

Jump-shot pioneer Sailors inducted into Basketball Hall of Fame

By The Associated Press The Denver Post

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LARAMIE —Former Wyoming standout Kenny Sailors said it might be the last honor he receives, and it's probably the biggest.

The inventor of the jump shot was named Tuesday as part of the 10-member class that will be inducted into the National Collegiate Basketball Hall of Fame on Nov. 18.

The 91-year-old led Wyoming to the NCAA championship in 1943 and was named national player of the year the same year. Sailors and his former coach, Everett Shelton, are the only Wyoming representatives chosen for the Hall of Fame in Kansas City, Mo.

Sailors said a number of people have tried to have him inducted over the years.

"I want to thank all those individuals, and I want to thank all those who were involved in the selection process," he said in a written statement released by Wyoming officials. "Now that it has happened, I'm very proud that I've made it. It's probably about the last honor I will receive, and it's probably the biggest.

"Some people think I'm as old as Methuselah. The only thing Methuselah didn't have that I do is the jump shot. I think the jump shot has done more to keep me in front of the people who select these type of honors than anything. I'm honored to be selected, even though I am a little late in years, and I'm honored to be joining Coach Shelton in the hall."

Shelton, who died in 1974, was inducted as a member of the founding class in 2006.

The rest of the 2012 class includes a trio of future New York Knicks: Patrick Ewing of Georgetown, Earl Monroe of Winston-Salem State and Willis Reed of Grambling. Kansas star Clyde Lovellette was selected along with North Carolina's Phil Ford.

Joe B. Hall, who guided Kentucky to the 1978 national title and nearly 300 victories, and Dave Robbins, who won more than 700 games at Virginia Union, were selected as coaches.

"It's a great privilege. It's a great honor, and I'm just overwhelmed with this event and what it means to me to be included," Hall said. "No one is more appreciative than I am."

Businessmen Jim Host and Joe Dean will go in as contributors.

"All of these individuals have played key roles in the growth and foundation of our wonderful and great game," said Reggie Minton, the deputy executive director of the National Association of Basketball Coaches and chairman of the hall's selection panel.