



'MANNYWOOD' NAMED TOP SPORTS MOMENT FOR 2008

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Beverly Hills, Calif. (January 23, 2009) – The L.A. Dodgers acquisition of slugger Manny Ramirez and his monumental impact on and off the field -- the phenomenon that became known as “Mannywood” -- was named the top sports moment of 2008 at the 4th annual **L.A. Sports Awards**, presented by the Los Angeles Sports Council.

On July 31, just minutes before baseball’s trade deadline, the Dodgers acquired Ramirez from Boston. The future Hall of Famer proceeded to bat .396 with 17 home runs and 53 RBIs in the season’s final two months, leading the team to the National League Championship Series for the first time in twenty years.

Sporting uniform #99 beneath his famous dreadlocks, Ramirez’ engaging style and winning attitude inspired his teammates and captivated the city.

Ramirez and the Dodgers were honored at a star-studded awards presentation held tonight at The Beverly Hilton.

The L.A. Sports Awards were created by the Sports Council in 2005 to recognize the year’s biggest and best moments in sports in the Los Angeles/Orange County area.

In other award presentations, **Kobe Bryant** of the L.A. Lakers was selected as 2008 “Sportsman of the Year” and **Candace Parker** of

the L.A. Sparks was named "Sportswoman of the Year." Lakers General Manager **Mitch Kupchak** was chosen "Sports Executive of the Year" and Lakers Coach **Phil Jackson** received the "Coach of the Year" award.

Highlights of tonight's show will be televised in a one-hour special on FSN Prime Ticket on Friday, January 30, with several repeat broadcasts to follow.

During the awards gala the overall Top 10 moments of 2008 were announced in ranked order. They are:

1. **Dodgers Get Manny:** Manny Ramirez turns Los Angeles into "Mannywood" and leads the Dodgers to the National League Championship Series. (July 31)
2. **Kobe Nets MVP:** Kobe Bryant wins his first NBA Most Valuable Player award. (May 6)
3. **Lezak's Golden Touch:** Irvine 's Jason Lezak swims the anchor leg of the men's 4 x 100 meter freestyle relay, leading the U.S. team to gold and thereby preserving the second of Michael Phelps' eight gold medals. (August 11)
4. **Lakers Return to Finals:** The Lakers defeat San Antonio in five games to win the Western Conference championship and advance to the NBA Finals. (May 29)
5. **Dodgers Advance to NLCS:** The Dodgers defeat the Cubs in a three-game sweep of their Division Series to advance to the National League Championship Series for the first time since 1988. (October 4)
6. **Bruins Earn Third Straight Final Four Trip:** UCLA's men's basketball team swept through the West Regional to earn its third consecutive trip to the NCAA Final Four. (March 29)
7. **Trojans Win Pac-10, Again:** USC's football team defeats UCLA, 28-7, to earn an unprecedented seventh straight Pac-10 championship. (December 6)

8. **Walsh & May Repeat in Beach Volleyball:** Kerri Walsh and Misty May-Treanor win their second consecutive Olympic gold medal in beach volleyball at the Beijing Games. (August 21)
9. **Angels Reach 100 Wins:** On the last day of the regular season the Angels set a club record with their 100th victory in a win over Texas. (September 28)
10. **Parker Shines in Rookie Campaign:** Candace Parker becomes the first player in WNBA history to win the league's Most Valuable Player and Rookie of the Year awards in the same year. (October 5)

Eighteen other awards also were presented tonight to each of our major local teams and universities – plus Golf, Horse Racing, Motor Sports, and Tennis – recognizing their greatest moment of the year. Those winners were determined by online fan voting conducted by the L.A. Sports Council on its website, www.lasports.org. Balloting took place from Dec. 15 thru Jan. 15. A complete list of those winners can be found on the Council's website beginning on Monday.

Sportsman of the Year honoree Bryant was recognized not only for his individual excellence, but for his commitment to making his teams better as well. Bryant had a brilliant 2008 on the floor at Staples Center and in the Olympic basketball tournament in Beijing, leading the Lakers into the NBA Finals and then the U.S. Olympic team to a gold medal.

Parker turned heads in '08 by becoming the first WNBA player to win the league's Rookie of the Year and MVP in the same season. The University of Tennessee standout also won a gold medal with Team USA at the Beijing Olympics.

Kupchak was the recipient of the prestigious Executive award for his outstanding work -- most notably, acquiring star Pau Gasol -- as architect of the 2008 NBA finalists, while Jackson was honored for his skill in guiding the Lakers back to the Finals for the first time in four years.

A blue-ribbon media panel chose the overall Top 10 moments and ranked them in order of importance. The panel also selected the Sportsman, Sportswoman, Sports Executive, and Coach of the Year. The panel was comprised of representatives from the local print and electronic media and was chaired by noted local sports historian Rich Perelman.

A moment is defined as a specific instant in time (such as a winning goal, hit or shot), an individual or team milestone, an upset victory, a remarkable game, a special event, or a career achievement. Nominated moments must have taken place in the local area or have involved a local athlete or team.

The Greatest Moments event is a fundraiser for the non-profit Sports Council, which will utilize the proceeds to further its mission of promoting economic development through sports in Southern California. For further information, please visit the Sports Council website at www.lasports.org.