

MISS BASKETBALL: Banktson is money player

Class D forward wins in tight race

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Jeff Banktson had modest goals for his daughter, Brenna, when she made the varsity team as a freshman at Frankfort High School.

"I told her it would be great if she could get seven points, seven rebounds and have no turnovers," her father said.

Brenna Banktson didn't know what to expect when the first varsity game rolled around and she was in the starting lineup against Northport ... and she scored 20 points.

"I thought: 'Oh, wow!' " she said. "After that, I thought it was normal to get that many. I thought I would get 20 in every game."

She nearly did.

Banktson averaged 18 points as a freshman and tonight she carries an 18.8-point scoring average into Frankfort's Class D quarterfinal game against Bay City All Saints at Traverse City Central.

She will also carry something else -- the distinction of being the state's Miss Basketball.

In one of the closest races in the 26-year history of the award, Banktson, 5-feet-11, is the recipient of the award given annually by the Basketball Coaches Association of Michigan in conjunction with the Free Press.

Banktson, who signed with Western Michigan, totaled 398 points



Brenna Banktson of Frankfort says she was thrilled "just to be on the ballot" for Miss Basketball. (KIRTHMON F. DOZIER/Detroit Free Press)

The votes are in

to edge Carrie Snickers of Hudsonville Unity Christian (371 points) and Keshia Hines of Auburn Hills Avondale (367).

Only BCAM members are permitted to vote and points are awarded on a 5-3-1 basis. Of the 309 votes cast, Banktson collected the most first-place votes (52).

Frankfort is a Class D school in the northwestern part of the Lower Peninsula, near Traverse City, and Banktson thought that would hamper her chances for the award.

"I guess you could say this was my goal," she said. "But I was thrilled just to be on the ballot. That was fine with me. I thought being from a Class D school, I wouldn't have a chance."

BCAM members don't mind voting for girls from Class D schools. Two years ago, Tiffanie Shives of Lansing Christian won the award, and in 2001, Liz Shimek of Maple City Glen Lake was the winner.

Banktson, who can be a powerful inside player as well as a skilled perimeter player, made a lasting impression on coaches last season when she led Frankfort to the Class D state title.

She has totaled 1,966 career points and more than 800 rebounds while Frankfort has compiled a 90-11 record.

During her acceptance speech, Banktson thanked her family members and teammates and singled out Nicole Marshall, whom she said probably assisted on more than half of her baskets.

"We've been playing together since second grade," said Marshall. "I remember when we were in seventh grade. She was so dominant, I thought: 'Oh my, she's going to be something else.' Even if she's double-teamed, I'm going to pass it to her. She's going to just grab it and score because she's so strong."

How strong is she?

"She could play football and just dominate," Marshall said.

For years it was Banktson's brother, Max, a sophomore at

Here are the results of the 26th annual Miss Basketball award, given by the Basketball Coaches Association of Michigan, in conjunction with the Detroit Free Press. Votes are awarded on a 5-3-1 basis. Only BCAM members are permitted to vote.

Rk	Player, School	Points
1.	Brenna Banktson, Frankfort	398
2.	Carrie Snickers, Hudsonville Unity Christian	371
3.	Keshia Hines, Auburn Hills Avondale	367
4.	Kristi Boehm, Kent City	302
5.	Cetera Washington, Kalamazoo Loy Norrix	284
6.	Chelsea Albert, Brighton	234
7.	Brittany Carnago, St. Clair	224
8.	LaKeisha Mosley, Detroit Community	215
9.	Simone Trice, Flint Northwestern	177
10.	Lonnie Terrell, Inkster	133

Miss Basketball winners

Frankfort, whom she dominated when they played one-on-one.

"Playing against him really helped me a lot," Banktson said. "I used to beat him all the time and then he started growing. I remember the first time he beat me. It seemed so weird. I can still beat him, but it goes both ways now."

Banktson showed oodles of potential even before she entered high school, when, along with Marshall, she served as a varsity manager.

"I took them along with us to team camp and snuck them into a few summer games before they were eighth-graders," said Frankfort coach Tim Reznich. "We were at the Siena Heights team camp and Brenna caught the ball at the right elbow, faked to the right, spun to the left and scored. I thought: 'Wow, where did that come from?' "

It came from the 2006 Miss Basketball.

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The 26 winners of the Miss Basketball Award:

Year	Player, high school	College
2006	Brenna Banktson, Frankfort	Western Michigan
2005	Allyssa DeHaan, Grandville	Michigan State
2004	Tiffanie Shives, Lansing Christian	Michigan State
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