



UTAH SPORTS  
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## 2017 GOVERNOR'S STATE OF SPORT AWARDS WINNERS ANNOUNCED

*Jerry Sloan, LaVell Edwards, Tanner Aus and Utah's athletes, coaches and teams honored*

**Salt Lake City, UT, April 13, 2017**– Forty-nine of Utah's most accomplished athletes and coaches for the 2016 calendar year were honored Thursday evening at the 2017 Governor's State of Sport Awards, hosted by the Utah Sports Commission and presented by Zions Bank. A record 140,000 votes from sports fans in all 50 states and 106 countries around the world determined a winner in each of the eleven voting categories.

"The lessons learned from sports stay with us and benefit us throughout our lives," said Gov. Gary R. Herbert. "It is great to honor the top athletes, teams and coaches in our state and I salute each nominee for their contributions to sports in Utah."

The event also paid tribute to two of the most respected coaches in history. Jerry Sloan received the event's Lifetime Achievement Award, and LaVell Edwards was posthumously honored with a Legends Award.

This year's event also featured the first Lewis Feild Bareback Riding Award, a tribute to the late PRCA Hall of Famer Lewis Feild. The award was presented to Tanner Aus, who was the highest-point bareback winner in Utah's three main rodeos – the Spanish Fork Fiesta Days Rodeo, the Ogden Pioneer Days Rodeo and the Days of '47 Cowboy Games & Rodeo.

### 2017 Governor's State of Sport Awards Winners

#### HIGH SCHOOL FEMALE – KATE HUNTER

As one of Provo High School's all-time greatest runners, Kate finished her high school career with a state championship in the 1600-meter. She took 4<sup>th</sup> place at the Footlocker West Regional Championships, then finished 18<sup>th</sup> at the Footlocker Cross County Nationals. Kate had a 4<sup>th</sup> place finish at the Bob Firman Invitational and a 7<sup>th</sup> place finish at the NIKE Southwest Region. In addition to her hard work on the course, Kate is a Cross Country Academic All-State athlete carrying a 4.0 grade point average. She is currently ranked 4<sup>th</sup> in the U.S. for 800-meter indoors. Kate is a Brigham Young University signee for cross-country and track.

#### HIGH SCHOOL MALE – CASEY CLINGER

American Fork senior and Brigham Young University commit Casey Clinger was named the Gatorade National Cross Country Runner of the Year for 2016-2017. He won his second straight national title at the Nike Cross Nationals with a course-record time of 15.28.4. – The first 2-time champion in history. He also took home the 5A Championship in the 3200-meter and 1600-meter, both for the second time, helping his American Fork team to a state title. Casey's list of accomplishments run deep including being the Simplot Games 3200 meter Champion and meet record holder, the Arcadia Invitational 3200-meter Champion, three time Nike All-American, Utah State 4A Academic All-State in Cross Country, and three-time Gatorade Utah Runner of the Year. Casey finished his high school career with 15 straight wins at 3 miles and at the 5k.

#### COLLEGIATE FEMALE – ASHLEY HATCH

This former BYU soccer star ended her senior season with 19 goals and averaging .95 goals per game, putting her 3<sup>rd</sup> in the nation in both categories. Ashley achieved “Hat Tricks” against defending champion Penn State and against San Francisco. She finished her collegiate career with 47 goals and 21 assists. During the NCAA Tournament she scored against Oklahoma to help BYU advance to the 3<sup>rd</sup> Round. Her accolades include being a National Coaches Association of America First Team All-American, All-West Coast Conference First Team and a MAC Hermann Trophy Award Semifinalist. She was invited to the United States Women’s National Team camp and earned her CAP on October 19<sup>th</sup>. Ashley’s success at BYU and her brief stint with the US Women’s National Team led her to be selected as a second pick in the draft by the North Carolina Courage in the National Women’s Soccer League.

#### **COLLEGIATE MALE – JOEL BOLOMBOY**

Joel Bolomboy’s senior year at Weber State University thrust him into the national spotlight. In 2016, he was named both the Big Sky Conference Most Valuable Player and Big Sky Defensive Player of the year. He led the Wildcats to the Big Sky regular season and conference tournament title, and a trip to the NCAA tournament. While en route to finishing third in the country in rebounding with 12.6 boards a game, he also became the Big Sky Conference all-time leading rebounder with one thousand three hundred and twelve for his career. Bolomboy also had twenty-six double-doubles during the 2016 season, the most in Weber State history and third most of any player in the nation. The Utah Jazz in the second round of the 2016 draft selected Joel.

#### **ADAPTIVE FEMALE OF THE YEAR – KOLLEEN CONGER**

In 2008, Kolleen cased a 90-foot double and completely shattered her tibia and fibula at the ankle joint in both legs. After multiple failed surgeries, she determined her best option was amputation. After 3 years of healing and finding the proper artificial limb, Kolleen returned to her lifelong passion for motocross racing. Her hard work and dedication have put her first on the podium at the Women’s Amateur at Rocky Mountain Raceway Moto Grand Prix and the Utah Desert Foxes Knolls Knockout Race. She placed 3<sup>rd</sup> overall in the USRA series points against 5 able-bodied women. Her accomplishments were noticed by sponsors and helped her to become the only female brand ambassador for Click Medical & Adjustable Sockets. When asked how she keeps riding after such a traumatic injury, her answer is simple, “It gives you something to look forward to each day, and in her mind, measures success when she can finally get back to her version of normalcy and do the things she loves.”

#### **ADAPTIVE MALE OF THE YEAR – HUNTER WOODHALL**

As last year’s Governor’s State of Sport Awards High School Male winner, Hunter Woodhall once again achieved great success not only during his senior year of high school but on the world’s biggest stage, the 2016 Paralympic Games in Rio de Janeiro. Hunter was crowned the 5A Utah State champion in the 400-meter and was named to the 2016 All-State Boys’ 1<sup>st</sup> team in the 400-meter and 2<sup>nd</sup> team in the 200-meter. He then was named to the 2016 U.S. Paralympics Track & Field High School All-Americans leading him to be selected for the U.S. Paralympic Track & Field Team for Rio. Hunter was the youngest sprinter at the Games, but that didn’t stop him from taking home a Silver medal in the 200-meter and the Bronze medal in the 400-meter.

#### **PRO/OLYMPIAN FEMALE – ALEX PUCCIO**

Alex is one of the world’s strongest climbers, gathering an impressive list of podium finishes at the World Cup and nearly a decade of dominance at the ABS Nationals. In 2016, she placed 6<sup>th</sup> at the IFSC Vail Bouldering World Cup while not knowing she had a herniated c5-c6 disc into her spinal cord forcing her to undergo a spinal fusion 5 days later. Just 3 months after the surgery, She won the Portland Boulder Rally, and then went on to win each of the next 10 consecutive Pro Bouldering Competitions in which she was a participant. Alex is the only woman to ever climb multiple V14s, and in 2016 she climbed up to the grade V13 Boulder outside in Hueco Tanks Texas, only 5 months post-surgery. Alex recently became the 10-time National Bouldering Champion at the National Championships recently held in Salt Lake City.

#### **PRO/OLYMPIAN MALE – RUDY GOBERT**

Rudy has proven to be one of the most valuable big men in the NBA, his presence obscuring opponent's vision on one end and drawing attention to him on the other. He was one of only five players in the NBA to average at least nine points, 11 rebounds and 2 blocks per game during the 2015-2016 season. He led the NBA in blocked shots having multiple streaks of 24-or-more games with a blocked shot. Rudy set a Utah Jazz franchise record with 31 consecutive games of 10-plus rebounds. In 2016, he joined Karl Malone, John Stockton and Carlos Boozer as the only Jazzmen to record at least 38 double-doubles in the first 56 games. He represents the French national basketball team in international competitions and played for France at the 2016 Rio Summer Games. Rudy is a key ambassador for Utah and the Utah Jazz, bringing summer basketball camp MVP's from France to Utah to visit and attend Jazz games during the season.

#### **COACH OF THE YEAR – JENNIFER ROCKWOOD**

Coach Rockwood became just the 12 NCAA Division I Coach in History to reach 350 career wins. She led BYU to its 5<sup>th</sup> straight West Coast Conference Championship and 5<sup>th</sup> trip to the 3<sup>rd</sup> round of the NCAA Tournament. In 12 Weeks of national rankings, the cougars spent 11 weeks in the top 10 and 6 weeks in the top 5. BYU beat the defending champs and then No. 5 Penn State on the road, then followed up with a victory over No. 19 Ohio State 2 weeks later. Jennifer coached two national All-Americans, one national scholar All-American and one Academic All-District Honoree. Coach Rockwood took the Cougars to the NCAA for the 18<sup>th</sup> time in her career.

#### **TEAM OF THE YEAR – EAST HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL**

East High School won its second consecutive four-A football title to cap off a 14-0 season. This was East High's eighteenth overall state title. The Leopards scored six hundred and ninety-four points and produced seven thousand and thirty-eight yards of offense, both the most in state history. Riding a current twenty-three game win streak, East High finished the year ranked number one in the country for medium sized schools by MaxPreps.

#### **EVENT/HIGHLIGHT OF THE YEAR – UTAH'S HAYLEE CACCIACARNE'S HEADER TO ADVANCE TO SWEET 16**

Haylee Cacciacarne's first collegiate goal is one that won't easily be forgotten. With the score tied one-to-one in the second round of the NCAA women's soccer tournament, the Utah freshman netted a long-distance header in the eighty-seventh minute to upset number ten ranked Florida State and send the Utes to the Sweet Sixteen for the first time in program history.

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