



NEWS RELEASE

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16 FINALISTS ANNOUNCED FOR PRESTIGIOUS BOB COUSY AWARD presented by THE HARTFORD

Fans Can Record Award "Assist" by Casting Votes On-Line

Nation's Top Collegiate Point Guard to be Introduced at NCAA Men's Final Four

SPRINGFIELD, MA – The Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame in conjunction with The Hartford Financial Services Group, Inc. (NYSE: HIG) are pleased to announce this years Finalists for the *Bob Cousy Award presented by The Hartford*, an honor presented annually to the nation's top collegiate point guard. Fifteen Finalists were chosen from a pool of over fifty top candidates from NCAA Division I, II and III institutions across the country. The 2006 Finalists were selected by screening committees comprised of members of the College Sports Information Directors of America (CoSIDA) representing all three divisions of collegiate basketball.

For the first time in the history of the Award, beginning February 3 fans will have the opportunity to vote for their favorite candidate online at www.cousyaward.com and register to win an opportunity to serve with Hall of Famers Bob Cousy, Jim Calhoun, Dean Smith and others on the Blue Ribbon committee assembled to select the winner. The lucky fan will participate in a roundtable committee discussion of the Award Finalists and then cast his or her symbolic 'vote' (representing the Finalist receiving the most on-line votes). The 2006 *Bob Cousy Award presented by The Hartford* winner will be announced at the NCAA Men's Final Four in Indianapolis, Indiana on Monday April 3.

"The Bob Cousy Award presented by The Hartford has established itself as one of college basketball's premier awards" said John L. Doleva, Hall of Fame President & CEO. "Mr. Cousy had a vision for this award when it was created – to recognize winning traits like leadership, vision and integrity. When you review the credentials of the student-athletes who are Finalists for the 2006 Award, it is clear there are a number of talented players who are striving to achieve the standard set by Mr. Cousy."

"Just like these players demonstrate on the basketball court, The Hartford and its network of independent agents represent leadership, vision, teamwork and integrity in the insurance industry," said David Moore, assistant vice president of marketing for The Hartford's Property & Casualty operations. "We're honored to be part of a growing tradition that supports these values, and we wish the best of luck to all the finalists for this year's award."

Cousy, also known as "Mr. Basketball," is considered the prototype of point guards and was a freshman on the Holy Cross team that won the NCAA Championship in 1947. He was a pioneer in the NBA, famous for bringing a 'flashy' style of passing and showmanship to the game. Named one of the Top 50 Players in NBA History, Cousy led the Boston Celtics to

championships in 1957 and 1959 through 1963. Cousy led the NBA in assists for eight consecutive years (1953-1960) and played in 13 straight All-Star games. After his retirement from professional basketball he was a successful coach at Boston College from 1963 to 1969, with an overall record of 117 wins and 38 losses.

"If basketball is an art form," noted Cousy, "it primarily resides in the artistry, creativity, imagination and development of the nuances of the position by a genuine point guard such as John Stockton or Jason Kidd." Cousy was enshrined in the Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame in 1971.

About The Hartford:

The Hartford is one of the largest financial services and insurance companies in the U.S., with worldwide revenues of \$27.1 billion in 2005. The company is a leading provider of investment products, life insurance and group benefits; automobile and homeowners products; and business property-casualty insurance. International operations are located in Japan, Brazil and the United Kingdom. The Hartford's Internet address is www.thehartford.com.

About the *Bob Cousy Award presented by The Hartford*:

Nominees for the *Bob Cousy Award presented by The Hartford* were solicited through the College Sports Information Directors of America (COSIDA) and the National Association of Basketball Coaches (NABC). A committee comprised of CoSIDA members narrowed the field to 16 student athletes from all three divisions of men's NCAA college basketball. The group of 16 will be reviewed and a winner chosen by a Blue Ribbon selection committee comprised of Hall of Famers, Mr. Cousy, college coaches, media members, sports information directors and one lucky fan chosen to represent the top vote getter in the on-line poll at www.cousyaward.com.

Previous winners of the award include Jameer Nelson from St. Joseph's University (2004) and Raymond Felton from the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill (2005).

2006 BOB COUSY AWARD PRESENTED BY THE HARTFORD FINALISTS

DIVISION I

Jose Juan Barea	Northeastern University
Dee Brown	University of Illinois
Keydren Clark	Saint Peter's College
Jordan Farmar	UCLA
Daniel Gibson	University Texas
Jeff Horner	University of Iowa
Daniel Horton	University of Michigan
Kyle Lowry	Villanova University
Carldell "Squeaky" Johnson	University of Alabama at Birmingham
Carl Krauser	University of Pittsburgh
Gerry McNamara	Syracuse University
Darius Washington	University of Memphis

DIVISION II

Mark Borders
Sheldon Pace

University of Tampa
Southwest Baptist University

DIVISION III

Adam Dauksas
Kyle Witucky

Illinois Wesleyan University
The College of Wooster

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