

33rd Annual Louisiana Association of Basketball Coaches Awards Banquet

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Holiday Inn Select
Baton Rouge, Louisiana

BATON ROUGE --- The major honorees at tonight's 33rd Annual Louisiana Association of Basketball Coaches Awards Banquet included three former Louisiana college basketball stars.

Inducted into the Louisiana Basketball Hall of Fame were Lawrence "Lanky" Wells of Louisiana Tech, Paul Poe of Louisiana College and Dave Simmons of Louisiana Tech.

The other major honoree was long-time Biddy Basketball coach and administrator Firmin Simms of New Orleans, who won the LABC's prestigious Mr. Louisiana Basketball award. This award is given annually to someone who has made a significant, long-term contribution to the game of basketball at any level in the State of Louisiana.

Also honored at the banquet were Louisiana's major college, small college, junior college and high school basketball players and coaches of the year, along with the top pro player from the state.

Wells was a three-time first team All-Southland Conference selection while at Louisiana Tech in the 1970s. He finished his playing career in 1977 as the fourth leading scorer and seventh leading rebounder in Bulldog history, with 1,608 points for a 16.4 average and 674 rebounds for a 6.9 average.

Wells averaged 18.0 points and 7.3 rebounds as a senior, 18.6 points and 7.4 rebounds as a junior, and 18.4 points and 7.1 rebounds in sophomore.

Poe was Louisiana College's first basketball All-American, earning first team AP and third team NAIA All-American honors in 1979 when he led the Wildcats to the NAIA Tournament with a school record 22-6 mark.

Poe ended his career as the leading scorer and fourth leading rebounder in Louisiana College history, scoring 1,860 points for an 18.1 average and pulling down 758 rebounds for a 7.4 average. He had season averages of 23.7 points and 8.5 rebounds in 1979, 22.8 points and 9.8 rebounds in 1978, and 18.0 points and 8.4 rebounds in 1977.

Simmons garnered first team All-Southland Conference, All-Louisiana, NABC All-District and SLC All-Tournament honors as a senior at Louisiana Tech in 1981. He was also a two-time second team All-SLC selection.

Simmons finished his collegiate career as the sixth leading scorer in Tech history, totaling 1,563 points for a 14.3 average and setting a school record with an 81.8% career free throw percentage. In 1981 he shot a school and SLC record 89.0% from the free throw line, which ranked 6th in the nation.

Simms coached Biddy Basketball teams in New Orleans for 29 years (from 1955 to 1984), winning 17 national championships and the 1968 world championship. Since retiring from coaching, he has served as the International Director of Biddy Basketball since 1996 and the director of New Orleans Biddy Basketball since 1986. He also founded and has served as the National Director of National Pre-Prep Basketball since 1979.

Simms built the New Orleans city program from four teams to 55 teams before Hurricane Katrina (nearly 600 kids), which has included such players as Kerry Kittles, Randy Livingston, Chris Duhon, D.J. Augustin, Deron Washington and Biko Paris.

The LABC also presented the Pete Maravich Memorial Award, honoring Louisiana's Major College Player of the Year, to 6-9, 289 pound junior forward Glen Davis of LSU. This season Davis was a first team All-Southeastern Conference selection, as well as first team NABC and USBWA All-District. He averaged 17.7 points and led the SEC in rebounding at 10.4 per game

Coach Orlando Early of UL-Monroe was presented the Tommy Joe Eagles Memorial Award as Louisiana's Major College Coach of the Year. This year the second year coach led the Warhawks to the Sun Belt Conference West Division title with an 18-14 record after being picked to finish in last place. He was also named the SBC Coach of the Year and the NABC District Coach of the Year.

The Bob Pettit Award, which is given to Louisiana's Professional Player of the Year, was once again presented to Shaquille O'Neal. This year the former LSU All-American and 14-year NBA veteran averaged 17.3 points, 7.4 rebounds and 1.4 blocked shots, and shot 59.1% from the field, in leading the Miami Heat to the Southeast Division title. He was also a starter in the 2007 NBA All-Star Game.

Shaun Dumas of Xavier received the Louisiana Small College Player of the Year award after being named a third team NAIA All-American with averages of 13.2 points, 6.09 assists (5th in nation) and 3.06 steals (3rd in nation). Chad McDowell of LSU-Shreveport, who was named the Louisiana Small College Coach of the Year for the fourth straight year, directed the Pilots to the Gulf Coast Athletic Conference tournament championship and the NAIA Tournament with a 25-8 record (the most wins and best winning percentage in Louisiana).

Kenny Johnson and David Francis of Southern-Shreveport were honored as the Louisiana Junior College Player and Coach of the Year, respectively. Johnson, a 6-4 freshman forward, averaged 17.4 points and 5.6 rebounds. Francis led the Port City Jags to the Louisiana Athletic Association of Community Colleges championship and the NJCAA Region 23 Tournament with a 24-7 record.

2007 LABC Award Winners:

Louisiana Basketball Hall of Fame Inductees: Lawrence “Lanky” Wells, Louisiana Tech; Paul Poe, Louisiana College; Dave Simmons, Louisiana Tech

Mr. Louisiana Basketball: Firmin Simms, Biddeford Basketball

Bob Pettit Award for the Louisiana Professional Player of the Year: Shaquille O’Neal, Miami Heat

Pete Maravich Memorial Award for the Louisiana Major College Player of the Year: Glen Davis, LSU

Tommy Joe Eagles Memorial Award for the Louisiana Major College Coach of the Year: Orlando Early, UL-Monroe

Louisiana Small College Player of the Year: Shaun Dumas, Xavier

Louisiana Small College Coach of the Year: Chad McDowell, LSU-Shreveport

Louisiana Junior College Player of the Year: Kenny Johnson, Southern-Shreveport

Louisiana Junior College Coach of the Year: David Francis, Southern-Shreveport

Louisiana High School Players of the Year:

Class AAAAA: Trenton Marshall, East St. John

Class AAAA: Greg Monroe, Helen Cox

Class AAA: Ben Martin, E.D. White

Class AA: Keith Williams, Madison

Class A: Josh White, Christian Life

Class B: Jacob Turnipseed, Anacoco

Class C: LaceDarius Dunn, Excelsior Christian

Louisiana High School Coaches of the Year:

Class AAAAA: Shannon LaFargue, Barbe

Class AAAA: Devan Clark, Northside

Class AAA: Jonathan Keife, E.D. White

Class AA: Mitchell Riggs, Madison

Class A: Michael Lyons, Grambling

Class B: Randy Bergeron, Centerville

Class C: Steve Rachal, Family Christian