

49th Annual Louisiana Association of Basketball Coaches Awards Banquet

May 6, 2023
Baton Rouge Marriott
Baton Rouge, Louisiana

BATON ROUGE, LA --- A high-scoring player from south Louisiana, along with a coaching legend from north Louisiana, were the major honorees at Saturday's 49th Annual Louisiana Association of Basketball Coaches Awards Banquet.

Inducted into the Louisiana Basketball Hall of Fame was former University of Louisiana at Lafayette star Kevin Brooks.

The other major honoree was former Northwestern State University coach Mike McConathy, who received the LABC's 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.

Brooks played at UL-Lafayette from 1987 to 1991, where he was a two-time honorable mention All-American and a four-time All-American South Conference and All-Louisiana selection, as well as the ASC Newcomer of the Year and Louisiana Freshman of the Year in 1988. Following his senior season, he was the 18th player selected in the first round of the 1991 NBA Draft.

He finished his collegiate career as the third leading scorer in UL-Lafayette history (only trailing legendary performers Bo Lamar and Andrew Toney), with 2,294 points for a 19.8 average. He also had 719 career rebounds for a 6.2 average, along with a 52.2% career field goal percentage, a 40.9% career three-point field goal percentage and a 77.4% career free throw percentage. He averaged 21.2 points (1st in ASC) and 6.0 rebounds in 1991, 20.1 points and 7.0 rebounds in 1990, 20.7 points and 5.4 rebounds in 1989, and 16.8 points and 6.3 rebounds in 1988.

McConathy retired at the end of the 2021-22 season, closing out a distinguished 39-year collegiate head coaching career in Louisiana where he amassed a total of 682 career wins. The first 352 victories of his career came at Bossier Parish Community College, a program he started in 1983-84 and turned into a nationally-ranked team that was a two-time junior college national tournament participant.

After taking over the Northwestern State program in 1999-2000, he amassed another 330 victories over the next 23 seasons, winning two Southland Conference regular season and three conference tournament championships, and leading the Demons to three NCAA Tournament

appearances. He was a three-time SLC Coach of the Year and two-time Louisiana Major College Coach of the Year.

Before entering the coaching ranks, McConathy starred at Louisiana Tech from 1973 to 1977, where he was a two-time honorable mention All-American and the SLC Player of the Year in 1976, finishing his career as Louisiana Tech's second leading scorer with 2,033 points for a 20.7 average. For his accomplishments as a player, McConathy was inducted into the Louisiana Basketball Hall of Fame in 1989.

The LABC also presented the Pete Maravich Memorial Award, honoring Louisiana's Major College Player of the Year, to junior forward Jordan Brown of UL-Lafayette. This season Brown was named the CollegeInsider National Mid-Major Player of the Year, as well as a first team All-Sun Belt Conference and NABC All-District selection and the Most Outstanding Player of the SBC Tournament. He averaged 19.3 points, 8.6 rebounds and 1.18 blocked shots and had a 57.1% field goal percentage, which included 10 double-double games. His single game highs were 37 points, 20 rebounds, 6 assists, 4 blocked shots and 3 steals.

Coach Bob Marlin of UL-Lafayette received the Tommy Joe Eagles Memorial Award as Louisiana's Major College Coach of the Year. He led the Ragin Cajuns to a second place finish in the Sun Belt Conference, to the SBC Tournament championship and to a 13th seed in the NCAA Tournament with a 26-8 record. This represented the second most wins in school history and an improvement of ten wins over 2022.

Senior guard Jalen Brooks of LSU-Shreveport received the Louisiana Small College Player of the Year award after being named a first team NAIA All-American. He was also the Red River Athletic Conference Player of the Year, Defensive Player of the Year and Newcomer of the Year, while averaging a conference-leading 22.5 points (8th in nation) and 11.2 rebounds (2nd in nation), including 21 double-double games.

Coach Kyle Blankenship of LSU-Shreveport, who was named the Louisiana Small College Coach of the Year, guided the Pilots to the Red River Athletic Conference regular season championship and to the third round of the NAIA National Tournament with a 26-8 record. Blankenship was also named the RRAC Coach of the Year.

Bryce Roberts and Coach Byron Starks of LSU-Eunice were honored as the Louisiana Junior College Player and Coach of the Year, respectively. Roberts, a sophomore guard, averaged 14.9 points, 3.9 rebounds and 1.7 steals and was the Louisiana Community Colleges Athletic Conference Player of the Year and a NJCAA All-Region 23 selection. Starks led LSU-Eunice to the LCCAC championship and the No. 2 seed and second round of the NJCAA Region 23 Tournament with a 19-4 record. This is the fourth straight year that Starks has received this award.

The Bob Pettit Award, which is given to Louisiana's Professional Player of the Year, was presented to center-forward Naz Reid of the Minnesota Timberwolves. In his fourth year in the NBA, the former LSU star averaged 11.5 points and 4.9 rebounds and had a 53.7% field goal

percentage. He had eight 20+ point games and single game highs of 30 points, 18 rebounds, 5 steals, 5 blocked shots, 4 three-point field goals made and 4 assists.

2023 LABC Honorees:

Louisiana Basketball Hall of Fame Inductee: Kevin Brooks, UL-Lafayette

Mr. Louisiana Basketball: Mike McConathy, Northwestern St.

Bob Pettit Award for the Louisiana Professional Player of the Year: Naz Reid, Minnesota Timberwolves

Pete Maravich Memorial Award for the Louisiana Major College Player of the Year: Jordan Brown, UL-Lafayette

Tommy Joe Eagles Memorial Award for the Louisiana Major College Coach of the Year: Bob Marlin, UL-Lafayette

Louisiana Small College Player of the Year: Jalen Brooks, LSU-Shreveport

Louisiana Small College Coach of the Year: Kyle Blankenship, LSU-Shreveport

Louisiana Junior College Player of the Year: Bryce Roberts, LSU-Eunice

Louisiana Junior College Coach of the Year: Byron Starks, LSU-Eunice

Louisiana High School Players of the Year:

Class AAAAA: Dorian Booker, Scotlandville

Class AAAA: Tahj Roots, Bossier

Class AAA: Elliot McQuillan, Port Allen

Class AA: Chris Lockett, Newman

Class A: De’Vion Lavergne, North Central

Class B: Jalen Brown, Avoyelles Public Charter

Class C: Terrance James, Gibsland-Coleman

Louisiana High School Coaches of the Year:

Class AAAAA: Derrick Jones, Catholic

Class AAAA: Nathaniel Roche, Carver

Class AAA: Rob Melanson, Iowa

Class AA: Randy Livingston, Newman

Class A: Antonio Hudson, Lincoln Prep

Class B: Antonio Benjamin, Avoyelles Public Charter

Class C: Charlie Alexander, Hornbeck