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DUNN, TEBOW HIGHLIGHT 2017 FLORIDA SPORTS HALL OF FAME INDUCTION CLASS

Enshrinement set for Nov. 8 in Ponte Vedra

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

ST. PETERSBURG, Fla. -- A former NFL "Man of the Year," a future Major League Baseball Hall of Famer, a Heisman Trophy recipient, and a man credited with taking the PGA to new levels of popularity and profitability highlight the 2017 Florida Sports Hall of Fame (FSHOF) Class announced today by FSHOF President Barry Smith.

Selected for induction were former FSU and NFL star running back **WARRICK DUNN**, perennial Atlanta Braves all-star **LARRY "CHIPPER" JONES**, University of Florida Heisman Trophy and multi-sport icon **TIM TEBOW**, and former PGA Tour Commissioner **TIM FINCHEM**. **COLLEEN WALKER**, a former Florida State and LPGA star, will also be inducted posthumously.

In addition, the 1967 Coral Gables High School football team, declared the state's "Team of the Century" by the Florida High School Athletic Association, will be honored on the 50th anniversary of its state and national championship run.

The induction ceremony will take place on Wednesday, Nov. 8 at the Sawgrass Marriott Golf Resort and Spa in Ponte Vedra Beach, FL with a portion of the event proceeds benefitting hurricane and flood relief in Florida. For sponsorship and ticket information, please visit www.FlasportsHOF.org.

“Without question, this is one of the most talented, eclectic and accomplished classes in Florida Sports Hall of Fame history,” Smith said. “The contributions these individuals have made within their chosen sport, to their communities, the nation and indeed on a worldwide stage, demand recognition and we are honored to welcome them as the newest members of the Florida Sports Hall of Fame.”

A native of Baton Rouge, LA, **Dunn** broke onto the national scene at Florida State University as a freshman in 1993 where he helped the Seminoles to its first national championship. In four seasons, Dunn rushed for a then-school record 3,959 yards and earned first team All-America honors as a senior. He also earned All-America honors as a member of FSU’s 4 x 100 relay team in track.

Dunn would go on to play 12 seasons in the National Football League for the Tampa Bay Bucs (1997-2001, 2008) and the Atlanta Falcons (2002-07). Dunn’s 10,967 career rushing yards ranks 21st on the NFL all-time list. He also gained more than 4,300 yards receiving and scored 61 touchdowns in his career. Dunn played in three pro bowls and was the winner of the 1997 Offensive Rookie of the Year Award.

He is equally known for his charitable works. Dunn founded the Home for the Holidays Program in 1997, which provides down payment assistance for single mothers to purchase homes. In 2002, he expanded those efforts by founding Warrick Dunn Charities and also joined other athletes in founding Athletes for Hope in 2007. He played a major role in helping raise money for Hurricane Katrina relief efforts. In 2005, he was named the NFL’s Walter Payton Man of the Year for his works in the community.

A native of Pierson, Fla., **Jones** was the first pick overall in the 1990 Major League Draft by Atlanta and would go on to a stellar 19-year career with the Braves. His career totals included a career batting average of .303 with 468 home runs and 1,623 RBI.

Jones was the 1999 National League MVP in a season where he hit .319 with 45 home runs and 110 RBI. He had 14 seasons with 20 or more home runs and nine seasons with 100-plus RBI. An eight-time all-star and a 1995 World Series Champion, Jones had his number “10” retired by the Atlanta Braves and is widely speculated to be a first ballot Hall of Fame selection in 2018.

Chipper’s Family Foundation has been a champion of charitable organizations that raise money for research of children’s diseases, including the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation, the

Rally Foundation and the National Pediatric Cancer Foundation. Jones' Foundation has given more than \$3 million to these charities and to Stetson University, where his father and godfather played baseball and coached.

Tebow played college football at the University of Florida, where he won the Heisman Trophy as a sophomore in 2007. He played an instrumental role in helping the Gators to the 2006 National Championship as a freshman and was the starting quarterback for Florida's 2008 national title campaign as a junior. He guided the Gators to a 13-1 record as a senior.

At the conclusion of his college career, he held the Southeastern Conference's all-time records in both career passing efficiency and total rushing touchdowns, appearing second and tenth (respectively) in the NCAA record book in these categories. He was a two-time SEC Player of the Year and was named All-America three times.

Tebow would go on to play three years in the NFL, compiling an 8-6 record as a starter for the Denver Broncos in 2011 and currently plays professional baseball in the New York Mets organization. He is also an analyst for the SEC Network.

Tebow is also well-known for his philanthropic efforts. As a college student, he founded "First and 15," an organization that raised funds for an orphanage in the Philippines. He launched the Tim Tebow Foundation in January 2010, with the stated mission of bringing Faith, Hope and Love to those needing a brighter day in their darkest hour of need. Tebow created "A Night to Shine," to provide a prom night experience to special needs teenagers. "A Night to Shine" has become a global event with more than 300 satellite proms occurring in 11 countries.

In 2013, Tebow was designated a Great Floridian by Florida Governor Rick Scott in recognition of his "major contributions to the progress and welfare" of Florida.

A University of Virginia law school graduate and former White House aide in the Carter Administration, **Finchem** served as Commissioner of the PGA TOUR from 1994-2016.

Finchem left a major imprint upon the organization in a multitude of areas.

Under his leadership, the PGA TOUR has continued its tremendous growth, from record purses, revenue and charitable contributions; to also leading a number of major global golf initiatives.

Finchem's tenure has included the creation of the FedExCup and Presidents Cup; formation of the International Federation of PGA Tours, World Golf Championships and World Golf Foundation; introduction of The First Tee youth initiative; creation of PGA TOUR Latinoamérica, the Mackenzie Tour-PGA TOUR Canada and PGA TOUR China.

He is also credited with taking a leading role in efforts to return golf to the Olympics for the 2016 Games in Brazil.

A native of Jacksonville, **COLLEEN WALKER** played collegiate golf at Florida State University where she was named the team's most valuable golfer in both her junior and senior seasons (1977-78).

She would go on to a stellar professional career, winning nine LPGA Tournaments including one major championship, the 1997 du Maurier Ltd. Classic. She won the LPGA Vare Trophy for low scoring average in 1998 and the 2004 Heather Farr Player Award given annually to the LPGA golfer "who, through her hard work, dedication and love of the game of golf, has demonstrated determination, perseverance and spirit in fulfilling her goals as a player."

Walker passed away at age 56 after a lengthy and valiant battle with breast cancer in 2012.

Prior to the induction ceremony, the FSHOF will host a Legacy VIP Reception with the inductees, current Hall of Fame members and event sponsors. A "Fame for Kids Celebrity Golf Tournament" will take place the following day.

About the Florida Sports Hall of Fame

The Florida Sports Hall of Fame recognizes and honors Florida's greatest sports figures and leverages this collective celebrity to promote fitness awareness, education and sports activities among our state's youth and adults. Equally important is the promotion of the qualities of discipline and honor among sports participants. To be considered for induction into the Hall, a candidate must have either been born in the state of Florida or had significant portion of their careers occur within the state of Florida.