

Melo, USA Basketball's Male Athlete of the Year 2006

Contributed by Emre
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The Denver Nuggets' Carmelo Anthony, who helped lead the 2006 USA Men's Senior National Team to a 13-1 overall mark and a bronze medal and an 8-1 record at the 2006 FIBA World Championship, was selected the 2006 USA Basketball Male Athlete of the Year, USA Basketball today announced.

"I'm very honored to receive this award," Anthony said. "I want to thank Mr. Colangelo and Coach K and his staff for giving me the opportunity to play for this team. I worked extremely hard over the summer to prepare because I take great pride in playing for my country. I also want to thank my teammates. They're a great group of guys and we had a lot of fun playing together. I look forward to continuing to work hard for USA Basketball and helping us get that gold medal in '08."

The USA's leading scorer at the 2006 FIBA World Championship averaging 19.9 ppg., Anthony was the lone American named to the five-man 2006 FIBA World Championship All-Tournament Team.

"The USA Basketball Executive Committee identified a well-deserving athlete for this award," said USA Basketball Executive Director Jim Tooley. "Carmelo was a team tri-captain and the USA's leading scorer. His outstanding performance at the World Championship was a major factor in the team's 8-1 record and bronze medal finish. All of us at USA Basketball are proud of the leadership he provided for the team and the way in which he represented his country."

Selected by the USA Basketball Executive Committee as the recipient of its Male Athlete of the Year award, USA Basketball also submitted Anthony for the U.S. Olympic Committee's 2006 Male Athlete of the Year award, which will be announced by the USOC in January 2007.

"Carmelo was on a mission to make our team and he did much more than that, he led our team. He had a terrific summer with the USA team and demonstrated his overall basketball talents and his leadership. In my mind he is deserving and a great choice for this award," stated USA Senior National Team Managing Director Jerry Colangelo.

"Carmelo was the ultimate team player," offered USA Senior Men's National Team head coach Mike Krzyzewski. "He had an outstanding summer, starting with our training camp in Las Vegas and ending with being a dominant player in the FIBA World Championship. He was a man after victories and showed how classy and mature he was in our one defeat. I love the way he plays the game, but I love the way he carries himself as a leader on the Senior National Team even better. He is very deserving of this award. With Carmelo, Dwyane Wade and LeBron James as the core of our National Team over the next two years, we have a lot to look forward to in USA Basketball."

Anthony, a tri-captain of the USA World Championship Team, averaged 19.9 ppg., 3.7 rpg., 1.9 spg. and 1.4 apg. He shot 50.4 percent from the field and 44.0 percent from 3-point, and his 179 points scored and 19.9 ppg. rank as the second most by a USA player in World Championship history, trailing only Luther Burden's 182 points and 20.2 ppg. average in 1974.

Among all 2006 World Championship participants, Anthony ranked sixth in scoring, ninth in 3-point field goals made (22) and tied for ninth in steals (1.9 spg.).

Anthony, the team's high scorer in five World Championship contests, opened preliminary group play with 21 points as the USA team earned a 111-100 victory over Puerto Rico, and in a hard-fought 94-85 victory over Italy, Anthony scored a USA World Championship record 35 points on 13-of-18 shooting from the field.

Advancing to the eighth-finals and faced with a win-or-go-home scenario, Anthony helped the USA claim its sixth straight win with an impressive 20-point outing against Australia. Moving on to the quarterfinals, Anthony tallied 19 points as the U.S. squad recorded a win over Germany. Next meeting an undefeated Greek team in semifinals play, the USA gold medal hopes ended when, despite a 27-point effort from Anthony, Greece posted a 101-95 victory over the Americans.

Prior to the 2006 FIBA World Championship, the USA cruised to 5-0 in its series of exhibition games, with Anthony averaging a team-leading 16.8 ppg. on 56.4 percent shooting from the field. Anthony led the USA scoring in three of the team's five exhibition games. In the USA's 114-69 win over Puerto Rico in Las Vegas, Nev., Anthony tallied 18 points, he scored 16 points in a 90-86 win over Brazil in Guangzhou, China, and 19 points as the USA topped Lithuania 111-88 in Seoul, South Korea...

Teammates of Anthony on the 2006-08 USA Senior National Team are: Gilbert Arenas (Washington Wizards); Shane Battier (Houston Rockets); Chauncey Billups (Detroit Pistons); Chris Bosh (Toronto Raptors); Bruce Bowen (San Antonio Spurs); Elton Brand (Los Angeles Clippers); Kobe Bryant (Los Angeles Lakers); Kirk Hinrich (Chicago Bulls); Dwight Howard (Orlando Magic); LeBron James (Cleveland Cavaliers); Antawn Jamison (Washington Wizards); Joe Johnson (Atlanta Hawks); Shawn Marion (Phoenix Suns); Brad Miller (Sacramento Kings); Adam Morrison (Charlotte Bobcats); Lamar Odom (Los Angeles Lakers); Chris Paul (New Orleans/Oklahoma City Hornets); Paul Pierce (Boston Celtics); J.J. Redick (Orlando Magic); Michael Redd (Milwaukee Bucks); Luke Ridnour (Seattle SuperSonics); Amaré Stoudemire (Phoenix Suns); and Dwyane Wade (Miami Heat).

The 2006-08 Men's Senior National Team and Duke University head coach Mike Krzyzewski was assisted by Jim Boeheim of Syracuse University, Mike D'Antoni of the Phoenix Suns and Nate McMillan of the Portland Trail Blazers.

Named a member of the 2006 All-NBA third team, Anthony helped lead the 2005-06 Denver Nuggets to the Western Conference Northwest Divisional title, a 44-38 regular season record and the 2006 NBA Playoffs. He averaged a career-best 26.5 ppg., 4.9 rpg., 2.7 apg. and 1.1 spg., while shooting career bests of 48.1 percent from the field and 80.8 percent from the foul line. Anthony finished the season ranked eighth overall in NBA scoring, fourth in field goals made, fifth in field goals attempted, seventh in free throws made and attempted and 19th in total efficiency points.

Anthony previously helped the USA capture bronze at the 2004 Olympics, playing in seven of the USA's nine games, averaging 2.4 ppg. As a member of the 2004 Senior National Team, Anthony averaged a team third-best 10.1 ppg., 2.8

rpg. and 2.0 apg. as the U.S. squad compiled a 5-1 record.

In 2002, Anthony was a member of the USA Junior World Championship Qualifying Team that finished with a 4-1 record and a bronze medal in Isla de Margarita, Venezuela. Starting all five games, he averaged a team-leading 15.6 ppg., a team second-best 6.2 rpg. and 1.8 apg. while shooting 54.1 percent from the field. Anthony tallied 23 points in a win over Argentina, 21 points and seven rebounds in a win over Mexico and 13 points and 10 boards in a loss to Venezuela.

Anthony also participated in the 2001 USA Basketball Men's Youth Development Festival for the silver medalist East Team and averaged a team-high 24.0 ppg., tying with LeBron James for the Festival's best scoring average. Shooting a Festival best 66.1 percent (39-of-59 FGs) from the field, Anthony also collected 4.3 rpg.

In capturing the 2005 USA Basketball Male Athlete of the Year honor, Anthony enters into the impressive company of previous honorees.

In its 27th year, the USA Basketball Athlete of the Year award has been garnered by notable athletes such as Shelden Williams (2005); Sean May (2004 co-recipient); Chris Paul (2004 co-recipient); Tim Duncan (2003); Reggie Miller (2002); Chris Duhon (2001); Alonzo Mourning (2000 and 1990); Gary Payton (1999); Elton Brand (1998); Earl Boykins (1997); Scottie Pippen (1996 and as a member of the 1992 U.S. Olympic Team); Ray Allen (1995); Shaquille O'Neal (1994); Michael Finley (1993); Christian Laettner (1991); Larry Johnson (1989); Dan Marjerle (1988); David Robinson (1986 and as a member of the 1992 U.S. Olympic Team); Chuck Person (1985); Michael Jordan (1984 co-recipient, 1983 and as a member of the 1992 U.S. Olympic Team), Sam Perkins (1984 co-recipient); Glenn Rivers (1982); Kevin Boyle (1981); and Isiah Thomas (1980).