

Griner, Griffin, James win Top Honors at ESPY Awards

Written by Yolande Y. Lezine, Sports Editor
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The Baylor Bears duo of Brittney Griner and Robert Griffin III joined Miami Heat superstar LeBron James in winning the top honors at the 20th Annual ESPY Awards held in Los Angeles, California.

Griner, earned both the Female Athlete of the Year and Female College Athlete of the Year honors. The 6-8 post, led the Lady Bears to the 2012 NCAA National Championship, with an unprecedented 40-0 record, was the consensus national player of the year and also won the coveted Honda Cup.

She was joined by members of the Lady Bears women's basketball team and their head coach Kim Mulkey. The Lady Bears were a nominee for Best Team but the Miami Heat won the ESPY.

Griner, a Houston native, joins Candace Parker (2008), Taryne Mowatt (2007), Diana Taurasi (2004), Chamique Holdsclaw (1999), and Rebecca Lobo (1996) in claiming double honors. Parker, Taurasi, Holdsclaw and Lobo all played basketball, while Mowatt played softball at Arizona. Holdsclaw and Lobo were named Best Female College Basketball Player of the Year, as there wasn't a Female College Athlete of the Year category at that time.

Heisman Trophy winning Baylor quarterback Robert Griffin III earned the Male College Athlete of the Year.

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Griffin III led Baylor to just its second 10-victory season of all-time, and its first since 1980. The 2011 Heisman Trophy winner set or tied 54 school records in three full seasons at Baylor, finishing the 2011 season with school records of 4,293 yards, 37 passing touchdowns and a passer efficiency rating of 189.5 (second-best in NCAA FBS history).

A native of Copperas Cove, Texas, and graduate of Copperas Cove High School, Griffin III earned second-team Academic All-America honors from Capital One/CoSIDA in 2011 and is a 2010 Baylor graduate with a degree in political science. RG3 was selected No. 2 overall by the Washington Redskins in April's NFL Draft.

Miami Heat forward LeBron James was the big winner at the awards show, collecting three trophies including Male Athlete of the Year for helping the Heat win the 2012 NBA Championship.

James wasn't on hand to accept his awards because he was in Las Vegas with the rest of the United States National Team preparing for the upcoming 2012 Summer Olympics in London, England.

James outpolled tennis player Novak Djokovic, Detroit Tigers pitcher Justin Verlander and Green Bay Packers quarterback Aaron Rodgers in fan voting for male athlete honors. He also won in the championship performance and NBA player categories, while sharing in the best team award, with Juwan Howard and Mike Miller accepting for the Heat.

"Lebron has had a magnifying glass on him since he was 17 years old and I think he's handled himself really, really well, teammate Mike Miller said about James backstage. "He's an unbelievable teammate, unbelievable father, so those are the most important things. He's just a likeable guy. He's a great basketball player to have."