

# 2023 Miss Basketball: Macy Brown

East Grand Rapids point  
guard is top senior in state

**Mick McCabe**

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All Jillian Brown wants is an assist. One teeny, weeny assist.

And her baby sister, Macy agrees wholeheartedly.

“She helped me in every way possible,” said Macy, a senior point guard at East Grand Rapids. “First of all, being a good role model and an even better sister, just paving the path

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# Miss Basketball

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of what it's like to work hard and being a good person overall. She's just a good person to be around and she created a good culture on our high school team."

She also helped create a Miss Basketball.

Macy Brown is the 42nd recipient of the Mick McCabe Miss Basketball award, given annually to the state's top senior.

In the process of winning the most prestigious award a female athlete in Michigan can receive, Brown is the first winner not from Detroit Edison in five years.

"They're all so good," Brown said of the former Edison Miss Basketball winners. "Gabby (Elliott), Rickea (Jackson), Ruby (Whitehorn) and DeDe (Hagemann), that was a great group of girls. It's definitely great to bring the award back over to the westside."

She is also the first winner from the state's westside since Benton Harbor's Kysre Gondrezick won it in 2016.

Voters are required to vote for three finalists. Brown accumulated 443 first-place votes, almost twice as many as any other finalist.

Points are awarded on a 5-3-1 basis. Brown, signed to play at Michigan, finished with 3,265 points. Grand Rapids West Catholic's Cadence Dykstra was second with 1,971 points, Kennedy Blair of Dearborn Divine Child finished third with 1,909, followed by Faith Carson of Buchanan (1,664) and Mayla Ham of Wayne (1,550).

This season, Brown averaged 25.1 points, 8.3 rebounds and 3.3 assists while finishing her career with 1,537 points.

A season-ending injury to a teammate last season thrust Brown into a premier role and she was more than up for the challenge.

"We knew Macy was a really talented kid, but we hadn't gotten to see what it would look like if she got volume attempts and the types of touches and usage that would come with being your best player," said East coach Troy Hammond. "So we got that a year early with her as a junior."

It wasn't just things Brown did as a junior, but the way she did these things that separated her from her other players in the class of 2023.

"Some of the things she did last year were just different and special," said Hammond. "So you could kind of see that she had the talent and the ability to potentially end up winning Miss Basketball."

The first time Brown became aware of the Miss Basketball award was in 2018 when East Lansing's Jaida Hampton won and Brown's oldest sister, Olivia, now a senior who plays at Valparaiso, saw her play in the state semifinals.

"It was a big deal because she was still playing when she won the award," Brown said. "They came home and told us all about it."

She became even more familiar of the award two years ago when the final ballot included her sister, Jillian, currently a sophomore with Northwestern, who finished third to Hagemann.

When Macy and Jillian would take the court in their backyard, the outcome was pretty much preordained and Macy rarely came out on top.

"I think every once in a while I beat her, but it was always tough for me," she said. "We always ended up fighting, I think."

"We would push each other, if I'm being honest. Things would get pretty heated."

If there is anyone who first had an idea Macy was going to be at the Detroit Free Press on Monday accepting the Miss Basket-



**East Grand Rapids guard Macy Brown was awarded the 2023 Mick McCabe Miss Basketball Award on Monday in Detroit.**

MANDI WRIGHT/DETROIT FREE PRESS

ball award, it was Jillian, who grew up dominating her little sister.

"I think it was my junior or senior year of high school, that she beat me for the first time," Jillian said. "Yeah, it got to the point where she was beginning to beat me, but I usually win."

It was in those one-on-one games that Jillian noticed the growth in her sister's game and thought someday she might wind up being noticed as the best player in the state.

"Honestly, I've always known," Jillian said. "I feel like she's kind of had natural talent so I've known she's had a ton of potential."

Potential is not always a flattering word, especially when that potential is never realized.

That was not a problem where Brown was concerned.

"Honestly, when I was in high school I kind of knew she should definitely win it because she affects the game so much," Jillian said. "Of course I'm biased because she's my sister, but I'm also not biased because I know her game well enough that I just know that she's a different player and there's a lot of things that separate her."

"She's a point guard, she's 6-feet tall, she's super athletic. Those things make her really great. But the things that separate her are her ability to be a great teammate and make her teammates better. She's always been a winner."

Hammond's first memory of Brown was as a 6-year-old, tagging along with Olivia and Julia who loved to be in the gym and couldn't wait to get a spot on the court.

He had as bird's eye view of her developing into so much more than just a terrific player.

"It's her ability to lead other kids," Hammond said. "Every kid on our team, would run through a brick wall for Macy. There's a charisma to her. She has a way about her that makes everybody around her feel special and valued."

Being able to become a genuine leader of her team, just like Jillian, may be the thing that vaulted Brown beyond being an all-state player to being Miss Basketball.

"I feel like building a relationship with all of my teammates is a really big thing," she said. "Just knowing that everyone on our team works so hard and they're trying their best is everything."

## And the winners are ...

Here are the 42 winners of the Mick McCabe Miss Basketball Award:

- 2023 Macy Brown, East Grand Rapids (Michigan)
- 2022 Ruby Whitehorn, Detroit Edison (Clemson)
- 2021 Daniya Hagemann, Detroit Edison (Michigan State)
- 2020 Gabrielle Elliott, Detroit Edison (Clemson)
- 2019 Rickea Jackson, Detroit Edison (Mississippi State)
- 2018 Jaida Hampton, East Lansing (Wichita State)
- 2017 Jordan Walker, Muskegon Mona Shores (Western Michigan)
- 2016 Kysre Gondrezick, Benton Harbor (Michigan, West Virginia)
- 2015 Tania Davis, Goodrich (Iowa)
- 2014 Lexi Gussert, Crystal Falls Forrest Park (Michigan State)
- 2013 Tori Jankoska, Freeland (Michigan State)
- 2012 Madison Ristovski, Grosse Point Woods University 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 Bankton, 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 Daedra 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)

Just to make sure every once in a while let them know they're doing a great job, staying positive no matter what because we're all in it together."

Yes, Jillian deserves an assist.

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