

# All-American Games Spotlights Legendary Coaches

**Girls Basketball Coaching Legends Charlie Domino and Mike Flynn** to square off at upcoming inaugural event

*The New Orleans Dominos and Philadelphia Belles are featured at the AAU All-American Games*

"Passionate personalities" that quote from girls' basketball influencer, coach, and longtime Girls' Basketball coach, Mike Flynn, best describes the personalities - and decades-long friendship - that he and Charlie Domino, of the New Orleans Dominos, two of the all-time great youth basketball coaches in the country.

First connecting in the late 1970's, these two legendary coaches are set to square off more than 40 years later for an AAU crown at the inaugural AAU All-American Games, July 1 - 3, 2021 in Knoxville, Tennessee. The event will be held in conjunction with the **new AAU Girl's and Women's Basketball [exhibit at the Hall](#)**.

**The display recognizes the AAU's vital role in advancing the development of women's and girls' basketball in the United States. [READ MORE](#) or [WATCH HERE](#).**

"Both Charlie and Mike being around for so long and implementing so many things earlier on for the betterment of AAU and the overall game of basketball has elevated what basketball is today," said Jerry Codispoti, Women's Basketball Hall of Fame Board and AAU Girls Basketball Committee member. "It is only fitting that these two greats go head-to-head in the first game of the first AAU All-American Games."

## 1974 - The Beginning

Charlie Domino began his coaching career at Ridegwood Prep in Metairie a New Orleans suburb where he coached football and baseball. The school didn't have a basketball program then.

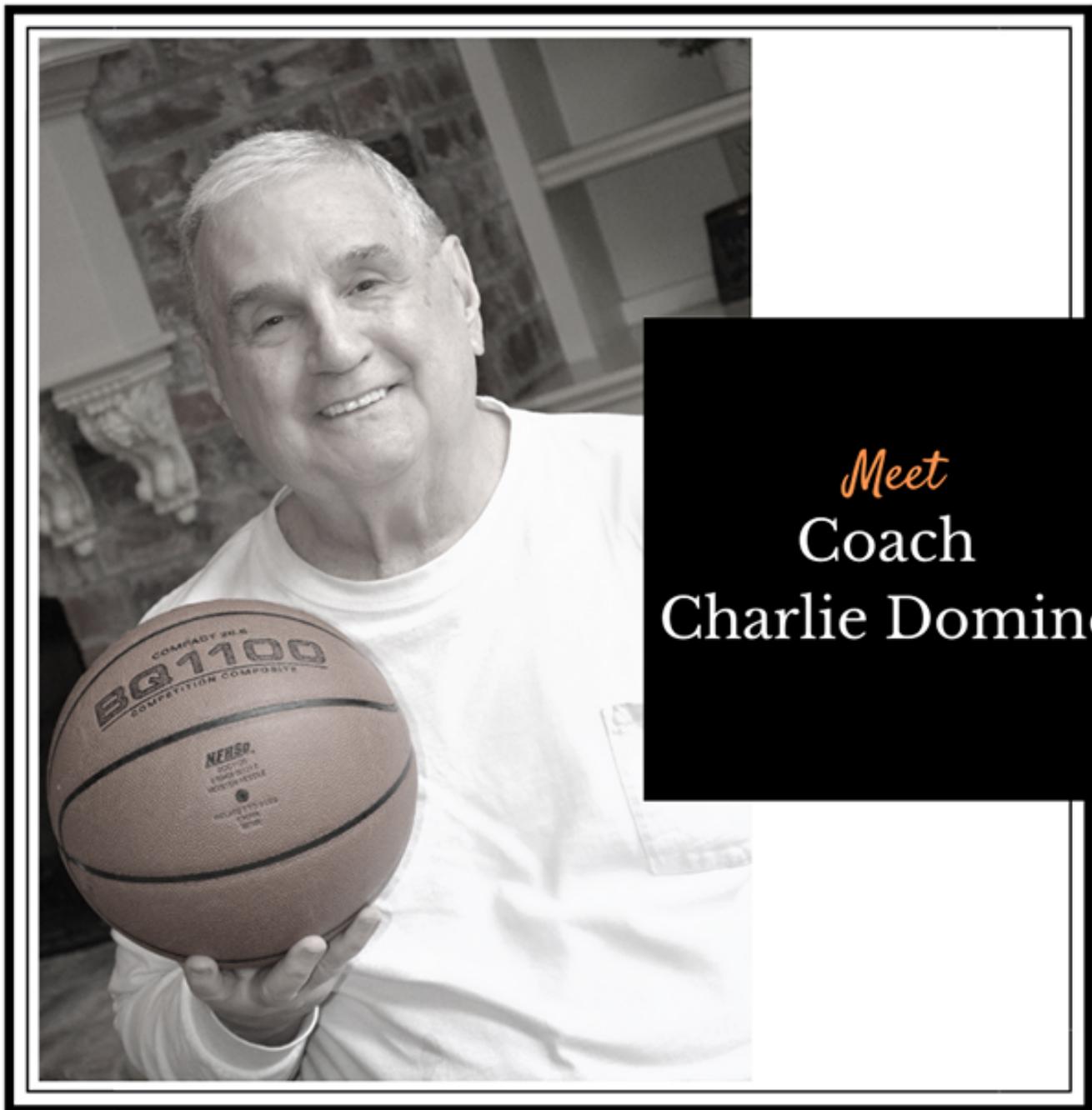
"There was no girls basketball at my high school," said Charlie Domino, AAU Girls Basketball Executive Committee member. "I coached football and baseball and wanted to get into basketball but my school didn't even offer it yet."

Luckily, a friend he played pick-up basketball with asked for help coaching the girls' team at a nearby all-girls Catholic school, Archbishop Chapelle High School.

"The funniest thing is I'd never played a minute of basketball in my life on an organized team." said Domino. "But, we ended up winning the city championship three times in a row."

In 1974, to give the players some extra competition during the off-season, Domino put together a summer team to compete in the fledgling AAU Girls Basketball program. In subsequent years, other girls were added outside of the high school team to help the team better compete against the high level of AAU competition.

"By 1976, we finished third in the country and by 1978, if my memory serves, we won our first two national championships on the same night in Murfreesboro, Tennessee." This was the first of 17 AAU national titles for the New Orleans Dominos.



@dominosaau twitter

The year 1974 also saw girls' basketball icon Mike Flynn start his first travel team in the Amateur Athletic Union (AAU). The C.L. Stars would later become a non-profit organization under the name "Philadelphia Belles" in 1978.

In 1979, the Belles captured their AAU national championship in the 18 and under division, defeating the defending champions New Orleans Dominos in the quarterfinals. Over the next 40 years the Belles have won over 4,200 games and countless titles, awards and championships ([History of the Belles](#)).

This was the first of many battles the two legendary coaches would engage in. But a friendship of mutual respect was born.

"In 1979, the AAU was something different and something new because there was nothing like it out there," said Flynn. "Charlie was a very active guy and I'm a very active guy and we played against each other and we were very competitive but we got along."



@mikeflynn826 twitter

Back then, the tournaments were run in a single-elimination format. Domino and Flynn's teams were so dominant in relation to other competing teams that often times the feeling was they were being deliberately scheduled to play against each other early in the tournament to allow other teams a chance to advance.

"I taught Charlie how to win," joked Flynn. "In all seriousness, what it meant was that Charlie and I won it back-to-back, so what does that tell you if we were playing each other in the quarterfinals?"

### **Grow the Game - Renegades**

Determined to help the girls' game grow and develop, Flynn and Domino not only coached but got involved at the administrative level of AAU.

Inspired by their match ups in early rounds, the two men pushed through the concept of double elimination national championship tournaments as a means of providing the opportunity for the best teams to compete for the title regardless of how early rounds were scheduled.

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Souvenir Program

# AAU 79

\$1.00

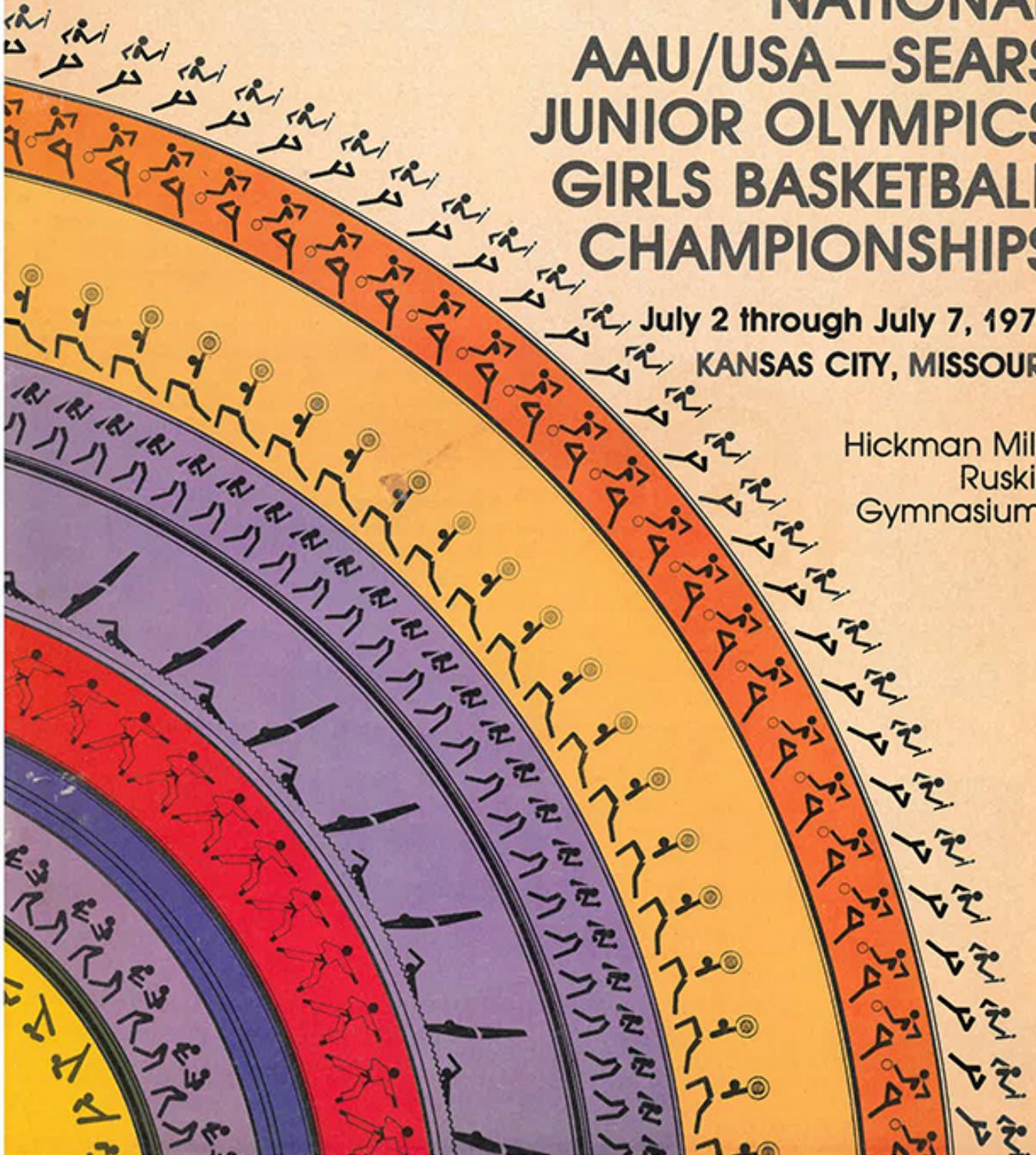
WINTER/SPRING

## NATIONAL AAU/USA—SEARS JUNIOR OLYMPICS GIRLS BASKETBALL CHAMPIONSHIPS

July 2 through July 7, 1979

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Hickman Mills  
Ruskin  
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Copy of the 1979 AAU/USA Junior Olympics Girls Basketball Championships game program

"We felt if double elimination came out, it could really grow the game. Because people could come and compete but they had two chances to win." said Domino. "Mike and I came up with a lot of really good ideas that changed AAU, some that were not always received by all positively."

This was the first of many times over the years in which Flynn and Domino joined together for the betterment of the girls' game. This relentless commitment to the continued development and growth of the game overall, and in AAU particular, wasn't always welcomed with enthusiasm.

"I guess you could say we were viewed as renegades because we were two of the first men to come into coaching in girls' basketball and make it exciting, popular, successful and competitive," said Flynn. "It was the beginning, it was the pebble thrown into the water that created the ripples that people didn't expect and the fact that we created such as ripples is why you are talking to us right now, 40 some years later."

### **Commitment to Excellence and Equality**

Domino and Flynn's impact on the game can't be understated. Both started coaching girls' basketball in the time of Title IX. Passed in 1972, this far reaching law prohibited colleges and universities receiving federal funding from sex-based discrimination.

"Back in the late 1970's, I was coaching the girls and was going Temple," said Flynn. "I would talk with a couple of the young women I was in class with, tell them what I was doing with girls' basketball, the Belles and AAU and how it's a fight every day. I would tell them stories. They were playing AIAW. Later on, I hear one of the people involved in the Title IX lawsuit was someone I used to talk with in class."

Passion, tireless effort and a drive for excellence seem to drive both these men. Add in blunt and no-nonsense, and you have two men who have left an indelible mark on the game and the people who play it. It is no wonder both programs showcase a "who's who" of legendary basketball players.

Including Kim Mulkey, an All-American point guard at Louisiana Tech, who won the inaugural NCAA title in 1982. She went on to coach Baylor to three NCAA titles (2005, 2012, 2019). The current coach of LSU, Mulkey got her start in AAU with the New Orleans Dominos in 1979.



*Kim Mulkey / TexasMonthly.com*

Moreover, Hall of Fame player, Dawn Staley a three-time Olympic gold medalist and current South Carolina coach (2017 national title) and Olympic team coach got her start with the Philadelphia Belles.



*Hall of Famer Dawn Staley Elsa/Getty Images*

"You're talking to two of the people who are responsible for the growth of girl's and women's basketball in America. All you have to do is look at the coaches who've come through from both of us. Charlie has Kim Mulkey, I have Dawn Staley," said Flynn. "So, if you think about it these are two leaders of the game and two [NCAA] national championship winners so what does that tell you about the impact which, because of our passionate personalities, that's always been taken for being contentious because our passion was for our program and our kids."

Flynn continued, "You create a standard of winning but if you do so for ten years or 20, everyone will know who you are and your programs." Much in the same vein, Domino coaches with the same intensity he did at the start.

"I am very demanding of my players on the floor," said Domino. "If we have practice at 9:00am you're late if you're there after 8:45. We want to be on the floor by 9 and you can't do that if you aren't there early enough."

He explained why this is so important, "Preparation is key - I print up a playbook for them and tell them use that playbook. I want them to understand the responsibility of being on the team. That name on your chest mean a lot of great players came through before. We have a tradition here and you are going to live up to it."

## **The Present**

Throughout the years, Domino has focused on coaching, building, and growing his program. The thing he is most proud of is not the national titles but something more important.

"My program has garnered \$28 million in scholarship money," said Domino. "And that's one of the things I am most proud of."



[FB.com/dominosgirlsaaubasketball](https://www.facebook.com/dominosgirlsaaubasketball)

Flynn has branched out from coaching to owner operator of US Junior Nationals and BlueStar Media group. Both men though still work with AAU, still causing ripples and pushing for the betterment of the game.

"Mike is now a consultant, Boo [Williams, AAU Basketball Chair] has gotten a new committee together and its very beneficial in the process," said Domino. "Mike was one of the three most influential people to the development of the girls' game. He knows where things are moving all the way down and he understands what the AAU needs to do. We are moving in a positive direction."

When asked what keeps them both "getting up in the morning and doing this," both men indicated they are still as dedicated and passionate to grow the game as they were when started more than 40 years ago.

"People doubting me," replied Flynn. "That means, if you're satisfied you don't have to get up. If you have something to prove, of proving to yourself everyday then you're doing the right thing and that effort improves the lives of all those around you."

"For me when you can help young people grow, that is the biggest thing, not just the winning," said Domino. "It's the teaching. I pride myself more in the \$28 million in scholarship money than in the 17 AAU national championships."

We will surely see these two passionate personalities on display as they square off in the inaugural All-American Games Thursday, July 1.

## PHILADELPHIA BELLES

Philadelphia, PA—Middle Atlantic



No	Name	Ht	Age	Grade
	Elizabeth Zuccarelli	5-4	13	8
	Erin Garrity	5-5	13	8
	Camille Angemi	5-6	14	8
	Roberts Jurash	5-9	14	8
	Sherry McClintock	6-1	14	8
	Marge Friel	6-3	14	8
	Christine Cunningham	5-6	14	8
	Kia Colbert	5-5	14	8
	Nakia Hill	6-1	13	7
	Darlene Saar	6-0	14	8
	Megan Gorman	5-8	13	8
	Eileen Gemmell	5-7	13	7
	Michelle Marsiniak	5-7	13	8

**Head Coach:** Mike Flynn  
**Asst. Coach:** Ron Angemi  
**Asst. Coach:** Rosellen Gutowski

*From the 1987 AAU/USA Junior Olympics game program.*

*See next page for program page*

# 18 & UNDER

## MICHIGAN ASSN.

City Bombers  
 Detroit, Mich.  
 Hill  
 Bell  
 Boozer  
 Brown  
 Everett  
 Hardy  
 Hunter  
 Johnson  
 McGee  
 McGee  
 Pryor  
 Walker  
 Coach: Virginia Lawrence  
 Asst.: Evelyn Buntin

## MIDDLE ATLANTIC ASSN.

Philadelphia Belles  
 Philadelphia, Penn.  
 Mary Coyle  
 Patricia Coyle  
 Maureen Dunne  
 Carolyn Glutz  
 Karen Kolb  
 Katherine Larkin  
 Deborah Lytle  
 Jill McKone  
 June Olkowski  
 Mary Ostrowski  
 Barbara Weiner  
 COACH: Kevin Gallagher  
 ASST.: Allison Echus

## NEW ENGLAND ASSOCIATION

The Wildcats  
 Wesley, Mass.  
 Catherine Bochain  
 Tracy Clanton  
 Joan Coogan  
 Ann Deacon  
 Medina Dixon  
 Alison Fay  
 Sherry Levan  
 Mary O'Connor  
 Debra Miller  
 Martha Morrison  
 Patricia Pinkwin  
 Lynne Walsh  
 COACH: JoAnn O'Callaghan  
 ASST.: Paula Ayers

## OREGON ASSN.

Battleground AAU  
 Battleground, Oregon  
 Sue Arehart  
 Pam Brisby  
 Susan Massie  
 Lorene Morgan  
 Nancy Morris  
 Donelle Odren  
 Tami Stuart  
 COACH: Patti McDonald

## OZA

Var  
 St Lo  
 Roslyn B  
 Caroline E  
 Julie Goe  
 Jane Hart  
 Katherine  
 Lynn Jac  
 Ellen Kiel  
 Caroline I  
 Mary Mill  
 Nancy M  
 Lori Smit  
 June Var  
 COACH:  
 ASST.: J

# ER

## MEXICO ASSN.

Albuquerque Roadrunners  
 Albuquerque, NM  
 Baca  
 Corley  
 Fallon  
 Goering  
 Hill  
 Jones  
 Marquez  
 Tina Russo  
 Scott  
 Spears  
 Tindell  
 Valencia  
 Coach: Joseph Pacheco  
 Asst.: Meredith Hovet (Tiny)

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 Fri.-Sat.-Sun. ....\$ 3.98

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 New Orleans, LA

Michelle Anderson  
 Karen Eaton  
 Dana Fortenberry  
 Sandra Hodge  
 Janice Lawrence  
 Paula Osborne  
 Kim McKay  
 Cheryl Taylor  
 COACH: Charles Domino  
 ASST: Joe Favalaro

## SOUT

A  
 Ha  
 Elizabeth  
 Cassa  
 Harrie  
 Susan  
 Daphn  
 Glend  
 Lynn  
 Lauri  
 Melan  
 Char  
 Peter  
 Sanya  
 COAC  
 Patri