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2016 NFHCA Hall of Fame Profile: Robin Balducci

CHANDLER, Ariz. – Through her years as both a player and coach, Robin Balducci has led the way for outstanding accomplishments in the field hockey program at the University of New Hampshire.

In recognition of her achievements, Balducci will be formally inducted in the National Field Hockey Coaches Association (NFHCA) Hall of Fame on January 5. The induction ceremony will be held during the 2017 NFHCA Annual Convention from January 4-6 at Naples Beach Hotel & Golf Club in Naples, Florida.

A 1985 graduate, Balducci was a standout student-athlete at UNH who excelled not only in field hockey but also in ice hockey and lacrosse. A starting goalkeeper her senior year, Balducci led the UNH field hockey squad to the NCAA Tournament and was selected to the United States National Team. She still holds the UNH school record with 31 shutouts. Balducci also was the starting goalkeeper for the lacrosse team that won the only NCAA championship in school history, and ranks sixth on the ice hockey all-time scoring list.

After spending three years as an assistant at Northeastern, Balducci returned to New Hampshire and would be on her way to becoming a coaching institution. She became head coach of the program in 1991, and has led UNH to four NCAA Tournament appearance and 21 overall postseason trips including conference tournaments. In her 25 seasons entering the 2016 campaign, Balducci became the school's all-time winningest head coach by directing the Wildcats to 254 victories.

Balducci led her program to success from the start of her tenure, and in 1998 the Wildcats broke through with a trip to the NCAA Tournament while going 14-7 overall. After another winning season the following year, UNH made it back to the NCAA tourney in 2000 while posting a 14-8 record.

Balducci directed the Wildcats to another run of success as UNH posted five straight winning seasons from 2009-13. The Wildcats won the America East tournament title and made it to the NCAA Tournament in both 2011 and 2013, and claimed the conference's regular-season crown in four straight

years from 2010-13. Balducci was honored as the America East Coach of the Year for each of those four seasons as UNH posted a 19-1 record in conference games and made the tournament final each season.

Balducci has won six America East Coach of the Year awards, also claiming the honor in both 1998 and 2000. She was named the NFHCA Northeast Region Coach of the Year winner in both 1998 and 2011. Balducci directed the Wildcats to a record of 254-247-4 in her 25 seasons entering the 2016 campaign, with a 95-62-2 mark in America East play. Eighteen Wildcats have earned All-America honors during her tenure, including five first-team recipients.

Balducci's achievements in field hockey go far beyond her success at UNH. She was selected to the coaching staff for the United States National Team in 1995, and the next summer she traveled to Germany with the squad to compete for the Champions Trophy. She also worked with the U-21 National Team and was a member of the coaching staff for the Pan American Games in Argentina where the United States won the silver medal. Balducci has been involved with United States Field Hockey Association developmental camps since 1985 and continues to work at both the A and B levels.

In addition to her NFHCA Hall of Fame selection, Balducci was previously inducted to the UNH Department of Women's Athletics Hall of Honor in 1998 in recognition of her individual accomplishments and in 1994 as part of the school's national championship lacrosse team.