

## Press Release

The 20<sup>th</sup> Annual induction class for the Hampton Roads African American Sports Hall of Fame (HRAASHF) includes Coach Bob Heard, Basketball official William E. "Willie" Brown, Pro basketball player Charles Hatcher, two time All-American and 1992 Olympic wrestler Anthony "Buddy" Lee, Professional football player Reggie Langhorne, contributor Curtis Cole and Posthumous James "Hook Shot" Grant.

Coach Robert "Bob" Heard is a career assistant coach who could have easily been a head coach at any college or university in the United States. However, heard the consummate teammate, is the type who could never leave the Norfolk State University Spartans for bigger pastures or the pros.

Heard's football career began in 1953 as a young Staff Sergeant in the U.S. Air Force stationed in Misawa Japan. As a starter on the unit's football team, Heard played for 2 years, attracting the attention of his coach who recommended him for a football scholarship at the University of Oregon upon completion of his military service. Heard became an Oregon "Duck" in 1955, and under the tutelage of renowned Coach Len Casanova, played as both defensive and offensive guard. His career at Oregon culminated in his participation in the 1958 Rose Bowl against Ohio State, where he played nose guard.

Heard's coaching career, began in 1961 as assistant football coach at Mississippi Industrial College, where he coached defense. His performance at MI got the attention of Head Coach Douglas Porter at Mississippi Valley State College (now MSSU), who recruited him as his defensive coach in 1962. After 4 successful years as defensive and assistant head coach at Mississippi Valley, Coach Heard was recruited in 1966 by head coach Jimmy Stevens as his Defensive Coordinator at North Carolina College (now NCCU). At NCCU, Coach Heard's reputation as a gifted defensive strategist, with overall depth of football knowledge, continued to grow.

In 1968 Coach heard was recruited to Norfolk State College now (NSU) by then head coach Curtis Maddox, to serve as Defensive Coordinator. In this capacity Coach Heard extended his coaching expertise to include recruiting. When Coach William "Dick" Price became head coach in 1974, Heard served variously as Defensive Coordinator, Offensive Coordinator, and Assistant head coach. It was during this period Coach Heard played a major role in leading the NSU Spartans to 3 consecutive CIAA Conference Championships, in 1974, 75 and 76.

Coach Heard has been a driving force in Norfolk State University athletics, and his influence through coaching, teaching, recruiting, and scouting has extended more broadly to the Hampton Roads community and to HBCU's in other areas.

Willie Brown is a native of New Port News Virginia. Willie began his career at G. W. Carver High School in New Port News, Virginia where he played football, basketball and ran track. As captain of his football and basketball teams he was selected to the Peninsula District Team. He was a member of the 1961 Virginia Inter-Scholastic (VIA) (The high school league for African American Schools of Virginia) state football championship team.

Willie attended the New Port News Apprentice School where he played football, basketball and ran track. He was captain of the football and basketball teams. He was the first African American to play basketball at the Apprentice School. In 1964 he became the first African American to receive the Apprentice School Athlete of the Year Award.

Willie began his career of officiating basketball while still attending high school. Willie was the first African American to officiate basketball in the Metro Conference which members included: Memphis, Louisville, Cincinnati, Virginia Tech, Florida State, Saint Louis, and Tulane. Willie was the fourth African American to officiate basketball in the Atlantic Coast Conference (ACC). He has officiated in the CIAA, ECAC, Southern, Sunbelt and Dixie Conferences.

Willie officiated for five years in the FIBA (Federation of International Basketball Association). In 1976 Willie officiated the National Invitational Basketball Tournament (NIT) in 1980, 81 and 83. Willie officiated NCAA Division II National Championship in 1982. Willie has served as the National AAU Boys Basketball Officials Committee Chairman. Willie serves as the Boo Williams AAU Summer Basketball League Tournament Director for 1992 to present.

Charles Hatcher is a native of Norfolk, Virginia. He played at Norview High School where he averaged 25 points per-game during the District tournament. Hatcher earned the "Most Outstanding Basketball Player" award for Norfolk. He was the first black player to win that award.

Hatcher enlisted in the Navy, where he played basketball, and was named All-Navy and earned an invitation to try out for the 1968 Olympic team. After getting cut, Hatcher accepted a basketball scholarship to Elizabeth City State University and played for legendary Vikings coach Robert "Bobby" Vaughan.

Because of an injury, he went on to play overseas for eight seasons, starring in Israel, Italy, Philippines, Spain and France. He spent time as a coach, including in Israel and with the Pro Athletes in Action tour, the NBA summer tour and the Pro Team tour.

During the 1980's he did speaking engagements through Pro Athletes in Action "Stay in School" Program, which later became the NBA "Stay in School" program.

Anthony "Buddy" Lee twice won All-American honors at Old Dominion University while earning a 122-25-2 wrestling record in 136- lb. completion. He finished fourth in the NCAA national in 1980 and seventh in 1982. Lee captured four NCAA East Regional championships and two state titles, while leading his team to two state championships.

When Lee graduated in 1982 with a degree in secondary art education, he was voted as the senior Athlete of the Year. He received three outstanding male athlete of the year awards at ODU and four most-valuable wrestler awards.

Lee had hoped to make the 1984 Olympic team in either freestyle or Greco-Roman. He felled due to a knee injury. He made the 1992 games where he placed sixth.

Lee credits the ODU coaches who "believed in him, pushed him to wrestle to his capability, and taught him the techniques he needed to win.

Reggie Langhorne is a native of Smithfield, Virginia. Langhorne played collegiate football for four years at Elizabeth City State University. Reggie was a 1985 7th round draft pick of the Cleveland Browns. As a wide receiver Langhorne had career statistics of 411 receptions, 5,446 yards receiving and scored 19 touchdowns.

He played from 1985 until 1991 with the Cleveland Browns. Langhorne had arguably his best season as a Brown in 1988, amassing 780 receiving yards and 7 touchdowns. In 1992 he signed with the Indianapolis Colts. During the 1993 season, he had the best year of his career, reaching 1,000 yards to go along with 85 receptions.

Langhorne played with the Indianapolis Colts from 1992- 1993. He spent 9 season in the NFL.

Curtis Coles is a native of Norfolk, Virginia. He played basketball and tennis at Booker T. Washington form 1967-1972. Coles played one year at Hampton Institute (Now University) under the late Coach "Ike" Morehead. Coles transferred to Old Dominion where he helped lead

the Monarchs in rebounding his sophomore year and played a major role in their NCAA Division II Basketball Championship. Majoring in engineering, Cole is a noted nationally recognized engineer and builder. He has refurbished the Lincoln Theater in Washington D.C., William "Dick" Price Stadium, Tidewater Community College and Norfolk Federal Building.

James "Hook Shot" Grant was a native of Aikens, South Carolina. "Hook Shot" played for the legendary Norfolk State Spartan's Coach Ernie Fears.

Grant got the nick name "Hook Shot" from a variation of the hook shot. On a fast break he was known to zoom five feet from the basket all set to lay the ball in. Then he would stop dribble backwards eight feet, falls away and shoot a "Hook Shot." "Oh you Hooker" the fans would yell. The Hooker loved that play.

Grant played for the Spartans from 1964-1968. Coach Fears had a vaunted "run and shoot" offense known as the "Torpedo." The 1964-65 team averaged 99.8 points a game in conference play.

In 1967 Grant was the Norfolk State Holiday Basketball Tournament most valuable player. Grant tallied 61 points in 2 games. Grant is listed as the number five all-time scorer in Spartan history. With 1,936 points. He averaged 20.8 points per game. He is currently ranked number five in field goals made for men's basketball. He ranked number in free throw percentage.

James "Hook Shot" Grant was voted 1965 most valuable player (MVP) for the CIAA Tournament.

The 20<sup>th</sup> Annual African American Sports Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony will be held on November 4<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 P.M., at the Renaissance Portsmouth-Waterfront Hotel 425 Water Street Portsmouth, Virginia 23704. Tickets can be purchased by contacting Heather Johnson Wall at (757) 495-0143 or (757) 286-4202 or email her at hajohnso@cox.net.