

Memmel is one of 10 finalists for 2005 Sullivan Award
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INDIANAPOLIS, Ind. – 2005 world all-around champion Chellsie Memmel of West Allis, Wis., is among the 10 finalists for the 76th Sullivan Award. Fans can vote for their choice for the winner at sullivanaward.usatoday.com. The Sullivan Award, sponsored by the Amateur Athletic Union (AAU), is presented annually to the USA's top amateur athlete.

In addition to Memmel, the other nine nominees are: basketball – Seimone Augustus and J.J. Redick; diving – Laura Wilkinson; football – Reggie Bush, Matt Leinart and Vince Young; skiing – Bode Miller; taekwondo – Steven Lopez; and track and field – Kerron Clement.

"We are thrilled that Chellsie is one of the finalists for the Sullivan Award," said Steve Penny, president of USA Gymnastics. "Chellsie had a phenomenal year in 2005, culminating with her becoming the first U.S. woman in 11 years to win the world all-around title. This recognition is certainly well deserved."

At the 2005 World Gymnastics Championships in Melbourne, Australia, Memmel became the first U.S. woman since 1994 to win the women's world all-around title, the sport's most prestigious title behind the Olympic crown. She also earned two world silver medals, the balance beam and uneven bars. In September 2005, Memmel won three gold medals (all-around, uneven bars and balance beam) at the Pan Am Championships, as well as anchored the U.S. Team that won the team gold medal. She also won the uneven bars title at the American Cup, a World Cup event. At the 2005 Visa Championships, she finished second in the all-around, uneven bars and balance beam. Memmel is an "A" student and member of the Honor Roll at West Allis Central High School. Memmel was a Sullivan Award finalist in 2003 for her contributions to the U.S. Women's Team that won the USA's first world team title at the 2003 World Championships, where she also won the gold medal for uneven bars.

Paul Hamm (2004) and Kurt Thomas (1979) are the only gymnasts to win the Sullivan Award.

Known as the "Oscar" of sports awards and older than The Heisman, the AAU Sullivan Award honors the outstanding amateur athlete in the United States. It has been presented annually by the AAU since 1930 as a salute to founder and past president of the Amateur Athletic Union and a pioneer in amateur sports, James E. Sullivan. Based on the qualities of leadership, character, sportsmanship, and the ideals of amateurism, the AAU Sullivan Award goes far beyond athletic accomplishments and honors those who have shown strong moral character.