



America's Graduate School of Sport

Celebrating 30 Years of Excellence



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Athlete of the Year Picked in Cooperation with CNN/SI and USA Today



The Artist and the Athlete

Sport Artist of the Year Mina Papatheodorou-Valyraki (article on page 11) and Athlete of the Year Barry Bonds heads the list of the outstanding honorees for this year's Academy's Awards of Sport.

Baseball slugger Barry Bonds has been voted the Athlete of the Year 2001. Bonds turned in one of the most dominating individual performances in a single season in baseball history. His exploits over the summer ruled the American sports scene as we waited to see if the 'Bay Area Bomber' could break the 70 home run mark.

Lance Armstrong, who captured his third Tour de France title in as many years was named the Male Athlete of the Year 2001. His battle back from cancer to become one of the

most dominant cyclists of all time is legendary.

Jennifer Capriati's comeback to tennis stardom was one of the most heart-warming stories of the 2001 sport season. Winning two of the four majors, Capriati proved that she was again a force to be reckoned with.

Athlete of the Year

Barry Bonds' magical season was one of the most prolific performances in the history of the game of baseball. Bonds batted

.328 with 137 RBI and a Major League record of 73 homers beating the 70 record posted by Mark McGwire in 1998. His league-leading 177 walks broke Babe Ruth's record of 170 set in 1923. The 37-year-old San Francisco Giants left fielder again slugged his way into the record books with his .863 slugging percentage, the best in major league history. The Yankee great Babe Ruth held that record for 81 years when his slugging percentage was .847 in 1920. Bonds was also named the National League's Most Valuable Player for

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the fourth time in his career. No other player in history has won baseball's greatest individual award four times.

Male Athlete of the Year

Lance Armstrong won global acclaim with his third consecutive victory of the 'Tour de France', or what it has affectionately become known as the 'Tour de Lance'. Armstrong came back from a 35-minute deficit before he ascended the mountain stages and blew away the competition to earn another title. What makes Lance's victory so remarkable is that he battled cancer en route to his three dominating victories. Armstrong became only the eighth rider to win the race at least three times since the Tour began in 1903. He is the second American to achieve this remarkable feat (Greg LeMond won three times in 1986, 1989 and 1990). He is the first American to win it three straight times.

Female Athlete of the Year

Jennifer Capriati's storybook return to the top of the women's tennis world was the feel good sports story of the year. She began her quest at the Australian Open where she defeated the world's number one, two and fourth ranked players (the last three winners of the Australian Open) en route to her first Grand Slam title. She became the lowest seed (12th) to win a Grand Slam in the professional era. Her victory there ranked her in the Top 10 for the first time in seven years.

The Australian Open would prove to not be her only major of the year as she entered the French Open in Paris. She became the fifth player in women's tennis history to win the Australian and French Opens in the same year and the first American woman since 1986 to win the French Open when she defeated Kim Clijsters 1-6, 6-4, 12-10. Their thrilling match was a record for the most games in a third set of the French Open

women's final. Capriati extended her 2001 Grand Slam tournament winning streak to 14-0 becoming the 18th woman all-time to win consecutive Grand Slam tournament singles titles in a calendar year.

Her outstanding season would end with her being ranked second in the WTA 2001 rankings. Adding more to Capriati's credentials was her amazing consistency. She was the only player this season to reach at least the semi-finals of all four Grand Slam tournaments.

The Ballot

The Athlete of the Year ballot was compiled from the top three vote-getters of each month in 2001. The Athlete of the Month Award voting process was open to the public as each monthly ballot was posted to the USSA website. The monthly list was then paired down to the ten athletes on the ballot by a select committee involving some of today's most influential media outlets.

The ballot was released in the first week of December and thanks to media outlets like CNN.com, and USATODAY.com, the voting reached 10,000 plus total votes for the fourth year in a row.

Male Team of the Year

The Arizona Diamondbacks have been chosen as the 2001 Male Team of the Year. The Diamondbacks' win of the 2001 World Series is being hailed as one of the most exciting of all time. The Diamondbacks are now the youngest to ever win the World Championship. (Ironically, the Yankees are older than the state of Arizona.)

This was the 34th time the World Series has gone to seven games and the 49,589 fans at Bank One Ballpark weren't disappointed. It was the third time this post season that

the Diamondbacks won the clinching game of a series by only one run. It was Luis Gonzales' RBI single with one out in the bottom of the ninth that gave the Arizona Diamondbacks a 3-2 win in Game 7 over the New York Yankees.

Female Team of the Year



Jennifer Capriati

The University of Maryland's Women's lacrosse team has been chosen as the 2001 Female Team of the Year. The Terrapins finished the year ranked No. 1 for 32-consecutive weeks in the IWFLCA polls and holding the longest streak in Division I women's athletics with seven straight national championship titles.

The 2001 season not only brought a

10th National Championship to Maryland, but also moved notable members of the team to the tops of multiple Maryland and NCAA record charts. The season began and ended with the Terrapins ranked No.1 in the nation and produced an undefeated record for the fourth time in school history. In posting a perfect 23-0 record, the Terrapins not only claimed their seventh-straight NCAA Championship, but also won the most games ever in a single season.

Readers Can Participate

The Academy invites readers to participate in the selection process for the Athletes of the Year. Anyone can nominate an athlete by coming to our home page at www.ussa.edu. The nominations should be written by describing, who, what, where, why, when and how much. We ask that you take time to participate.



2001 Female Team of the Year

2001 University of Maryland's Women's Lacrosse Team