

## CARLOS SAMPLE

*Note: This is the **second** in a series of three feature stories on this year's inductee into the Louisiana Basketball Hall of Fame, this year's recipient of the LABC's Mr. Louisiana Basketball award, and the recipient of the LABC's Don Landry Award. The 2024 inductee will be former University of Louisiana at Monroe star Carlos Funchess. Mr. Louisiana Basketball for 2024 is former long-time Scotlandville Magnet High School coach Carlos Sample. The Don Landry Award recipient is former long-time Northwestern State University coach and athletic director Tynes Hildebrand.*

### BASKETBALL WAS A LOT MORE THAN WINS FOR SAMPLE

By: Robin Fambrough  
Written for the LABC

BATON ROUGE, LA – What Carlos Sample saw in the Scotlandville High gym on a Sunday night last month made him smile.

“We were coming back from a weekend trip, so I stopped by the gym,” Sample said. “There were youth basketball games going on and I saw three of my former players out there coaching.”

“The wins, the championships and all that stuff is great. But to see former players out there, working with kids and giving back? It's about more than playing basketball. That will end ... it's about preparing for life.”

Make no mistake about it, there were plenty of wins and championships for Sample, who is being honored as Mr. Louisiana Basketball by the Louisiana Association of Basketball Coaches.

Sample will receive the award during the LABC's 50th Annual Awards Banquet on Saturday, May 4, at the Baton Rouge Marriott. It is the most prestigious annual award given by the LABC and is presented annually to someone who has made a significant, long-term contribution to the game of basketball at any level in the State of Louisiana.

Sample coached the Hornets to an incredible 14 straight title game appearances in the Louisiana High School Athletic Association's highest classification, Class 5A/Division I select, before stepping down after the 2022-23 school year. Sample continues to work as athletic director at north Baton Rouge-based Scotlandville.



“He’s very deserving ... I can tell you that,” said Kenny Almond, the 2014 Mr. Louisiana Basketball recipient and a legendary coach in his own right. “Look at what he has done. He has done a great job coaching and he always did it the right way.”

“Carlos could change the style of offense they played to fit the players he had. Believe me, there is a lot to that. Tough defense was part of it. He had talent, but when he coached, his players got better.”

Scotlandville won eight LHSAA state titles, had six runner-up finishes and led three nationally-ranked teams during Sample’s 16-year stint at the school, winning 85 percent of his games with a 482-83 record. The Hornets won their first title in 2012 and eventually earned the moniker, “The Program”.



Before coming to Scotlandville, Sample spent nine seasons at his alma mater, Istrouma. He has an overall winning percentage of 77 percent and an overall record of 676-198 that also includes one season at Livonia. Those totals also include 12 district titles and 10 East Baton Rouge tournament titles.

The number of Division I Scotlandville players Sample coached started with J.J. Thomas (UL-Lafayette) in 2011 and includes current Virginia star Reece Beekman, the star of Sample’s 2020 Division I select champions. Guards such as Beekman and Javonte Smart typically come to mind as top players for Sample, a star guard in his own right at both Istrouma and Southern University.

A 6-foot-10 post player, Damian Jones, currently plays for the Cleveland Cavaliers after a college career at Vanderbilt. Sample’s first college signee was Istrouma post player Anthony Greenup, who forged a different professional distinction.

“Getting kids to see there are possibilities they never thought about, like going to college, is a big part this,” Sample said. “My first player to go to college was Anthony Greenup. He ended up playing for the Harlem Globetrotters and traveling around the world”.

“I could be hard on them (players). The lessons you learn in basketball ... working hard and being disciplined ... go beyond basketball.”

All in all, Sample produced two high school All-Americans, four Louisiana Gatorade Players of the Year and eight Class 5A state players of the year.

Rival coaches, such as Madison Prep's Jeff Jones, laud Sample's accomplishments.

"There are only two guys I have been around who have the ability to have their kids do exactly what they want them to do," Jones said. "And that's Carlos Sample and Harvey Adger (Glen Oaks coach). Their teams don't make a lot of mistakes and they are detail oriented."



"I was an assistant (at Glen Oaks) when Carlos was at Istrouma. He was someone I wanted to model my program after."

Others see Sample's 14 consecutive title game appearance as more than just a one generational standard.

"What he (Sample) did was raise the bar," said Liberty's Brandon White, whose team won the Division I select title in March. "I don't think you'll see that again – 14 straight title games – especially in 5A."

Prior to beginning his coaching career, Sample starred as a two-time All-Southwestern Athletic Conference player at Southern from 1987 to 1990, where he scored 1,399 points (16.3 avg.) and handed out 472 assists (5.5 avg.) Following his senior season, he was named the MVP of the 1990 Louisiana College All-Star Game.

In addition to honoring Sample, the May 4 awards banquet will include the induction of former University of Louisiana at Monroe star Carlos Funchess 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, as well as the presentation of the LABC's Don Landry Award to former long-time Northwestern State University coach and athletic director Tynes Hildebrand. More information about the LABC can be obtained by visiting their website at [www.labball.com](http://www.labball.com).

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