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**BIG EAST VOLLEYBALL POSTSEASON AWARDS ANNOUNCED
Louisville and St. John's highlight 2006 individual accolades**

CINCINNATI, Ohio - The 2006 BIG EAST Volleyball postseason award winners as well as the all-conference team selections were announced Thursday evening at the Great Hall in the Tangeman University Center on the campus of the University of Cincinnati. The announcement came as part of the annual Awards Banquet held the night before the quarterfinal games of the BIG EAST Championship. This year's Championship is being held Nov. 17-19 at Fifth Third Arena in Cincinnati, Ohio.

Louisville senior middle blocker Ana Stewart was named BIG EAST Player of the Year and an all-conference first team selection. In her final season, Stewart helped the Cardinals to 11 straight conference victories to close the regular season, en route to a 13-1 league mark and second-place finish in BIG EAST play. Stewart finished the season as the top individual in the conference in hitting percentage (.438). The Cardinal senior led the team in hitting percentage (.438) and blocks (1.37 bpg). In addition, the Anapa, Russia native ranked second on the team in digs (2.52 dpg) and third in kills (2.46 kpg). Stewart was named to the conference weekly honor roll on Sept. 11 and Sept. 25.

Louisville freshman outside hitter Tatyana Kolesnikova was tabbed BIG EAST Rookie of the Year and also received all-conference first team honors. Kolesnikova becomes the first freshman from Louisville to be named BIG EAST Rookie of the Year. This season, the Cardinal rookie played in 87 games. The Louisville freshman was named BIG EAST Rookie of the Week a league best three times this season and was named conference Player of the Week on Oct. 10. Kolesnikova played a pivotal role for the Cardinals offensively as she led the team in kills with an average of 3.52 (303 total). In addition, the Uzbekistan native posted a hitting percentage of .352, which ranked second among individuals in the league in all conference matches.

St. John's sophomore libero Kathleen "Lena" Yee was selected as the BIG EAST Libero of the Year and was named to the all-conference second team. Yee becomes the first St. John's player to be named Libero of the Year. This season, Yee helped the Red Storm win their first regular season conference title. The St. John's senior led the team in hitting percentage (.429) and digs (4.60 dpg). Against league opponents, Yee averaged 5.11 digs per game.

St. John's head coach Joanne Persico-Smith captured BIG EAST Coach of the Year accolades. Persico-Smith received her first BIG EAST Coach of the Year honor after guiding the Red Storm to its first-ever regular season conference title. St. John's overall record of 29-1 is the Red Storm's best in school history. In addition, St. John's set school records for three-game sweeps (21), road wins (19) and consecutive wins (20). Statistically as a team, St. John's ranks first in the conference in assists (16.15 apg), kills (17.53 kpg) and digs (17.54). The Red Storm also ranks first among all NCAA teams in kills.

In addition, St. John's sophomore outside hitter Hui Ping Huang and senior outside hitter Patti Hardimon were named to the All-BIG EAST First Team. Rounding out the list of first team honorees were Cincinnati's Jessie Nevitt, Marquette's Jamie Mueller and Kimberly Todd, Notre Dame's Mallorie Croal and Adrianna Stasiuk, Pittsburgh's Diana Andreyko and Azadeh Boroumand and USF's Marcela Gurgel.

PLAYER OF THE YEAR

Ana Stewart, Louisville, Sr., MB

ROOKIE OF THE YEAR

Tatyana Kolesnikova, Louisville, Fr., OH

LIBERO OF THE YEAR

Kathleen "Lena" Yee, St. John's, So., L

COACH OF THE YEAR

Joanne Persico-Smith, St. John's, 12 Seasons

All-BIG EAST FIRST TEAM

Diana Andreyko, Pittsburgh, Jr., OH
Azadeh Boroumand, Pittsburgh, Sr., S
Mallorie Croal, Notre Dame, So., OH/OPP
Marcela Gurgel, USF, Fr., OH
Patti Hardimon, St. John's, Sr., OH
Tatyana Kolesnikova, Louisville, Fr., OH
*Jamie Mueller, Marquette, Sr., OH
Jessie Nevitt, Cincinnati, So., MB
Hui Ping Huang, St. John's, So., MH/OH
Adrianna Stasiuk, Notre Dame, Jr., OH/OPP
Ana Stewart, Louisville, Sr., MB
Kimberley Todd, Marquette, Jr., OH/MB
*- unanimous selection

All-BIG EAST SECOND TEAM

Myanna Hellsten, Cincinnati, Sr., MB
Caitlin Rimgaila, St. John's, Sr., MH
Adrian Semrau, Villanova, Sr., MB
Noel Olson, Cincinnati, Sr., S
Justine Stremick, Notre Dame, So., MB
Wioleta Leszczynska, St. John's, Jr., RS/S
Bridget Denson-Dorman, Connecticut, Fr., S
Tricia Meyers, Seton Hall, So., MB
Kathleen "Lena" Yee, St. John's, So., L
Latoya Blunt, St. John's, Jr., RS/OH
Monica Renfrow, Marquette, Jr., S
Meagan Dooley, Pittsburgh, Fr., OH

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