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BASKETBALL COACHES ASSOCIATION OF MICHIGAN 1998-99 MR BASKETBALL VOTE TOTALS

<u>NAME - SCHOOL</u>	<u>5 PTS</u>	<u>3 PTS</u>	<u>1 PT</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
JASON RICHARDSON - Saginaw Arthur Hill	(114) 570	(48) 144	(27) 27	741
LAVELL BLANCHARD - Ann Arbor Pioneer	(82) 410	(64) 192	(29) 29	631
ALOYSIUS ANAGONYE - Detroit St Martin dePorres	(12) 60	(37) 111	(37) 37	208
BRENT DARBY - River Rouge	(11) 55	(31) 93	(43) 43	191
T J MEERMAN - Coopersville	(8) 40	(20) 60	(36) 36	136
J R WALLACE - Muskegon Reeths Puffer	(13) 65	(10) 30	(22) 22	117
TAYLOR BRO - Rockford	(6) 30	(17) 51	(14) 14	95
WILLIE WALLACE - Flint Southwestern	(0) 0	(14) 42	(18) 18	60
NICK MOORE - Redford Catholic Central	(2) 10	(11) 33	(13) 13	56
KEVIN LEE - Lansing Everett	(3) 15	(5) 15	(15) 15	45

Arthur Hill star claims his title — Mr. Basketball

BY MICK MCCABE

Free Press Sports Writer

When Dave Slaggert made a surprise visit to Jason Richardson's home Saturday night, he asked Richardson to step into his car. Slaggert, the Saginaw Arthur Hill basketball coach, needed to discuss a disciplinary problem.

"I was a little worried because Coach already had to dismiss someone from the team," Richardson said Monday.

Once inside his car, Slaggert handed Richardson a card, which he took out of the envelope.

The cover of the card read: "For What You Did and for Who You Are. . . ." Richardson opened the card, which read: ". . . Congratulations to a Rising Star." At the bottom, Slaggert wrote: "MR. BASKETBALL."

Richardson quickly looked at Slaggert, looked back at the card and looked at Slaggert. "Are you serious?" he asked. "April Fools' is coming. Are you fooling me?"

No fooling, Jason Richardson is Mr. Basketball.

Richardson, a 6-foot-6 forward, is

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THE VOTE

Top vote-getters for the Hal Schram Mr. Basketball Award, with five points awarded for a first-place vote, three for a second and one for a third.

- 1.** Jason Richardson, Saginaw Arthur Hill, 741 points;
 - 2.** LaVell Blanchard, Ann Arbor Pioneer, 631;
 - 3.** Aloysius Anagonye, Detroit DePorres, 208;
 - 4.** Brent Darby, River Rouge, 191;
 - 5.** T.J. Meerman, Coopersville, 136.
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Arthur Hill star claims title Mr. Basketball

MR. BASKETBALL, from Page 1D

the 19th recipient of the Hal Schram Mr. Basketball Award, given annually to the state's top senior by the Basketball Coaches Association of Michigan in conjunction with the Free Press.

Association members chose Richardson over LaVell Blanchard of Ann Arbor Pioneer in a relatively close vote, 741 points to 631.

Of the 267 ballots cast, Richardson earned 114 first-place votes, 48 for second and 27 for third. Blanchard received 82 first-place votes, 64 for second and 29 for third.

And the news keeps getting better for Final Four-bound Michigan State fans. Last November, Richardson signed with the Spartans.

"I talked to Coach Izzo last night," Richardson said. "He asked if I heard anything. When I told him I did, he said if I hadn't won it they were going to protest."

Richardson was in kindergarten the last time someone from

Saginaw won the award — Buena Vista's Mark Macon in 1987.

Ironically, that was the year Macon won instead of Detroit Pershing's Steve Smith, who had a better senior season than Macon. But Macon won largely because of what he accomplished during his first three years in high school.

That scenario almost occurred this year with Blanchard.

"I was really expecting LaVell to win this," Richardson said. "He was the highest-ranked player in our class since his freshman year. He's a good player and a good person off the court. I respect him and his game."

Richardson was a support player at Arthur Hill last season, playing second fiddle to teammate DeAndre Hulett, an all-stater. But this fall, Slaggert circulated 800 videotapes that featured seven minutes of Richardson highlights from his sophomore and junior seasons.

"He was our No. 2 option last year, so nobody knew about him," Slaggert said. "It's tough for a guy who made sixth-team all-state to come back and be Mr. Basketball."

The video showed some of Richardson's most spectacular plays: a reverse tip dunk; a tip dunk with the left hand after he missed a right-handed lay-up.

"Jason is such a unique player, you've got to see him to believe him," Slaggert said.

There is more to Richardson's game than electrifying jams. This season he is averaging 25.3 points and 12.8 rebounds while shooting 50 percent from the field. He has improved his perimeter shooting so much, he is now a legitimate threat from three-point range.

During his acceptance speech Monday, Richardson thanked his mother, Elaine Cook, whom he referred to as "the love of my life." He also thanked the seven carloads of family members who traveled to Detroit for the presentation.

Last weekend, Richardson led

Arthur Hill to its first Class A regional title in 36 years. This week he could end up with a state title.

That brought up a question. Which would prefer — the Mr. Basketball award or the state championship?

"I'd rather have the state championship," Richardson said. "I would want that for the team. A lot of people have said it was just me on the team. I want to win the state championship for the team."

The voting

Coaches association members voted, with points awarded on a 5-3-1 basis.

1. Jason Richardson, Saginaw Arthur Hill, 741 points;
2. LaVell Blanchard, Ann Arbor Pioneer, 631;
3. Aloysius Anagonye, Detroit DePorres, 208;
4. Brent Darby, River Rouge, 191;
5. T.J. Meerman, Coopersville, 136;
6. J.R. Wallace, Muskegon Reeths-Puffer, 117;
7. Taylor Bro, Rockford, 95;
8. Willie

PAST WINNERS

Former winners of the Hal Schram Mr. Basketball Award, with high school and college they attended:

- 1981:** Sam Vincent, Lansing Eastern (Michigan State). **1982:** Robert Henderson, Lansing Eastern (Michigan). **1983:** Antoine Joubert, Detroit Southwestern (Michigan). **1984:** Demetreus Gore, Detroit Chadsey (Pittsburgh). **1985:** Glen Rice, Flint Northwestern (Michigan). **1986:** Terry Mills, Romulus (Michigan). **1987:** Mark Macon, Saginaw Buena Vista (Temple). **1988:** Matt Steigenga, Grand Rapids South Christian (Michigan State). **1989:** Michael Talley, Detroit Cooley (Michigan). **1990:** Anthony Miller, Benton Harbor (Michigan State). **1991:** Chris Webber, Birmingham Detroit Country Day (Michigan). **1992:** Kenyon Murray, Battle Creek Central (Iowa). **1993:** Jon Garavaglia, Southgate Aquinas (Michigan State). **1994:** Willie Mitchell, Detroit Pershing (Michigan, Alabama-Birmingham). **1995:** Robert Traylog, Detroit Murray-Wright (Michigan). **1996:** Winfred Walton, Detroit Pershing (Syracuse, Fresno State). **1997:** Shane Battier, Birmingham Detroit Country Day (Duke). **1998:** Dane Fife, Clarkston (Indiana).

- Wallace, Flint Southwestern, 60; 9. Nick Moore, Redford Catholic Central, 56; 10. Kevin Lee, Lansing Everett, 45.