



## **Sportexe Names 2006 Football Coach of the Year Winners**

*Sportexe names their 2006 coaches awards; recipients are NFL: Sean Payton- New Orleans Saints, NCAA Div.I: Art Briles-University of Houston, NCAA Div I-AA: David Bennet- Coastal Carolina University, NCAA Div. II: Billy O'Boyle-Chadron State College, NCAA Div. III: Frank Miriello-Washington & Lee University, NAIA: Dino Kaklis- Bethel College, Junior College: Brad Franchione- Blinn College, High School: Bill Redell- Westlake Village Oaks Christian.*

Round Rock, TX, December 20, 2006 --([PR.com](http://PR.com))-- Sportexe® is proud to announce the winners of its inaugural Football Coach of the Year award for 2006. As one of the global leaders in the synthetic turf system industry, Sportexe thoroughly reviewed candidates nationwide to find coaches from high school, collegiate and professional levels that demonstrate the same quality, integrity and performance that has become synonymous with the Sportexe brand.

Dedicated to providing proven, technology-rich synthetic field systems worldwide, Sportexe has developed a reputation for unsurpassed quality - from start to finish. Since its incorporation in 1989, Sportexe has been perfecting the finest details that go into making better, safer, and higher performing athletic surfaces.

This dedication to quality has led Sportexe to where it is today - underfoot of many of the most prestigious teams and sports facilities from around the globe. Sportexe clients include the Baltimore Ravens, New Orleans Saints, Buffalo Bills, San Francisco 49ers, LSU, University of Alabama, University of California at Berkeley, University of Southern Mississippi and De la Salle High School.

This year's winners include:

- NFL: Sean Payton, New Orleans Saints
- NCAA Division I-A: Art Briles, University of Houston
- NCAA Division I-AA: David Bennett, Coastal Carolina University (Conway,S.C.)
- NCAA Division II: Billy O'Boyle, Chadron State College (Neb.)
- NCAA Division III: Frank Miriello, Washington & Lee University (Va.)
- NAIA: Dino Kaklis, Bethel College (Tenn.)
- Junior College: Brad Franchione, Blinn College (Brenham, Texas)
- High School: Bill Redell, Westlake Village Oaks Christian (Calif.)

NFL: Sean Payton, New Orleans Saints - Only 11 months have passed since replacing six-year head coach Jim Haslett, and already first time head coach Sean Payton has guided the New Orleans Saints to a 9-5 record and put it in position for a championship run with its first playoff berth in six years - only its sixth appearance in franchise history.

The Saints, victims of Hurricane Katrina, went 3-13 in 2005 after being forced to evacuate the city and played the entire season with no home crowd, no home practice facility, and no home stadium and - in some instances - no home period.



Now, the Saints with only one playoff victory in its 40-season existence are looking to climb out of the NFL cellar and symbolically lift the City of New Orleans out of the turbulent shadow caused by the destructive aftermath of two vicious hurricanes in the fall of 2005.

Payton, a protégé of Bill Parcells while serving as assistant head coach with the Dallas Cowboys in 2003-05, has never wavered from the task nor shirked his responsibility of the rebirth of New Orleans and its football team.

With the help of former San Diego Charger quarterback Drew Brees, who signed as a free agent this season after undergoing career-threatening shoulder surgery in January, and Heisman winner Reggie Bush, the second overall pick in the 2006 draft, Payton's Saints are no longer the nation's "feel good" story and are now a "real good" story with realistic Super Bowl aspirations.

NCAA Division I-A: Art Briles, University of Houston - With a Conference USA championship, a third bowl game in four years and its first 10-win season since 1990, it's no wonder the University of Houston's Art Briles is on the shortlist of many schools looking to fill current head coaching vacancies.

Houston's conference title, its first since C-USA's inaugural season in 1996, is the crowning achievement of the rebuilding plan at Houston as the Cougars have come from a winless season in 2001, two years prior to Briles' arrival, to a 10-3 record with league title during his fourth year at the helm of his alma mater.

The former Cougar wide receiver will be leading Houston, which finished sixth in the nation in total offense and 11th in scoring, averaging 439.9 yards and 32.8 points per game, to face Steve Spurrier's South Carolina squad in the AutoZone Liberty Bowl on Dec. 29 in Memphis.

Briles was named the C-USA Coach of the Year and is a finalist for the Eddie Robinson Coach of the Year award. Briles becomes just the second head coach in UH history to pick up coach-of-the-year honors.

NCAA Division I-AA: David Bennett, Coastal Carolina University (Conway, S.C.) - Only two other programs (Florida Atlantic and Georgia Southern) have ever reached the I-AA (now the Football Championship Subdivision) playoffs quicker than David Bennett's Coastal Carolina University football team.

This year in just the fourth year of play, Bennett led Coastal to a 9-2 record, including a 4-0 mark in the Big South to earn its third consecutive Big South crown and the program's first-ever berth in the NCAA Division I Football Championships. CCU is the first Big South representative ever to earn an invitation, and only the second school from a non-automatic bid conference to earn a berth (Cal Poly - 2005) in the last 10 years.

Bennett has a 34-10 record during his four years with the Chants and has never had a losing season in his 11-year coaching career (97-27 overall). At Catawba, he led the Indians to three consecutive appearances



in the NCAA Division II playoffs, including a run into the national semifinal round in 2001.

**NCAA Division II:** Bill O'Boyle, Chadron State College (Neb.) - Head coach Bill O'Boyle led Chadron State College to one of the biggest turnarounds in college football this season. The Eagles were 4-6 last fall and finished at 12-1 this season. Highlights this year included winning the Rocky Mountain Athletic Conference championship and advancing to the Division II Elite Eight after winning the first playoff game in the school's history.

O'Boyle, who served 14 years as a Chadron State assistant coach before taking the helm in 2005, also coached junior running back Danny Woodhead to the 2006 Harlon Hill Trophy, which is awarded to the Division II player of the year. It was the third straight nomination for Woodhead.

**NCAA Division III:** Frank Miriello, Washington & Lee University (Va.) - Coach Frank Miriello, who was named the Old Dominion Athletic Conference coach of the year, led Washington & Lee University to its first conference championship since the 1985 season. The Generals finished the 2006 campaign with a 7-4 overall record and a 5-1 mark in the ODAC. Additionally, the Generals made their first-ever appearance in the NCAA Division III Football Playoffs.

A four-time ODAC Coach of the Year, Miriello recently completed his 12th season with the Generals and claims a 61-58-1 (.513) overall record. His 61 wins rank second all-time at W&L, just 17 wins shy of surpassing Gary Fallon (1978-94) for the top spot. His .513 winning percentage is also the third-best by a W&L coach since 1926.

**NAIA:** Dino Kaklis, Bethel College (Tenn.) - Bethel College (Tenn.) head coach Dino Kaklis is the embodiment of heart, determination and hard work. Kaklis, who coached the No. 8-ranked Wildcats to a school best 10-3 season, its second straight Mid-South Western Division title and an NAIA quarterfinal playoff berth.

Bethel finished 7-1 in conference play and was a perfect 7-0 at home this season, including a playoff win over Friends University.

In 2005, Bethel ended the season 7-4 going 6-2 in Mid-South play and a perfect 5-0 in the Western Division. This was their best season since football was reinstated at Bethel in 1993 and its first winning season in more than 70 years. Bethel finished the season ranked No. 23 in the NAIA poll, but failed to make the playoffs.

**Junior College:** Brad Franchione, Blinn College (Brenham, Texas) - Second-year head coach Brad Franchione, son to Texas A&M football head coach Dennis Franchione, guided Blinn College (12-0) to its third NJCAA national championship with a 19-6 victory over a No. 2-ranked Pearl River (Miss.) Community College in the Pilgrim's Pride Bowl Classic on Saturday, Dec. 9. The Buccaneer's had captured the Southwest Junior College Football Conference title with a 20-14 overtime win over No. 17-ranked Kilgore on Dec. 2.



It was Blinn's first conference title and national title since 1996, when the Buccaneers won their second of two consecutive national championships under head coach Willie Fritz. The Buccaneers, which boasted the nation's top defense, are now 19-3 in two seasons under Franchione.

High School: Bill Redell, Westlake Village Oaks Christian (Calif.) - Westlake Village Oaks Christian head coach Bill Redell extended the winning streak to 46 games as the USA TODAY No. 6-ranked Lions won the first "official" California state high school football championship in 79 years by defeating Cardinal Newman of Santa Rosa 27-20 in overtime in the California Interscholastic Federation's Division III title game Saturday, Dec. 16.

Oaks Christian (15-0) became the first team to win the state championship since Kern County Union High, now Bakersfield High, won in 1927, and only the second team in state history to finish the season 15-0. The Lions also produced the second-highest point total (797) in state history, trailing Bloomington's 880 points in 14 games in 1994.

Thanks to Canyon's 27-13 Division I state championship victory over Concord's De La Salle, which entered the game ranked No. 1 nationally, Oaks Christian was recognized by Cal-Hi Sports as State Team of the Year.

#### About Sportexe:

With offices in Ontario, Texas, and Georgia, Sportexe is dedicated to delivering top notch synthetic turf solutions to each and every client. As an acknowledged leader in the industry, the U.S Company prides itself on delivering products that feature the latest in innovation and superior engineering with an emphasis on research and development. Currently Sportexe is the exclusive or official turf system supplier for The Arena Football League, (AFL/AF2), National Lacrosse League (NLL), Major Indoor Soccer League (MISL), U.S. Indoor Soccer Association, and the National Field Hockey Coaches Association (NFHCA). Additionally, Sportexe partners with the National Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association (NIAAA). Sportexe has also made tremendous progress in the international scene by securing relationships with both the International Hockey Fédération (FIH), and the Federation International de Football Association (FIFA).

For additional information and an inside look at our cutting-edge products, please visit [www.sportexe.com](http://www.sportexe.com)

###



**Contact Information:**

Sportexe

Nic Vlcek

512-744-0342

[Contact via Email](#)

[www.sportexe.com](http://www.sportexe.com)

**Online Version of Press Release:**

You can read the online version of this press release at: <http://www.pr.com/press-release/25464>