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EWU'S BALDWIN NAMED COACH OF THE YEAR

OGDEN, Utah (Nov. 25, 2013) -For the second straight season, Eastern Washington's Beau Baldwin has been selected by his peers as the Big Sky Conference football Coach of the Year.

Baldwin guided Eastern Washington to an 8-0 conference record and a 10-2 regular season. The Eagles won the outright Big Sky Championship, becoming the first team other than Montana to finish perfect in league play since Nevada in 1991.

The Eagles will take the No. 3 overall seed and a No. 3 national ranking into the Division I Championship. Eastern Washington received a first-round bye, and will play at home on Saturday, Dec. 7.

"I am humbled very much," said Baldwin. "Especially in the sport of football, a coach of the year award is more accurately stated as a coaching staff of the year award. So much of it is because of what the assistant coaches do every year. I'm lucky to not only have great football guys, but great teachers and men on this staff. This type of award is a tribute to them. And no staff ever wins a coach of the year award without talented players, great leadership and outstanding character in the locker room. Our players exemplify that."

Baldwin and the Eagles opened the season with a bang, stunning No. 25 Oregon State of the Pac-12 49-46, becoming just the fourth FCS team ever to upset a ranked FBS opponent. The Eagles suffered back-to-back losses on the road to FBS Toledo and national FCS power Sam Houston State, but rebounded to win their final eight games of the regular season.

Eastern Washington's high-powered offense was led by sophomore quarterback Vernon Adams, who was named the Big Sky Offensive MVP on Monday. The Walter Payton Award candidate leads the nation in passing efficiency and total offense, and set a Big Sky single-season record with 46 touchdown passes. Redshirt freshman wide receiver Cooper Kupp was named the Freshman of the Year, and is a leading candidate to win the Jerry Rice Award as the nation's top freshman.

The Eagles rank in the top-10 nationally in scoring offense, total offense, and passing offense.

Eastern Washington's Big Sky championship was the third in four seasons under Baldwin. Over that span, EWU has compiled a 27-5 conference record. Baldwin led EWU to the 2010 National Championship, and a semifinal appearance in 2012.

In six seasons at EWU, Baldwin has compiled a 54-21 record, and a 38-10 mark in conference play. Baldwin's Coach of the Year is the seventh for an Eastern Washington Coach. Dick Zornes won the honor in 1992, followed by Mike Kramer in 1997. Paul Wulff was honored in 2001, 2004 and 2005.

Baldwin is a finalist for the Eddie Robinson Coach of the Year, which is presented annually by the Sports Network.

Baldwin's Eagles became the first team since Montana in 2009 to go undefeated in league play, and did so in a season when the league sent a record four teams to the playoffs.

"I also want to recognize and congratulate the other great coaches in the conference who work so hard," Baldwin said. "It's such a grind week-in and week-out in this great Big Sky Conference. I specifically want to congratulate coach (Jerome) Souers, coach (Mick) Delaney and coach (Ed) Lamb for the hard work they and their staffs put in to earn the right to play more football in the playoffs. Any of those coaches and their staffs could have won this award and it would have been just as deserving as our staff. I wish them luck as we all get the opportunity to continue our seasons."

Baldwin is assisted by John Graham (Associate Head Coach/Defensive Coordinator), Aaron Best (Offensive Coordinator/Offensive Line), Jeff Schmeddling (Safeties/Special Teams Coordinator), Ryan Sawyer (Defensive Line/Recruiting Coordinator), Junior Adams (Wide Receivers), Zak Hill (Quarterbacks), Josh Fetter (Linebackers), Brian Strandley (Tight Ends), Cherokee Valeria (Cornerbacks), and Kiel McDonald (Running Backs).