. The sky is the limit for Jordan, and I know he will continue to improve because of his strong work ethic."

The Defensive Player of the Year is Thompson Rivers WolfPack fourth-year big man **Greg Stewart**.

Strategically, teams tried to force him to defend on the perimeter, but found out that his athleticism was as impressive as his height and length in the paint, which resulted in the massive, 7'2" post leading Canada West in blocked shots, with 2.5 per game. With an average of 15.8 points, and a league-leading 11.5 rebounds per game, TRU opponents were forced to prepare for Stewart each game, and it was reflected in the number of perimeter shots their opponents attempted.

On January 18, Stewart was named Canada West Athlete of the Week after picking up 52 points, 35 rebounds in a weekend series split with the Victoria Vikes. He was far and away the team's "plus-minus" leader. When he was not on the court, opponents were more confident in attacking the basket and it was evident many nights, as the WolfPack finished the season 3-15.

"The numbers for rebounding and blocked shots speak loudly for Greg's impact at the defensive end of the court. Even more impressive was how many shots he altered and the indecision he created for our opposition in the key," noted interim WolfPack head coach Thom Gillespie.

The Ken Shields Award nominee as top student-athlete from Canada West is **Kevin Shaw** of the Simon Fraser Clan.

One of the best three-point shooters and defensive players in the Canada West conference, Shaw, of North Vancouver, was the model student-athlete during his five years at Simon Fraser University. In his senior season with the Clan, Shaw was sixth in the

conference in both three-point shooting percentage and three-point shots made, helping lead the Clan to a 14-4 regular season record and their first home playoff series in over five seasons.

Off the court, Shaw has also made a significant impact, posting a GPA over 3.0 during his time at SFU, and has been determined to make the community in which he lives a better place. Shaw has been a member of the Clan Student Athlete Council, organizing both a Toys For Tots fundraiser and a can drive for the Vancouver Food Bank. He sported a hideous moustache during November as part of 'Movember', helping to raise funds and awareness for prostate cancer. He also helped organize the Clan's 'Casino Night' fundraiser for the men's basketball program, and served as a 'Big Buddy' mentor to youth in the Lower Mainland.

"Kevin has had an outstanding fifth year," said SFU head coach Scott Clark. "He is a tireless worker and has maximized his potential both on and off the court through that hard work, and has been a leader in our campus community. SFU is lucky to have such a quality young man in our program."

After guiding the UBC to a staggering 17-1 conference season mark, a first-round playoff series victory, the top CIS ranking and the No. 1 seed at this week's conference Final Four, Thunderbirds head coach **Kevin Hanson** is the CWUAA Coach of the Year.

This is the second consecutive season and fourth time overall that Hanson has won the conference award since taking over the UBC program 10 years ago. It was also a milestone year for the Vancouver native, as he picked up his 500th win at the Collegiate/University level, having reached that mark after a combined 20 years at the helm of Langara College and UBC. In 2009-10, UBC won its fifth straight Pacific Division title.

This season, the T-Birds were impressive on both sides of the ball, owning some of the best offensive and defensive numbers in Canada West. UBC finished second in scoring offence (85.8 points per game), thanks in part to its league-leading 47.4% field goal percentage and second-best 16.4 assists per game. They were equally strong on defence, leading Canada West in scoring defence (68.1 ppg) and holding opponents to a league-low 38.0% shooting, including only 29.7% from three-point land. They hauled in 42.2 boards per game, while allowing opponents only 33.8. Thanks to these remarkable stats, the T-Birds owned the conference's best scoring margin at +17.7.

"It is always a great honour to be selected by your peers Coach of the Year. To win this award two years in a row is a great accomplishment for Kevin and it is certainly well deserved," said UBC Athletic Director Bib Philip.

A host of players have made a return appearance on the Canada West All-Star roster. Whyte, along with 2009 CIS MVP **Jacob Doerksen** from the TWU Spartans, **Ross Bekkering** (Calgary) and **Showron Glover** (Saskatchewan) all make the All-Star team for the second straight season, while Brandon's **Dany Charlery** made the all-conference squad for the fourth consecutive year. Doerksen is about to round out a stellar university career, having been named CIS Rookie of the Year in 2005-06 and he, along with Whyte, also made the All-Star squad back in 2006-07.

Following is a breakdown of all individual award winners and All-Stars:

Awards

MVP: Josh Whyte, UBC

Rookie of the Year: Jordan Baker, Alberta

Defensive Player of the Year: Greg Stewart, Thompson Rivers

Ken Shields Award nominee: Kevin Shaw, Simon Fraser

Coach of the Year: Kevin Hanson, UBC

All-Stars

First Team

Josh Whyte, UBC
Showron Glover, Saskatchewan
Ross Bekkering, Calgary
Jacob Doerksen, TWU
Zeon Gray, Fraser Valley

Second Team

Jeff Price, Lethbridge
Dany Charlery, Brandon
Sean Burke, SFU
Robbie Sihota, Calgary
Chas Kok, SFU

Major award winners become finalists for national awards, handed out by Canadian Interuniversity Sport (CIS) at Nationals, hosted by Carleton University, March 19-21 at Scotiabank Place in Ottawa.

This weekend the Final Four takes place at UBC in Vancouver, where the top-seeded Thunderbirds take on Saskatchewan in one conference semifinal on Friday night, while Simon Fraser faces Calgary in the other. The Canada West final goes Saturday evening. Finalists will qualify for the CIS tournament, with one wild card spot available across the country, to be announced by CIS prior to the tournament.

Please direct questions to the Canada West office: sportsinfo@canadawest.org, or contact any of the 14 Canada West men's basketball schools. Contact information for all conference schools can be found on the www.canadawest.org Members page.

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About CWUAA

“Canada West is consistently the most decorated of the four conferences in Canadian Interuniversity Sport (CIS), winning at least 10 CIS national titles every year since 1997-98. Comprised of 14 schools, from the provinces of Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta and British Columbia, the CWUAA produces numerous major award winners and Academic All-Canadian student-athletes each year, with many going on to athletic success around the globe in pro leagues or events such as the Olympics, Paralympics or Universiade Games.”