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ORGANIZATIONS PLAN TO UNITE FOR CREATION OF COLLEGE BASEBALL AWARDS SHOW

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LUBBOCK, Texas, and ST. PETERSBURG, Fla. — The boards of directors and awards committees for the Dick Howser Trophy, Brooks Wallace Award, College Baseball Foundation, College Baseball Hall of Fame, and National Collegiate Baseball Writers Association plan to come together to host an awards program to present college baseball's major individual honors.

This collaboration will allow the CBF to include the presentation of the Dick Howser Trophy during the College Baseball Awards Show, which will be presented in Lubbock on July 2, 2009. The nationally televised event will be followed by the College Baseball Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony on July 3.

The groups have had discussions with national television networks and corporate sponsors to assemble the recipients of the Howser Trophy, Brooks Wallace Award, NCBWA Stopper of the Year, CBF Pitcher of the Year, and National Coach of the Year for NCAA Division I baseball at one site and date. Recognition of the Pro-Line Athletic/NCBWA All-American and Freshman All-American teams, the NCBWA Freshman Player and Pitcher of the Year, as well as other awards, will be included in the awards show's schedule of events.

"We are very excited to work with these two organizations to bring increased attention to college baseball," said Raymond Richardson, CBF board member and College Baseball Awards Show chair. "This is a great sport that deserves this night of celebration, especially as we approach the 150th anniversary of the first college baseball game.

"To have so many awards presented in one evening will be great for college baseball. The game and those that play it will soon be recognized together on a national stage. Partnerships with the Howser Committee and the NCBWA will only make the game of college baseball stronger."

Jana Howser, whose father is the namesake of the Howser Trophy, said uniting these college baseball awards only seemed natural.

"Bringing (the Howser Trophy) to the College Baseball Awards Show is a natural fit," said Howser, who serves on both the Howser Trophy Committee and CBF Board of Directors. Dick Howser also was

inducted into the College Baseball Hall of Fame in 2008.

“For nearly 25 years, a group of talented and dedicated people have worked continuously to honor the best college player nationally in awarding the Dick Howser Trophy,” she added. “Now the Howser Trophy Committee and NCBWA are partnering with the College Baseball Foundation to enhance the recognition of the game. This comprehensive presentation of awards will strengthen college baseball by awarding a spectrum of college baseball achievements nationally. My dad would be very happy to see the exposure of college baseball growing.”

Winners of the national awards will be celebrated at the showcase event as well as the various sites of the sponsoring and voting bodies before and after the national awards show as determined by the awards committees.

This year marks the 23rd annual presentation of the Dick Howser Trophy, which traditionally has been presented in Omaha, Neb., around the College World Series and then at the winner’s campus site the following autumn. Howser Trophy recipients also have been lauded at the Governor’s Baseball Dinner in St. Petersburg in conjunction with the sponsoring agency, the St. Petersburg Area Chamber of Commerce.

The trophy is named in memory of Florida State University’s All-America shortstop Dick Howser, who later managed the New York Yankees and took the Kansas City Royals to the 1985 World Championship after a solid Major League Baseball playing career totaling 30 years. The cornerstones of the Howser Trophy are performance, both academically and on the field, leadership, moral character and courage — qualities that were exemplified by Dick Howser. The trophy first was proposed by Howser’s Seminole infield teammate Bill Bunker and then actualized by 23-year Howser Trophy committee chair and bank president David Feaster along with the St. Pete Area Chamber. Feaster currently is president of Cornerstone Bank in St. Petersburg.

“This is a very wonderful development for the Dick Howser Trophy, which the St. Petersburg Area Chamber of Commerce has had the privilege of sponsoring for 23 years,” said SPCACC executive John Long. “We are appreciative of the cooperation and support in this venture.”

The Brooks Wallace Award has been presented since 2004 to a college player of the year for athletics ability and courage. In 2009, the national award will be designated for the first time for a position player — shortstop. The award memorializes the Texas Tech standout shortstop, who died at the age of 27 from leukemia after a standout playing and coaching career at the university.

Under the cooperative agreement, the groups will join in an alliance similar to the College Football Awards Association and use similar voting groups and timelines for preseason watch lists and presentations.

Voting for the Dick Howser Trophy has been conducted by the NCBWA membership since 1999, after the American Baseball Coaches Association selected the recipient from 1987 through 1997. The NCBWA also selects the NCAA Division I Stopper and Freshman of the Year.

The Wallace Award has been voted on by a select group of coaches, media, media relations directors, and the Wallace Award committee since its inception in 2004.

The Wallace Award presentation was a key component of the College Baseball Foundation’s July events, which also includes the National College Baseball Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony. Since its inception

in 2005, the Hall of Fame has named 47 inductees, including the 2009 class. The CBF and College Baseball Hall of Fame also are working on a permanent home for the hall in Lubbock, Texas. Currently, artifacts and trophies are housed in the Southwest Collection and University Archives at Texas Tech. The Wallace Award also is unveiling a new permanent trophy in time for the 2009 presentation.

The joint presentation and national telecast have been the brainchild of the participating groups for several months and have met with a solid initial response.

The 2008 Howser Trophy and Wallace Award recipient Buster Posey of Florida State had nothing but praise for the awards committees and his experiences in Lubbock and Omaha.

“I think college baseball will benefit from the added exposure,” said the consensus college player of the year and San Francisco Giants signee. “I really like the idea of pulling some of these awards together. Lubbock is a great place to have it. When you get in a big city, sometimes you lose sight of why you are really there. The hospitality in Lubbock was second to none.”

The Dick Howser Trophy was created in 1987, shortly after Howser’s death. Previous winners of the Howser Trophy are Mike Fiore, Miami, 1987; Robin Ventura, Oklahoma State, 1988; Scott Bryant, Texas, 1989; Alex Fernandez, Miami-Dade Community College South, 1990; Frank Rodriguez, Howard College (Texas), 1991; Brooks Kieschnick, Texas, 1992 and 1993; Jason Varitek, Georgia Tech, 1994; Todd Helton, Tennessee, 1995; Kris Benson, Clemson, 1996; J. D. Drew, Florida State, 1997; Eddy Furniss, LSU, 1998; Jason Jennings, P, Baylor, 1999; Mark Teixeira, 1B, Georgia Tech, 2000; Mark Prior, P, USC, 2001; Khalil Greene, SS, Clemson, 2002; Rickey Weeks, 2B, Southern U., 2003; Jered Weaver, P, Long Beach State, 2004; Alex Gordon, 3B, Nebraska, 2005; Brad Lincoln, P, Houston, 2006; David Price, P, Vanderbilt, 2007; and Buster Posey, C-UT, Florida State, 2008.

Wallace Award recipients have been Kurt Suzuki, C, Cal State Fullerton, 2004; Alex Gordon, 3B, Nebraska, 2005; Brad Lincoln, P, Houston, 2006; David Price, P, Vanderbilt, 2007; and Buster Posey, C-UT, Florida State, 2008.

Stopper Award recipients have been J. Brent Cox, Texas, 2005; Don Cxyz, Kansas, 2006; Luke Pihoda, Sam Houston State, 2007; and Joshua Fields, Georgia, 2008.

The combined total years of presentations for the Howser, Wallace, NCBWA Wilbur Snyppe Award for contributions to college baseball, Stopper, and 2009 Pitcher of the Year are 65 — not counting 2009 additions.

“We are very excited to continue moving forward with these plans,” Richardson said. “None of our past or present success would have been possible without the support of the Lubbock community and our generous sponsors, including United Supermarkets, City Bank, Diamond Sports, Mizuno, Rip Griffin Companies, University Medical Center, McDougal Companies, Lubbock Economic Development Agency, Lubbock Power & Light, and the City of Lubbock, and our new partner, the City of St. Petersburg.”