

# Mr. Basketball

By WADE LAROCHE | WADE.LAROCHE@CAPJOURNAL.COM

AFTER 30 LONG YEARS, South Dakota’s Mr. Basketball finally hails from Pierre again.

Governors’ big man Zach Hanson got one final high school basketball accolade Sunday when he was awarded Hansen-Anderson’s Mr. Basketball honor. Hanson becomes the first Governor to win the award since Troy Schaefer won it in 1983, and he joins the company of South Dakota legends such as Mike Miller, Eric Piatkowski and Eric Kline with his most recent award. The senior is well aware of that historical context.

“This means a lot to me and it’s a great honor,” Hanson said. “I was just happy to be mentioned with some of the guys who were at the banquet. When I was a kid, I always heard about some of the great names who won Mr. Basketball. It’s a great honor to finally be one.”

The list of names nominated with Hanson included his teammate Lane Severyn. The award’s banquet was a great finish to high school careers of the best one-two punch in South Dakota history and further proved how great it is to be a Governor right now.

“Having two guys who are finalists for this award is pretty tremendous,” Governors coach Terry Becker said. “That just doesn’t happen very often. As a coach, it was great to soak in that moment at the luncheon (Sunday). I look in the program and see the great players who won that award. Knowing that Zach’s name will be listed amongst those historic players is pretty unbelievable. There aren’t players of this caliber who play in South Dakota very often; it’s been remarkable that they came through at the same time.”

The Mr. Basketball award is just another triumph in a year that will be tough to beat for any player. Hanson unofficially started his basketball season by signing to play for Creighton, he later helped the Governors win conference, district and state titles and the accolades have showered in since. Hanson won the Gatorade Player of the Year, the South Dakota Coaches Association Player of the Year, he earned another All-State selection and he now has the Mr. Basketball award.

“There isn’t a way to describe everything that has happened,” Hanson said. “I’ve been given a lot of opportunities and I’ve really enjoyed it all. I don’t think this year could have gone any better. I’m thankful for everything that has happened.”

Hanson isn’t alone in his bliss. The Governors had a season for the ages in 2012-13 and that notion is further cemented with every offseason honor.

“It’s just been one thing after another, the Govs have been cleaning house with these accolades. It just slams it in even more that this was a historical season,” Becker said. “This is something that we just absorb and enjoy because we know everyone involved will remember this season for a long time.”

The fact that Hanson was able to be with Severyn for their final moment in high school basketball was fitting. Neither player played for any records or awards and Hanson isn’t taking his time on the floor with the fellow Division 1 commit for granted.

“It’s been great to be with Lane through everything,” Hanson said. “It’s never been about awards and records for me and Lane, but I think it just shows what kind of players we are. It’s special that we’ve been able to be teammates the last four years.”

Hanson’s next few weeks will continue to be eventful. The legendary Gov will graduate in a couple of weeks, and will begin his new journey in Omaha, Neb., about two weeks after receiving his diploma.

“It’s crazy to think about high school is over and it’s kind of sad,” Hanson said. “I’m very excited for this new beginning though. I know it will be a challenge but I think that’s where the excitement comes from.”

Hanson will let his glorious senior season serve as motivation as the 6-foot-9 star trades his green in for blue.

“I think it all just gets me more excited for college,” Hanson said. “I’ve seen what happens when I work towards my goals. College will be another level, and I will have to work harder. I’m excited to start at the bottom again and have to work my way up.”

Hanson’s challenge will be even more difficult given the fact that Creighton will transition from the Missouri Valley Conference to the Big East. That means show-downs with schools such as Georgetown, St. Johns, Villanova and Marquette, as well as a conference tournament in the world’s most famous arena, Madison Square Garden.

The challenge will be daunting, but Hanson’s high school coach is confident that Zach will shine on the big stage.

See **HANSON**, B4

Pierre’s Zach Hanson was named Mr. Basketball over the weekend. (Wade LaRoche/Capital Journal)

## Coming up this week

### PIERRE TRACK AND FIELD

at Miller Invite  
11 a.m. Tuesday  
Hosting Middle School Track Meet  
3:45 p.m. Friday  
at ESD Meet in Aberdeen  
11:30 a.m. Saturday

### PIERRE GOLF

at ESD Meet in Yankton  
9 a.m. Monday  
at Watertown Invitational  
10:30 a.m. Tuesday  
Hosting Pierre Invitational  
10 a.m. Friday

### PIERRE TENNIS

at ESD Meet in Brookings  
9 a.m. Friday

### PIERRE BASEBALL

vs. Rapid City Stevens(doubleheader)  
5 p.m. Wednesday  
vs. Brandon Valley(doubleheader)  
5:30 p.m. Friday

vs. triangular in Brookings  
Noon Sunday

### STANLEY COUNTY GOLF

at Preregion meet in Mobridge  
10 a.m. Monday

### SULLY BUTTES TRACK AND FIELD

at Miller Invite  
11 a.m. Tuesday

### SULLY BUTTES GOLF

at Preregion meet in Mobridge  
10 a.m. Monday

## Today’s trivia

What team did Grizzlies double-double machine Zach Randolph begin his career in the NBA with? See the answer in Tomorrow’s Capital Journal.

### FRIDAY’S ANSWER

Steph Curry attended college at the University of Davidson.

## Awards

## Becker named coach of the year

Governors’ coach Terry Becker continued the Pierre’s dominance of post-season awards.

Becker was named Boys’ Basketball Coach of the Year by the South Dakota High School Coaches Association.

It was a special season Becker’s program as the Governors won their first state championship in 31 years, their first ESD title in 31 years and the school’s second district championship.

Other coach of the year award winners included Parkston’s Jared Digmann (wrestling), Warner’s Stewart Bohle (girls’ basketball), Vermillion’s Mark Upward (gymnastics) and Dell Rapids St. Marys’ Cami Bacon (spirit).

## Track and field

## Governors vault to success in Sioux Falls

By WADE LAROCHE

WADE.LAROCHE@CAPJOURNAL.COM

Conditions weren’t ideal in Sioux Falls over the weekend, but the Pierre Governors produced some great results nonetheless.

The Governors battled cold weather while competing in the two-day Howard Wood Relays, as well as the O’Gorman Invitational this weekend.

At Howard Wood, the best of the best for the Governors was senior Austin Lemieux. Lemieux had a great outing with a second-place finish in the pole vault. He vaulted to a 13-3 height to

See **GOVS**, B4