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MONTANA'S TINKLE SELECTED COACH OF THE YEAR

OGDEN, Utah (March 18, 2013) - For the second consecutive season, Montana's Wayne Tinkle has been selected as the Big Sky Conference Men's Basketball Coach of the Year by his peers.

Tinkle guided Montana to 19-1 conference record and the program's second consecutive regular-season conference title. The Grizzlies won their second straight Big Sky Championship last week, downing Weber State 67-64 in the title game.

Montana will take a 25-6 record into the second round of the NCAA Tournament on Thursday as the Grizzlies face Syracuse of the Big East Conference.

Tinkle and the Grizzlies won 25 games despite missing All-Conference guard Will Cherry for 10 games. Cherry, the two-time Big Sky Defensive Player of the Year, missed the first seven games of the season as he recovered from a broken foot. He missed three more games late in the season with a foot injury. Senior forward Mathias Ward also missed the final seven games with a foot injury.

Montana's 19 regular-season conference wins were the most in league history. The Grizzlies set conference records for most consecutive regular-season conference victories with 25, a streak that started during the 2011-12 season. Montana has won 28 straight regular-season conference home games, and 31 in a row overall at home against Big Sky teams.

Over the past two seasons, Tinkle's Grizzlies have gone a combined 34-2 in conference regular-season games, and 38-2 overall against conference foes including postseason games. Montana's combined overall record the past two seasons is 50-13.

Tinkle, now in his seventh season at his alma mater, has amassed an overall record of 145-77. He is 85-31 in regular-season conference games. He ranks seventh in conference history in league victories. He is 10th on the Big Sky's all-time career victories list.

Tinkle has led Montana to at least 20 victories in each of the past four seasons. Over the past four seasons, his teams are a combined 93-34 with three Big Sky Championships. He is the first coach at Montana to lead the Grizzlies to the NCAA Tournament three times.

This marks just the sixth time a Grizzly coach has been honored by the Big Sky. Tinkle is the first Grizzly coach to win the honor twice. He is the eighth coach in league history to win the award in back-to-back seasons.

Montana junior Kareem Jamar was named the Big Sky's Most Valuable Player, while Cherry was named the Defensive Player of the Year. Cherry was named to the All-Conference First Team for the third straight season, while Jamar was tabbed for the second straight season. Ward was a Second Team All-Conference pick. Sophomore guard Jordan Gregory was named Honorable Mention All-Conference.

Tinkle was assisted by Jonathan Metzger-Jones, Freddie Owens and Kerry Rupp. Matt Erickson is the Director of Basketball Operations.