

SPORTS

2017 Scholar Athlete of the Year Awards set for April 30

BUSTER LAING
Grand Bahama Sports and Travel

The scholastic world gets its own award show and a dose of roasting-esque comedy when comedian Will Stubbs hosts the 2017 Scholar Athlete of the Year Scholarship and Awards Ceremony on Sunday, April 30, 2017. The awards presented by Grand Bahama Sports and Travel will be held in The Bahamas Union of Teachers Hall, Wildcat Avenue, Grand Bahama and as always, will honour achievements of those in the sporting world who have excelled in the classroom and on the field.

Grand Bahama Sports and Travel Scholar Athlete of the Year Scholarship Committee is also very pleased to announce that the two overall high school boys and girls winners will now both receive \$1,000 in scholarships, while both runners up will receive \$500.00.

The Primary school winners will receive \$500 and the runners up \$250.

"We would like to sincerely thank our sponsors for having such a caring and giving heart because without your financial support for this event it would not have been possible," said Buster Laing, Grand Bahama Sports.com

"With your donations, we are able to provide over \$4,500 in scholarship this year and also provide complimentary dinner for over 40-student athletes from 22 area schools on Grand Bahama at the ceremony."

Sponsors of the event include Grand Bahama Port Authority, H & L School Supplies and Bookstores, Polymers, PharmaChem, Freeport Oil, G.B.Shipyard, Chances and Playtime Sports.

In addition, the Mark Wilson Coaching Award for Commitment and Dedication will be presented by the wife of the late Mark Wilson, Brooke Wilson.

Here is a look at the categories for the event, which goes on at 4:00 p.m.



COACHING AWARD – The Mark Wilson Coaching Award for Commitment and Dedication will be presented by the wife of the late Mark Wilson, Brooke Wilson.
(PHOTO: BUSTER LAING)

- Duranique Lightbourne,**
Jack Hayward
Quanisha Marshall,
Bishop Michael
Carlie McBrayer,
Lucaya International
Alexzandra Austin,
Sunland Baptist
Lezlia Jones, St. Georges

- HIGH SCHOOL BOYS**
Holland Martin,
Tabernacle Baptist
Jalen Pinder, Mary Star
Akeem Hanna, Jack Hayward
Jameir Pinder, Bishop Michael
Dikembe Johnson,
Lucaya International
Javares McIntosh,
Sunland Baptist
Mateo King, St. Georges

- PRIMARY SCHOOL GIRLS**
Kenya Christie, West End
Christia McKenzie,
Holmes Rock
Genesis Thompson,
Martin Town
Taynisha Jones, Bartlett Hill
Wilna Toussaint, Lewis Yard
Queen Thyaya Moore,
Tabernacle Baptist
Reginae Bastian,
Sunland Baptist
Precious Alcide,
Freeport Primary
Ciara Williams, Walter Parker

- Prisca Smith, Maurice Moore
Phoebe Wilson,
Lucaya International
Chelsea Poitier,
Freeport Gospel
Imara Nesbitt, Bishop Michael

- PRIMARY SCHOOL BOYS**
Henricus Maycock,
Holmes Rock
Kareem Curtis ,Bartlett Hil

- Ashton Sweeting, Martin Town
Aaron Forbes, Sunland Baptist
Eric Fischbacher,
Bishop Michael
Demari Clarke,
Freeport Primary
Donnie Hanna, Walter Parker
Nigel Forbes, G.B.Academy
Drevontae Smith,
Maurice Moore
Dylan Glington, Freeport Gospel

- Xavion Outten,
Mary Star Catholic
Ethan Paice,
Lucaya International

About the Award: The Scholar-Athlete Program will annually recognize two high school and primary seniors – one boy and one girl – from each member high school whose aca-

demical and athletic careers have been exemplary.

Nominated by their schools, which are limited to one nominee each, candidates must be a senior or graduate student in their final year of eligibility, have a grade point average of at least 2.75 on a 4.0 scale or 68 percent and participated in at least two core sports.

ATHLETES EXPECTED TO SIGN LETTERS OF INTENT AT THIS YEAR'S DARRELL SEARS BASKETBALL SHOWCASE

SHAYNE STUBBS
FN Sports Reporter
shayne@nasguard.com

Once again, basketball athletes will be put under a microscope and the watchful eyes of recruits at the 15th Annual Darrell Sears Basketball Showcase.

The Showcase tips off today, Friday, April 28 and will run to Sunday, April 30 at the St. Georges' Gymnasium. The players take the court Friday evening at 6:00 p.m. – 10:00 p.m. and on Saturday from 9:00 a.m. - 7:00 p.m.

The start time on Sunday will be 10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

In attendance this year will be Oklahoma University, Stetson University, University of Louisiana Monroe, Colorado State University, Arkansas Little Rock University, Winthrop University, Robert Morris University, Auburn University, Arkansas State University, Edward Waters, Paris College, Miami Dade College, St. Petersburg College and Pensacola State College.

The Showcase is put on in conjunction with the Basketball Caribbean Connection (BCC) and is a National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) certified event.

It is, perhaps, the only NCAA certified showcase in the Caribbean.

Since 1999 scores of young athletes have been awarded scholarships to not only play basketball abroad, but further their education at the collegiate



DARRELL SEARS

level as well. Players such as the sixth overall pick of last year's NBA Draft, Chavano "Buddy" Hield, Magnum Rolle, Garvin Hart, Lourawls 'Tum Tum' Nairn, Dwight and Kadeem Coleby, Prince Cooper, Travis Munnings, Nathan Bain among countless others have all been discovered as a result of the Showcase.

"The Showcase is the premiere event for the country as far as getting kids an opportunity to be seen and getting the kids an opportunity to go to school," voiced BCC Board Member Calvin "The Future" McIntosh. "We all like tournaments, we all want to win. But this is something, where I think the kids can win individually. It's not necessarily team based. We just want kids to get an opportunity to go to school."

Athletes throughout the country are invited through coaches and/or parents. Sears highlighted that the Showcase was created after witnessing the prices to register in other Showcases outside the country. Their goal was to introduce something affordable for athletes throughout The Bahamas.

"The thing is we started the showcase because we've traveled to all the major showcases, where we had to pay an average of \$150 to get in.

"We had to find a way to get there, then we have to pay \$150 to get in ... we tried to figure out a way to get those persons to come to us, where we don't have to spend that kind of money."

This year, Sears and McIntosh will do something a little different. For the first time in the history of the Showcase four athletes would be expected to sign their letter of intent, during or after Saturday's session.

McIntosh later discussed some of the benefits of the Showcase, which included "being in a smaller market.

"You have maybe 10 - 15 U.S coaches who could pinpoint one player. And if you're that good you'll definitely stand out and every coach in the gym would be asking about you.

"I remember a kid a couple years ago – Nashad Mackey – relatively unknown. He was actually in the States. He came into the Showcase that year and he was the best player by far. Now he's at a junior college. He

got seen here at the Showcase ... even Calvin Anderson."

McIntosh explained that this would be the second year in a row that they invited Bahamian junior college basketball players to come back.

"Because a lot of them in junior colleges aren't really getting seen. So last year we had Calvin Anderson come down, he really didn't have much offers where he was at. He came to the Showcase and this year he will be starting at the University of Louisiana Monroe."

Sears concluded that the run of Showcases held on the island would not be possible without the help of his committee that included: McIntosh, Greg Munroe, Patrick Victor, Kelia Wildgoose, Shamarra Beckles and also a few sponsors.

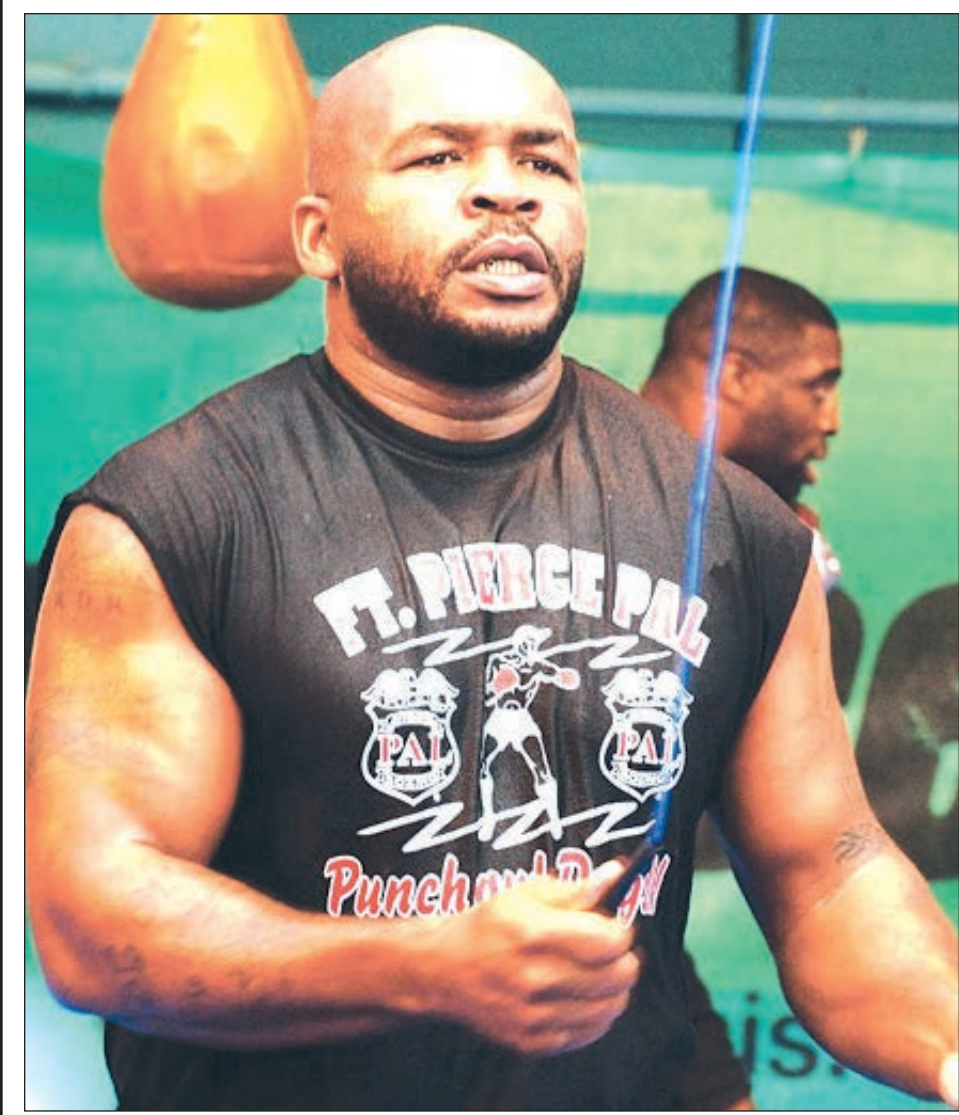
"We would like to thank the Freeport Council, Mrs. Della Bridgewater at Pelican Bay Resort and Nesbitt's Rentals."

Sears noted that over the course of 15 years, millions had been afforded to athletes that had participated in the Showcase.

The top 15 standouts at this weekend's exhibition will be selected to travel to Louisiana, Dallas, and Las Vegas play in an Amateur Athletic Union (AAU) Tournament in July.

Athletes will compete in a number of games inclusive of three-on-three and five-on-five. Coaches are also expected to run drill clinics for athletes to test their fundamentals and knowledge of the game.

Tank Williams seeks to boost boxing with farewell contests



SHERMAN "TANK" WILLIAMS

At 44, Sherman "Tank" Williams is quite aware that his competitive days in the ring are numbered.

He has been one of the great sports ambassadors of his era for The Bahamas. Williams has fought as a professional for 20 years.

He is a noted fistic figure on three continents. He won several regional titles in North America. Williams has been a double Asian champion, and in Europe, he is perhaps even better known, because of exciting bouts and training camps. At every turn of his career, he ensured that The Bahamas was highlighted. In Europe, his training camps are adorned with a huge Bahamian flag, always.

It has to be accepted that he has proven to be a true patriot.

At this time, as his career winds down, Williams is embarking on an ambitious program, one that, if successful, would revitalize boxing in the country. He had hoped that a Commonwealth Boxing Council heavyweight title fight, scheduled for this coming Saturday, (April 29), would have jump-started a series of bouts geared to re-establish The Bahamas as a boxing mecca.

Alas, the bout fell through when all aspects of the proposed match between Williams and Jamaican Lenroy Thomas could not be arranged. So, Williams in conjunction with his handlers and with the full support of the Bahamas Boxing

Commission is now targeting May 20 for a return to the ring, possibly for a World Boxing Council regional crown.

"I would like to make one thing clear. This is not just about a title,

"I want to bring my worldwide star power and 20 years of experience as a sports ambassador back home to The Bahamas. I am working with promoters to make this a reality. Also, the Commonwealth title still

Sports Scope

By Fred Sturup



but, more about creating a venue in The Bahamas for world championship boxing. And, from the eco-social point of view, I want to give another outlet to young Bahamians to compete and to have a way out. Boxing was my way out and I understand (the importance of having a wholesome option) as much as anyone else. This (upcoming) fight will be the beginning of championship events that I would like to see in The Bahamas. Boxing in The Bahamas has struggled for a long time, but we now have an opportunity to create a real platform and further assist our amateur program.

will come off. I will fight the winner of the fight for the vacant title, which is now scheduled for England," informed Williams.

The native Grand Bahamian is to be saluted for what he has contributed thus far to nation building through sports representation. He wants to do more. Williams deserves the support of the Boxing commission, the Ministry of Sports and the Ministry of Tourism.

(To respond to this column, kindly contact Fred Sturup at sturup1504@gmail.com or on WhatsApp at 727-6363).