

# East Lansing's Klarissa Bell voted Michigan's Miss Basketball

**The Associated Press**, March 15, 2010 7:12 p.m.

DETROIT - Before Monday, Klarissa Bell was just part of one of the best recruiting classes in Michigan State history.

Now, though, she has something that her heralded classmates don't: the Miss Basketball trophy.

The East Lansing senior was presented with the trophy Monday, finishing with 1,267 points in voting by the Basketball Coaches of Michigan. Grand Rapids Catholic Central's Annalise Pickrel finished second, with Grosse Pointe North's Ariel Braker third and Detroit Country Day's Madison Williams was fourth.

Pickrel and Williams will join Bell at Michigan State this fall. Braker is headed to Notre Dame.

"I'm really looking forward to playing with Annalise and Madison this fall - I thought one of them would win, because of their stats, or that Ariel would get it," Bell said.

"There's the three of us, plus a really good player coming from Indiana, and I can't wait to see what we can do together as freshmen."

Bell got the news Friday while helping at her mother's resale shop.

"My coach called and said 'Who am I speaking to?' and I told him it was me, and he said 'Am I really speaking to Miss Basketball?'," Bell said. "I didn't believe him. I kept asking him if he was kidding."

Bell wasn't the only one who was stunned by the news. Her mother, Krista Myles, ended up on the phone with East Lansing coach Rob Smith.

"Klarissa told me, and I thought she was joking, so I got on the phone with Coach Smith, and he told me, and I was like 'Where did you hear this?'" Myles said. "He told me he had heard it from the (Detroit) Free Press, so I finally believed it. This is so wonderful for Klarissa."

Bell, a shooting guard, is averaging 21 points, nine rebounds, four assists and four steals this season. East Lansing plays Rockford in Tuesday's Class A quarterfinals.

"Her teammates have been having fun with her - everyone wants to beat Miss Basketball in a shooting drill - but I think everyone involved in our program got goosebumps when we found out she had won," Smith said. "No one deserves this more than she does."

With a win Tuesday, Bell would get a chance to finish her high school career in her hometown and in the gym where she'll play her college games, as the semifinals and finals have moved to MSU's Breslin Center this season.

"(Michigan State) Coach (Suzy) Merchant keeps sending texts to the three of us saying that we're one step closer to getting to Breslin," Bell said. "I've only played there once in high school, but I'd like a couple more chances before I start there this fall."