

Tori Jankoska of Freeland named Miss Basketball

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By Mick McCabe

Freeland girls basketball coach Tom Zolinski called Tori Jankoska one day last week and told her he wanted to stop by her house and give her a basketball that had been rolling around in his car for a week.

The ball was to signify that Jankoska had scored 1,000 points in her career.

"So he walked in the door and gave me the ball," Jankoska said. "I looked for the writing that said '1,000 points,' but it said '2013 Miss Basketball.'"

Jankoska looked at Zolinski and asked: "What?"

Zolinski said: "You got it! You won!"

Yes, she did.

Jankoska is the 32nd recipient of the Miss Basketball award, given annually to the state's top senior by the Basketball Coaches Association of Michigan, in conjunction of the Free Press.

Jankoska accumulated 2,450 points, finishing ahead of Goodrich's Taylor Gleason (2,132), Abby Cole of Grand Haven (1,784), Antania Hayes of Detroit King (965) and Allie Havens of Mattawan (931).

Only BCAM members are permitted to vote, and points are awarded on a 5-3-1 basis. This year, 918 coaches participated in the voting, the most since online voting began in 2009. The previous best was 697, in 2011.

Jankoska was a scorer deluxe, totaling 2,333 points during her career. This season, she averaged 30.9 points, 7.0 rebounds, 3.8 assists and 4.8 steals per game.

Next fall, she will play with fellow Miss Basketball winners Klarissa Bell (East Lansing, 2010) and Jasmine Hines (Central Lake, 2011) at Michigan State.

Saginaw Nouvel's Jenny Ryan, who won the award in 2009, is the first Miss Basketball that Jankoska remembers.

"That's when I figured out there was a Miss Basketball award," she said.

But being Miss Basketball was not a goal for Jankoska throughout high school.

"I didn't really think about it until my senior year," she said. "That's when everybody started saying it, and I read in the newspaper: 'Miss Basketball candidate Tori Jankoska.' I didn't realize it until then."

But that didn't mean she didn't want to be good enough to win the award. Her drive to improve allowed her to make quantum leaps each year.

"It was, obviously, a goal of mine to be the best," she said. "But I think later in my junior year and my senior year is when I really wanted to try to win it."

Zolinski knew his protégé had the making of a Miss Basketball long before it became a goal of Jankoska.

“I think it’s her love for the game,” he said. “Ever since she was little, she was so competitive with it. She was always playing with the boys. She always had a desire for basketball. She always wanted to get better.”

Voting results

Here are the results of the 32nd annual Miss Basketball award, given by the Basketball Coaches Association of Michigan, in conjunction with the Detroit Free Press. Only BCAM members are permitted to vote. Votes are awarded on a 5-3-1 basis:

1. Tori Jankoska, Freeland, 2,450 points
2. Taylor Gleason, Goodrich, 2,132 points
3. Abby Cole, Grand Haven, 1,784 points
4. Antania Hayes, Detroit King, 965 points
5. Allie Havers, Mattawan, 931 points

Past winners

Here are the 31 former winners of the Miss Basketball award:

- 2012 Madison Ristovski, G.P. Liggett (Michigan)
- 2011 Jasmine Hines, Central Lake (Michigan State)
- 2010 Klarissa Bell, East Lansing (Michigan State)
- 2009 Jenny Ryan, Saginaw Nouvel (Michigan)
- 2008 Kellie Watson, Ionia (Notre Dame/Grand Valley)
- 2006 Brenna Banktson, Frankfort (Western Michigan)
- 2005 Allyssa DeHaan, Grandville (Michigan State)
- 2004 Tiffanie Shives, Lansing Christian (Michigan State/Gonzaga)
- 2003 Krista Clement, St. Ignace (Michigan)
- 2002 Danielle Kamm, Saginaw Nouvel (Marquette)
- 2001 Liz Shimek, Maple City Glen Lake (Michigan State)
- 2000 Tabitha Pool, Ann Arbor Huron (Michigan)
- 1999 Vicki Krapohl, Mt. Pleasant (Duke)
- 1998 Kristen Koetsier, Grandville (Western Michigan)
- 1997 Aiysha Smith, Redford Bishop Borgess (St. Johns/LSU)
- 1996 Deana Nolan, Flint Northern (Georgia)
- 1995 Maxann Reese, Redford Bishop Borgess (Michigan State)
- 1994 Kim Knuth, St. Joseph (Toledo)
- 1993 Sally Sedlar, Manistee (Toledo/Central Michigan)
- 1992 Erinn Reed, Saginaw (Iowa/Kansas)
- 1991 Lisa Negri, Flint Powers (Ohio State)

1990 Markita Aldridge, Detroit King (UNC-Charlotte)
1989 Peggy Evans, Country Day (Tennessee/Ohio State)
1988 Jennifer Shasky, Birmingham Marian (George Washington)
1987 Dena Head, Plymouth Salem (Tennessee)
1986 Deadra Charles, Detroit DePorres (Tennessee)
1985 Franthea Price, River Rouge (Iowa)
1984 Emily Wagner, Livonia Ladywood (Stanford)
1983 Michele Kruty, Manistee (Dayton)
1982 Sue Tucker, Okemos (Michigan State)
1981 Julie Polakowski, Leland (Michigan State)