

Wisconsin Interscholastic Athletic Association

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WIAA WINTER TEAM TOURNAMENT SPORTSMANSHIP AWARDS ANNOUNCED

STEVENS POINT, Wis.--The Wisconsin Interscholastic Athletic Association, in cooperation with Rural Mutual Insurance, has selected the team Sportsmanship Awards for the 2009 winter State Tournaments.

The winners of the prestigious award are Benton in boys basketball, Siren in girls basketball, Rice Lake in boys ice hockey, River Falls in girls ice hockey, Stoughton in wrestling and Southwestern/Cuba City in gymnastics.

Division 4 champion Benton topped the list of schools and communities qualifying for the award at the Boys State Basketball Tournament. The Zephyrs displayed outstanding sportsmanship, enthusiasm and community pride in their 61-49 semifinal victory over Blair-Taylor and in their 55-43 win over Assumption in the championship final. It is the school's first Sportsmanship Award. Receiving honorable mention include Aquinas, Assumption, Blair-Taylor, Eau Claire North, Fall Creek, Madison Memorial, Oshkosh North, Roncalli and Xavier.

Siren was selected as the sportsmanship award winner in girls basketball. The Dragons were ousted from title contention in the Division 4 semifinals with a 49-34 loss to eventual champion St. Mary Central. It's the first WIAA/Rural Mutual Insurance Sportsmanship Award presented to Siren. Black Hawk, Cuba City, Durand, Fall Creek, Middleton, Monroe and Oostburg received honorable mention.

Stoughton receives its first Sportsmanship Award in wrestling following its display of sportsmanship at the State Team Wrestling Tournament. The Vikings also received the honor in girls basketball in 1998. They defeated DeForest 36-33 in the Division 1 quarterfinals before falling in the semifinals to eventual champion Wisconsin Rapids Lincoln, 57-11. Ellsworth, Franklin, Lodi, Muskego, Pewaukee, Random Lake and Wausau West received honorable mention for the award.

Southwestern/Cuba City receives the sportsmanship award in gymnastics for the fourth time. The co-op program also received the recognition in 2003, 2004 and 2006. The program placed seventh in Division 2 at the WIAA State Gymnastics Championships in March. The schools and communities receiving honorable mention include Antigo, Ashland, Eau Claire Memorial/North, La Crosse Logan/Central, Sheboygan South/North, Viroqua/Cashton/De Soto/North Crawford and West Bend West.

Rice Lake was chosen as the winner of the boys hockey Sportsmanship Award for its exemplary sportsmanship at the State Hockey Tournament. It is the first sportsmanship honor presented to the Warriors. This year, they edged Verona 1-0 in the quarterfinals before losing to Fond du Lac, 4-2, in the semifinals. Honorable mention went to Stevens Point and Superior.

The River Falls co-op, which includes Baldwin-Woodville, Elmwood, Glenwood City, St. Croix Central and Spring Valley won the State title and its first Sportsmanship Award this winter in girls hockey. The Fusion defeated the Mosinee co-op 2-1 in double overtime in the semifinals and the Fond du Lac co-op 10-4 in the championship final.

The WIAA/Rural Mutual Insurance Sportsmanship Award is presented to one school and community in each of the State team tournaments. The award winners are determined by the conduct and sportsmanship displayed by athletes, coaches, cheer and support groups, mascots, bands and spectators. Additional consideration is given for the effort of school administrators and chaperones to insure support for their teams are positive and that the highest ideals of sportsmanship are upheld. Award winners receive a plaque and banner in recognition of the honor. Schools receiving honorable mention are acknowledged with a certificate of recognition.

The selection process includes contributions and evaluations from contest officials, tournament management, police and security personnel, crowd control and ushers, WIAA staff members, area hotels and restaurants.

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