FRANKFORT, KY -- Cumberland University's Jeremy Lewis was voted the Women's Basketball Coaches Association (WBCA) Russell Athletic/Region 5 Coach of the Year on Tuesday after leading the Bulldogs to a 30-2 record and the Mid-South Conference regular season and tournament titles.

By winning the award, Lewis is a finalist for the Russell Athletic/WBCA National Coach of the Year award.

Cumberland has been ranked in the Top 10 nationally since the first regular season poll of the year in December, reaching as high as No. 5 in the country, the highest ranking ever for the program. The Bulldogs won their first regular season and conference tournament titles since 1998-99, also in the Mid-South Conference, and set the school record for victories, surpassing the previous mark of 27 held by the 1998-99 and 2006-07 squads.

CU is making its fifth appearance in the NAIA National Tournament and first since 2007 when the club reached the championship game. The Bulldogs open the tournament Thursday at 5:15 Central Time against the Coastal College of Georgia.

The Hendersonville native has served as the head coach of the Bulldogs for the past four seasons after spending three seasons as an assistant coach for the men's program and one year as a graduate assistant for the women. Lewis also played his final three years of collegiate basketball at Cumberland after one year at Aquinas College.

The 2013 Russell Athletic/WBCA NAIA National Coach of the Year will be named during the 3rd annual WBCA Awards Show on Monday, April 8, in New Orleans, La. This event is part of the WBCA National Convention and is held in conjunction with the NCAA® Women's Final Four®.

CU opens play in the NAIA National Championships Thursday afternoon vs. Coastal Georgia.