



## **REIGNING NAISMITH TROPHY WINNER TYLER HANSBROUGH HEADLINES 2008-09 EARLY-SEASON WATCH LIST**

### **Big East Conference Leads The Way With 11 Players**

**ATLANTA (Dec. 18, 2008)** – University of North Carolina forward Tyler Hansbrough takes aim at becoming just the third repeat winner in the 40-year history of the Naismith Trophy as he headlines the 2008-09 early season watch list, the Atlanta Tipoff Club announced today. Hansbrough, the third Tar Heel and 16<sup>th</sup> recipient from the Atlantic Coast Conference (ACC) to win the Naismith Trophy, would join Bill Walton (1972, 73, 74) and Ralph Sampson (1981, 82, 83) as the only multiple winners of the award, if he repeats again this year. The 6-9 senior from Poplar Bluff, Mo., is joined by teammates Wayne Ellington and Ty Lawson on the list.

The Big East Conference placed 11 candidates on the watch list, followed by the ACC with seven. The Southeastern Conference (SEC) and Pacific 10 (PAC-10) each placed six.

The watch list was compiled by the Atlanta Tipoff Club's Board of Selectors, which based its criteria on player performances from the previous year and expectations for the 2008-09 college basketball season. The watch list does not include incoming freshmen, although those student-athletes will be considered in the first vote in February, 2009. The Naismith Trophy presented by AT&T will be awarded at the 2009 NCAA Men's Final Four in Detroit, Mich.

"The talent level across all conferences continues to impress, and that will create an even greater challenge for our voting academy when it comes time to select the winner in April," said Gary Stokan, Atlanta Tipoff Club president. "And we look forward to this special season, our 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the most prestigious trophy in all of college basketball."

For the sixth consecutive season, presenting sponsor AT&T will once again set the standard in allowing fans to participate in determining this year's winner. Through the power and ease of text messaging, fan voting will account for an unprecedented 25% of the final results – more than any other national college basketball award. At the beginning of February, CBS' "AT&T at the Half" will feature a weekly Naismith Trophy update highlighting the players in contention.

In February, the Naismith Trophy voting academy, comprised of leading basketball journalists, coaches and administrators from around the country, will narrow its preseason list to the Top 30 players in the nation. Those players, and others who distinguish themselves throughout the season, will be eligible for the final ballot in March.

Other notable Naismith Men's College Player of the Year winners include Bill Walton, Larry Bird, Michael Jordan, Patrick Ewing and David Robinson. The Naismith Trophy is the most prestigious national award presented annually to college basketball's player of the year.

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For more information, visit [www.naismithawards.com](http://www.naismithawards.com).

**2008-09 Naismith Trophy Early Season Watch List:**

<b>Last</b>	<b>First</b>	<b>Class</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>School</b>
Abrams	A.J.	Sr.	Guard	Texas
Adrien	Jeff	Sr.	Forward	Connecticut
Akognon	Josh	Sr.	Guard	Cal. St. Fullerton
Blair	DeJuan	So.	Forward	Pittsburgh
Brockman	Jon	Sr.	Forward	Washington
Brown	Derrick	Jr.	Forward	Xavier
Budinger	Chase	Jr.	Forward	Arizona
Calathes	Nick	So.	Guard/Forward	Florida
Clark	Earl	Jr.	Guard/Forward	Louisville
Collins	Sherron	Jr.	Guard	Kansas
Collison	Darren	Sr.	Guard	UCLA
Cummard	Lee	Sr.	Guard	Brigham Young
Curry	Stephen	Jr.	Guard	Davidson
Downey	Devan	Jr.	Guard	South Carolina
Dozier	Robert	Sr.	Forward	Memphis
Ellington	Wayne	Jr.	Guard	North Carolina
Gibson	Taj	Jr.	Forward	Southern California
Griffin	Blake	So.	Forward	Oklahoma
Hansbrough	Tyler	Sr.	Forward	North Carolina
Harangody	Luke	Jr.	Forward	Notre Dame
Harden	James	So.	Guard	Arizona State
Henderson	Gerald	Sr.	Guard/Forward	Duke
Heytvelt	Josh	Sr.	Forward	Gonzaga
Hudson	Lester	Sr.	Guard	University of Tennessee-Martin
Hummel	Robbie	So.	Forward	Purdue
James	Dominic	Sr.	Guard	Marquette
James	Damion	Jr.	Guard/Forward	Texas
Jerrells	Curtis	Sr.	Guard	Baylor
Lawal	Gani	So.	Forward	Georgia Tech
Lawson	Ty	Jr.	Guard	North Carolina
Maynor	Eric	Sr.	Guard	Virginia Commonwealth
Mayo	Josh	Sr.	Guard	Illinois-Chicago
McAlarney	Kyle	Sr.	Guard	Notre Dame
McClinton	Jack	Sr.	Guard	Miami
McNeal	Jerel	Sr.	Guard	Marquette
Mills	Patrick	So.	Guard	Saint Mary's
Moore	E'Twuan	So.	Guard	Purdue
Morgan	Raymar	Jr.	Forward	Michigan State
Ogilvy	A.J.	So.	Center	Vanderbilt
Pargo	Jeremy	Sr.	Guard	Gonzaga
Patterson	Patrick	So.	Forward	Kentucky
Price	A.J.	Sr.	Guard	Connecticut
Reynolds	Scottie	Jr.	Guard	Villanova

Rice	Tyrese	Sr.	Guard	Boston College
Smith	Tyler	Jr.	Forward	Tennessee
Steele	Ronald	Sr.	Guard	Alabama
Thabeet	Hasheem	Jr.	Center	Connecticut
Vaden	Robert	Sr.	Guard/Forward	Alabama-Birmingham
Wilkinson	Gary	Sr.	Forward	Utah State
Young	Sam	Sr.	Forward	Pittsburgh

### **ABOUT THE ATLANTA TIPOFF CLUB**

The Atlanta Tipoff Club, an Atlanta Sports Council property, is committed to promoting the game of basketball and recognizing the outstanding accomplishments of those who make the game so exciting. The Atlanta Tipoff Club, founded in 1956, has presented the Naismith Trophy since UCLA's Lew Alcindor first won the award in 1969. Old Dominion's Anne Donovan won the inaugural Women's Naismith Trophy in 1983.

The Naismith Award has become an emblem of excellence for the game, recognizing the Men's and Women's College Basketball Player of the Year, Men's and Women's College Basketball Coach of the Year, as well as awards for outstanding achievement in high school basketball, officiating, and contribution to the game.

### **ABOUT AT&T**

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