

FIRMIN SIMMS

*Note: This is the **fourth** in a series of four articles on this year's inductees into the Louisiana Basketball Hall of Fame and the LABC's Mr. Louisiana Basketball award recipient. The 2007 inductees will be former star players Dave Simmons of Louisiana Tech, Paul Poe of Louisiana College and Lawrence "Lanky" Wells of Louisiana Tech. Mr. Louisiana Basketball for 2007 is long-time Bidly Basketball coach and administrator Firmin Simms of New Orleans.*

LONG-TIME BIDDY BASKETBALL COACH AND ADMINISTRATOR TO BE HONORED AS "MR. LOUISIANA BASKETBALL"

By: Kevin Spain
Deputy Sports Editor
New Orleans *Times-Picayune*
Written for the LABC

NEW ORLEANS -- Over the years, Firmin Simms' name has become synonymous with Bidly Basketball not only in New Orleans and the United States, but across the globe.

Simms, the International Director of Bidly Basketball since 1996, has achieved many great accomplishments over the years as a basketball coach. While he has garnered many wins and titles as a coach, Simms also is the founder and director of National Pre-Prep Basketball which is for boys between the ages of 13 and 15.



A 1946 graduate of Holy Cross in New Orleans, Simms played two years for the Tigers before graduating. He began his coaching career shortly thereafter at the tender age of 19 at St. Cecilia in New Orleans in 1948. In 1953, Simms was hired as a supervisor and coach for the New Orleans Recreation Department (NORD).

He first coached Bidly Basketball in 1955 and that year he took his team to a second place finish in nationals. Two years later, Simms would gain his first national championship in Bidly competition.

In 1968, Simms would lead his team to the first World Championship that was played in Scranton, Pa. Spain, Mexico, and Puerto Rico were just some of the countries that were represented along with many other teams from across the United States. In all, Simms won a total of 17 national championships during his 29 years as a Bidly coach from 1955 to 1984.

After retiring from active coaching in 1984, Simms was named Director of New Orleans Bidly Basketball in 1986 and took a program that had four bidly teams and built it into one that had as many as 55 before Hurricane Katrina.

Under his leadership, some of the players that came out of the Bidby leagues he directed were Kerry Kittles, Randy Livingston, Chris Duhon, D.J. Augustin, Deron Washington and Biko Paris.

Simms has always believed that the ages he coached at were crucial ages in development and he wanted to teach the kids the fundamentals of basketball as well as lessons in life.

Simms will be named “Mr. Louisiana Basketball” for 2007 by the Louisiana Association of Basketball Coaches during its 33rd Annual Awards Banquet at the Holiday Inn Select in Baton Rouge on May 5. The award is the most prestigious annual award given out by the LABC and is given each year to someone who has made a “significant, long-term contribution to the game of basketball at any level in the State of Louisiana”.

In addition to the honoring of Simms, the banquet will include the induction of three new members into the Louisiana Basketball Hall of Fame. There will also be recognition of Louisiana’s major college, small college, junior college and high school players and coaches of the year, along with the top pro player from the state.

A limited number of tickets for the banquet are available for \$20 and can be reserved by contacting the LABC at labbal@gmail.com. The Holiday Inn Select is located at 4728 Constitution Avenue in Baton Rouge (College Drive exit off of Interstate 10).

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