

BCAM announces third class of “Retro” Mr. Basketball winners

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Six high school basketball stars of the past, culled from a list of 60 players mentioned on All-State, All-Tournament and All-Area teams from years gone by, were tagged as “Retro” Mr. Basketball winners by the Basketball Coaches Association of Michigan.

Michigan basketball fans eagerly await the annual announcement of the Hal Schram Mr. Basketball award winner. Given to the state’s top senior as voted by BCAM membership, the award is named after the late Hal Schram, a sportswriter who began his career at the *Lansing State Journal*, then covered athletics for the *Detroit Free Press* for more than 40 years. The award is jointly sponsored by BCAM and the *Free Press*. Sam Vincent of Lansing Eastern was the first recipient of the award in 1981. Bay City Western’s Matt Costello was named the 2012 recipient of the award.

The “Retro” Mr. Basketball program attempts to answer the question, “What if that award had been first given out in 1920?”

“The goal of the “Retro” Mr. Basketball project is to shine the spotlight on the state’s top prep players from 1920 to 1980,” notes Michigan High School Athletic Association historian, Ron Pesch. “Michigan’s past is stacked with great athletes. The “Retro” award is designed to celebrate the rich history of high school basketball in the state by recalling the exploits of many of the state’s greatest players, and honor those who would have been candidates for such an award had it existed at the time.”

This year marks the third year of a ten year program. In 2010, BCAM’s “Retro” committee selected seven winners from ballots for 1920, 1930, 1940, 1950, 1960, 1970 and 1980. Last year, the committee named winners for the years 1921, 1931, 1941, 1951, 1961 and 1971. The project will culminate in 2019, when the final six winners of the “Retro” award, will be named. At that time, Michigan’s list of “Mr. Basketball” winners will span 1920 through 2019 and total 100 names.

The ‘Retro’ committee focuses on a player’s athletic achievements during his prep playing days. While the events of life after high school may be recalled in a player’s biography, the award is based on what that player did in high school, with a spotlight on his senior year.

Meeting between sessions of the annual Michigan High School Athletic Association’s boys basketball championships, the ‘Retro’ committee reduced this year’s list of candidates to 27 finalists, and then selected this year’s six winners from that group.

Below is the list of players named “Retro” Mr. Basketball for each season, followed by brief biographies on this year’s nominees.

Biographies of 2012 nominees:

1922 Mr. Basketball

ROYAL CHERRY, GRAND RAPIDS UNION HIGH SCHOOL

Led Union to a 27-9 win over Kalamazoo Central for the 1922 Class A crown. Received high accolades in tournament play and was a unanimous selection for First Team All-Tournament honors at center. "Few high school men as capable as Cherry have ever taken part in a state tournament," stated an *Ann Arbor News* reporter at the time. "Combining speed with exceptional generalship, Cherry is one of the brightest prospects in years. Not only is a good basket shot and a competent free throw artist but he is also a general, who knows all phases of the game and handles his men in a capable manner." He later played at the University of Michigan.

1922 Finalists

(In alphabetical order)

Richard Doyle, Kalamazoo Central High School

Named to the Class A All-Tournament team. Played for Galesburg High School as a junior but attended high school at Kalamazoo Central in his senior year. (His brother, was a star football player for Kalamazoo College). Tall, husky, yet "fast on his feet", Doyle played guard and was a considered a "bear on defense." A strong rebounder and an ideal guard, Doyle was especially strong in the opposing team's end of the court. "In every game he played he broke up play after play." Solid track man. Later became the first basketball All-American at the University of Michigan.

Harry Lee, Niles High School

Scored 203 points in 25 games. One of three players from Niles named to the Class B All-Tournament first team. Team finished as Class B State Champion in 1922 and would repeat in 1923. Lee would later earn four basketball letters while at Western Normal (now Western Michigan University.) Later became a high school coach at St. Joseph High School, where he lead his 1946 Class B squad to the Class B state title.

James Scanlon, Negaunee High School

Helped lead Negaunee to the Upper Peninsula title and an entry in the State Tournament at Ann Arbor. While the team lost in their first round appearance to Kalamazoo, Negaunee emerged as the champion of the consolation series, earning third place honors in the tourney. Finished as the top individual point scorer in the tournament, "caging 22 field baskets in the four games he played." Strong on defense as well, Scanlon earn a first-team spot on the All-Tournament squad. Played the first semester of the 1922-23 season, but was a mid-year graduate, making him ineligible for the state tournament in 1923. Hence he was considered for the 1922 award.

1932 Mr. Basketball

LOWELL MATTESON, PORTAGE HIGH SCHOOL

According to longtime *Kalamazoo Gazette* Sports Editor Jerry Hagan, the "sensational sharpshooting of Matteson, Portage forward in each game, was the talk of the Class D tournament." Matteson scored 36 points in the final three rounds of the Class D tournament to lead Portage to the Class D State Championship. Finished the year with 229 points in 23 games.

1932 Finalists

(In alphabetical order)

Wayne Cruce, Highland Park High School

Two-time All-City selection by multiple Detroit papers. "Called by many the best basketball player in the city," according to the *Detroit Times*. Served as captain of the Polar Bears. Rated a solid ball handler and passer, who made good use of pivot. Intercepted many opposing team passes.

Donald King Lewis, Mt. Pleasant High School

Finished with 148 points for the season, including 30 in the final three rounds of the state tournament. Singled out as "one of the great individual stars of the tournament." In Mt. Pleasant's Class B championship victory over Niles, he scored 12 points on six field goals "thrown from all angles of the court for half of his team's points". Later attended the University of Michigan.

William Morris, Detroit Western High School

A 5-11, 160 pound guard. Two-time All-City selection, he was considered equally effective offensively as defensively. "A good ball handler with a keen eye for the basket," according to the *Detroit Free Press*. "Smart player under the basket and on rebounds. Has keen knowledge of the game's fine points and fundamentals."

1942 Mr. Basketball

LARRY SAVAGE, SAGINAW HIGH SCHOOL

A major contributor to Saginaw's rise to the state Class A championship. Leader of the Saginaw Valley Conference in scoring and was a unanimous All-Valley team selection and a Detroit Free Press All-State selection. Scored 155 points in 12 league games, chalked up 85 in six tournament contests. An all-around athlete, he was also one of the State's top fullbacks on the gridiron and considered an "excellent big league second-base project," according to the *Free Press*. Played football and baseball in college at Northwestern University. Longtime city manager of Traverse City.

1942 Finalists

(In alphabetical order)

Paul Bard, 6-0, 190, Guard, Muskegon High School

Named captain of the *Detroit Free Press* All-State team, Bard was recognized for his hard-working style and cool leadership under pressure. Scored 88 points in 13 regular season contests, then 47 points in tournament play. Provided one of the all-time classic moments of state tournament history when, with four seconds left in the contest, he stole an inbounds pass, then let lose a one-handed shot from behind half court that went in to send the Class A championship game with Saginaw into overtime. A three-sport man, he also won letters in football and baseball.

Lynn Chandnois, 6-2, 185, Flint Central High School

"Pivot artist who set an all-time scoring record for the Flint school and otherwise disported himself as a master of court technique," noted the *Free Press*. "Big, strong and hard-going, Lynn scored 23 points in two games, once against Saginaw's state champions. A fast, clever floor man, he won glowing accolades for his cage ability from practically every coach and official who saw him. He's a left-handed pivot man and an excellent foul shooter." A football All-American at Michigan State, he played seven seasons in the NFL for the Pittsburgh Steelers. A first-semester senior in the winter of 1942, he graduated mid-year in 1943, making him eligible for the 1942 Retro Mr. Basketball award.

Dillard Crocker, 6-2, center, Niles High School

Provided the offensive punch in leading Niles to the MHSAA Class B championship. Didn't see varsity action until the fifth game of this team's regular schedule, yet still scored 203 points in 16 games. Tallied 20 points against Ecorse in the title game to give Niles its first State title in 20 years. Played basketball while in WWII service, then professionally from 1948 to 1953, including six seasons with early NBA teams. Like Chandnois, a first-semester senior in the winter of 1942.

Jack Scott, 5-11, forward, Hazel Park High School

A forward on an average Hazel Park team, scored 268 points in 14 games to set a scoring record for Southern Oakland County competition. According to the *Free Press*, he rated head and shoulders over all others in the Detroit Metropolitan area. Earned nine varsity letters. Solid baseball player, Scott was also considered an outstanding third baseman prospect.

1952 Mr. Basketball

FRANK TANANA, 6-2, 203, guard, DETROIT ST. ANDREW HIGH SCHOOL

Twice named to the *Detroit Times* and *Detroit News* All-State team. According to the *News*, "...probably the standout in any class, His generalship and all-around ability were big factors as St. Andrew went through a second season without a loss." "He was the tournament's No. 1 topic," wrote Hal Schram in the *Detroit Free Press* following the finals, "and without doubt, the most valuable player to come out of this state in a decade."

1952 Finalists

(In alphabetical order)

Fred Corbus, 6-2, St. Louis High School

The state's prep scoring king in 1952, Corbus totaled 406 points in 16 games for a 31.6 per game average. Scored 30 points in his team's 53-34 win over Algonac for the Class C title. The total was the tops in tournament history at the time, surpassing Russ Swaney's 27 points scored for East Grand Rapids in 1950. Corbus later played at Western Michigan.

Dave Parks, 6-3½, 189, Highland Park High School

Controlled the boards and was very effective in the pivot position, where he scored 291 points. Helped Highland Park to an unbeaten season by defeating Saginaw Arthur Hill for the Class A state championship.

Bill Stuijbergen, 6-2, 203, Kalamazoo Central High School

Only returning regular on a Kalamazoo squad that won three straight Class A crowns. Overshadowed in the line-up by senior Ron Jackson a year earlier, Stuijbergen "picked up Jackson's scoring and defensive load this year." Finished with 323 points on the year. An all-round athlete, he also earned All-State honors in football. Played three years of minor league baseball, then served as a coach at Lansing Sexton and Kalamazoo Loy Norrix high schools.

Terry Thompson, 6-3, Ishpeming High School

The only repeater on the *Free Press* All-State first team, Thompson led Ishpeming to the semifinals of the state tournament in 1952. Averaged 24.8 points for the state quarterfinalists. Pivot shot left most opponents helpless. Established a career scoring mark at Ishpeming. Played one year at Ball State, then returned to the Upper Peninsula to play at Michigan Tech.

1962 Mr. Basketball

ERNIE THOMPSON, 6-3, 187, SAGINAW HIGH SCHOOL

“The finest all-around basketball player I’ve seen in 27 years of coaching,” said Saginaw coach Larry Laeding, at the time. “He’s as good a defensive rebounder I’ve ever seen in high school, averaging 18 rebounds a game. He also blocks many shots on defense.” Set a Saginaw Valley League record with 314 points in 12 games, topping Milt Mead’s total of 269 set in 1950 during his days at Bay City Central. Established new MHSAA state final records of 42 points and 27 rebounds in the Trojan’s Class A championship victory over Benton Harbor. Fifty years later, the rebound record still stands.

1962 Finalists

(In alphabetical order)

Bill Curtis, 6-3, Grand Rapids South High School

Averaged 18 points per game in 12 city-league games, and finished with 261 points for the year. Excelled both in the backcourt and on the boards for South. Curtis was considered the best player for all-around ability in the Grand Rapids area. Later played at Michigan State.

Oliver Darden , 6-6½, 205, Detroit Western High School

Scored 367 points in 14 games for a 26 point average. Detroit’s most sought after college prospect. A four-sport letterman as a first baseman, end in football and high-jumper in track. Later played at the University of Michigan and in the ABA.

Ken Wilburn, 6-4, 172, River Rouge High School

Despite missing three regular-season games, he finished with 218, then added 158 during the tournament during Rouge’s march to the state Class B title. An exceptional rebounder, his 276 boards led “to the team’s fast break which no Michigan team could stop this season,” according to his *Detroit News* All-state write-up. Accurate jump shot and outstanding on defense.

1972 Mr. Basketball

LARRY FOGLE 6-5, 210, DETROIT COOLEY HIGH SCHOOL

Banged in a career total of 1,662 points and averaged 38.5 points a game his senior year. Hauled down 18-20 rebounds per contest. Quick, strong and equally effective as far out as 15-18 feet. Scored 73 points in a game with Detroit Cody. Led Cooley's state tournament run to the semifinals. Scored 24 points in the second quarter against Ferndale in the regional final. Named United Press International Player of the Year in Michigan. Listed by Letterman Magazine as "one of the top 30 high school players in the nation", by Scholastic Magazine as one of the nation's Top 40 and was named to Parade Magazine's All-American 2nd team.

1972 Finalists

(In alphabetical order)

Wayman Britt, 6-1½, 185, Flint Northern High School

Only regular who returned from Northern's 1971 Class A state champions, Britt led the Vikings to their second straight Class A title. Gave Northern's attack confidence and poise. "He was our leader...our clutch performer...the guy we turned to," said Northern coach Bill Frieder in the *Detroit Free Press*. Averaged 13.2 points per contest and led the team with 151 assists. Later played basketball at the University of Michigan and briefly in the NBA.

Jessie Campbell, 6-9, Stockbridge High School

Only returning starter from Stockbridge's Class C runner-up squad. Averaged 28.9 points and 31 rebounds per contest as a senior. Finished with 1,490 points and 1,586 rebounds during his four year career. Led the Panthers to a 59-6 mark over the previous three years.

Paul Griffin, 6-9, 200, Shelby High School

Averaged 30 points and 28 rebounds per game while leading Shelby to its second consecutive Class C title. According to the Associated Press, "proved himself on the tournament trail." Played college ball at Western Michigan University, then enjoyed a seven-year career in the NBA.

Robert "Bubbles" Hawkins, 6-2, 185, Detroit Pershing High School

Led Pershing to a Public School League title. "A great floor leader who passed up many baskets to feed off to a teammate," noted the *Detroit Free Press*. Averaged 28 points per game, 12 rebounds and 12 assists over a three year career. "Hawkins is considered the finest natural athlete in the Detroit Area" stated the AP. Named 1st All-American by Parade Magazine. Played at Illinois State then part of four seasons in the NBA.

Leighton Moulton, 6-3½, 181, River Rouge High School

Key player on a lean Rouge team. "A deadly shooter with a soft shot, he was quick and equally effective on defense," noted Hal Schram in the *Free Press*. Led Rouge to a come-from-behind victory over Muskegon Heights in the state championship game. Averaged 22 points per game during the regular season. According to the AP, "A severe leg injury hampered him in the tournament, but that didn't stop him from hitting 30 points in the semifinal triumph over Elkton-Pigeon-Bay Port, and 24 in the finals victory. Played college ball at Dayton

BCAM 2011**Retro Mr. Basketball Selections**

- 1921 – George Haggerty, Ypsilanti
- 1931 – Edward Huttenga, Grand Haven
- 1941 – Don Osterman, Detroit St. Theresa
- 1951 – Webster Kirksey, Saginaw
- 1961 – Reggie Harding, Detroit Eastern
- 1971 – “Campy” Russell, Pontiac Central

BCAM 2010 Selections**Retro Mr. Basketball Selections**

- 1920 – Harry Kipke, Lansing Central
- 1930 – John Tooker, Kalamazoo St. Augustine
- 1940 – Ralph Gibert, Flint Northern
- 1950 – Charlie Primas, Detroit Miller
- 1960 – Pete Gent , Bangor
- 1970 – Rick Drewitz, Garden City West
- 1980 – Tim McCormick - Clarkston

Visit BCAM’s website for the biographies of 2010 nominees:

<http://www.bcam.org/awards/high-school-boys/259-qretroq-mr-basketball>