

Rod Strickland, the NBA executive, All-NBA point guard and member of the New York City Basketball Hall of Fame, was named men's basketball head coach of the Long Island University Sharks on June 30, 2022. **Strickland** joined LIU from the NBA's G League Ignite, the National Basketball Association's official minor league, where he served as director of the professional path program since 2018. **Strickland** is no stranger to the collegiate basketball scene, as he previously held an administrative role at Kentucky under John Calipari, director of basketball operations at Memphis and an assistant coach at South Florida under Orlando Antigua. **Strickland**, a Bronx native, is a 17-year NBA veteran that currently ranks 13th all-time in assists in league history.



LONG ISLAND UNIVERSITY SHARKS

MEN'S BASKETBALL GAME NOTES

LIU (0-2) vs. UCLA (2-0), Nov. 15, 2023, 7 p.m.

Pauley Pavilion • Los Angeles, Ca. • Pac-12 Network

@LIUBasketball
 @liubasketball

NEW LOOK SHARKS > In Rod Strickland's second season at the helm, he was able to get his guys in to really kick off his tenure. Strickland and co. added nine new Sharks to the team (six freshmen, three transfers.) Freshmen Eric Acker, Greg Kenney, Tre'shawn Sheppard and Jason Steele are all local grown New York products, while Nikola Djapa (Serbia) and Gezim Bajrami (Finland) join from overseas. The three transfers bring some much needed experience to this young squad, who only had one upperclassmen (Andre Washington) before this class came in. Tana Kopa is a sharpshooter from Division II Spring Hill while Rod Strickland's sons Tai and Terrell are well seasoned players who have played over 120 combined games.

REVENGE GAME? > LIU is 1-0 all-time against UCLA. On Dec. 21, 1950 #7 LIU defeated #9 UCLA by a score of 91-70 at Madison Square Garden. This was the only matchup between legendary head coaches Clair Bee and John Wooden. Bee was in his last year at the helm and Wooden was in just his third year as head coach. LIU had four future NBA players on the team: Don Ackerman, Ray Felix, Al Roges and Hal Uplinger.

BACK FOR ANOTHER YEAR > Andre Washington, R.J. Greene, C.J. Delancy and Ahmed Essahaty are the only four returners for LIU this season. In '22-'23 Washington was one of the teams most prolific scorers averaging 11.5 ppg, 2.5 apg and 2.3 rpg. He scored 10+ points 11 times and poured in 37 points against Saint Francis U on Feb. 18. R.J. Greene was named to the NEC All-Rookie team and averaged 9.1 points. He scored double-digit points 12 times and scored his season-high 21 points in the same game as Washington. C.J. Delancy appeared in 25 games, averaging 5.7 ppg and 4.2 rpg. He registered his first career double-double (10 pts, 12 reb) vs. Purchase on Dec. 22. Ahmed Essahaty was an important piece off of the bench after joining the team mid-way through the season. The Wellington, New Zealand native averaged 4.8 ppg while shooting at a 43.6% clip.

FASTEN YOUR SEATBELTS > According to KenPom, the Sharks were the sixth fastest team in the country in 2022-23 based on adjusted tempo. They trailed only UT Rio Grande Valley, Alabama, Long Beach State, Tulane and St. John's. Through two games, LIU is once again sixth in adjusted tempo.

GREENE-R PASTURES AHEAD > While LIU is off to an 0-2 start, sophomore R.J. Greene has been a bright spot so far. So far this season, Greene is averaging 13 points, 8.5 rebounds and one steal. Greene recorded a double-double on Monday against Pepperdine (14 points, 10 rebounds).

2023-24 SCHEDULE/RESULTS

Nov. 8	FISK	Canceled
Nov. 10	AIR FORCE	L 82-67
Nov. 13	at Pepperdine	L 88-53
Nov. 15	at UCLA	10 p.m.
Nov. 21	at Columbia	7 p.m.
Nov. 24	Texas A&M CC	2 p.m.
Nov. 25	at Northern Kentucky	4 p.m.
Dec. 2	at FIU	6 p.m.
Dec. 6	at Miami	7 p.m.
Dec. 12	at UMass Lowell	6 p.m.
Dec. 16	at Rutgers	1 p.m.
Dec. 23	at Mt. St. Mary's	1 p.m.
Dec. 28	UAlbany**	7 p.m.
Jan. 4	WAGNER*	7 p.m.
Jan. 6	at Stonehill*	2 p.m.
Jan. 13	at Sacred Heart*	2 p.m.
Jan. 19	at Saint Francis U.*	7 p.m.
Jan. 21	CCSU*	7 p.m.
Jan. 25	STONEHILL*	7 p.m.
Jan. 27	at Le Moyne*	2 p.m.
Feb. 1	at FDU*	7 p.m.
Feb. 3	SAINT FRANCIS U.*	7 p.m.
Feb. 8	MERRIMACK*	7 p.m.
Feb. 10	SACRED HEART*	8 p.m.
Feb. 15	FDU*	7 p.m.
Feb. 17	at Merrimack*	3 p.m.
Feb. 22	LE MOYNE*	7 p.m.
Feb. 24	at Wagner*	1 p.m.
Feb. 29	at CCSU*	7 p.m.

*Northeast Conference

*All times Eastern Time

**At Barclays Center

2023-24 NEWCOMERS



Tai Strickland
Terrell Strickland
Tana Kopa
Eric Acker
Greg Kenney
Tre'shawn Sheppard
Jason Steele
Nikola Djapa
Gezim Bajrami

LIU VS. UCLA BY THE NUMBERS



60	33.3%	31.3%	33	12	8
POINTS/GAME	FIELD GOAL %	THREE POINT%	REBOUNDS/GAME	ASSISTS/GAME	STEALS/GAME
71.5	47.2%	30.4%	31	12.5	7.5

FR. / 6-2 160 / EAST NEW YORK, N.Y.

Son of Erica Bynum and Shawn Acker
Marketing major
Born Nov. 22, 2005



FR. / 6-6 176 / WILLISTON PARK, N.Y.

Son of Suzanne and Greg Kenney
Born on Sept. 4, 2004



FR. / 6-6 230 / BROOKLYN, N.Y.

Son of Sharlene Henry and Steven Sheppard
Born Oct. 2, 2003



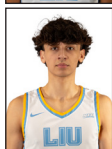
JR. / 5-11 / 178 / STATEN ISLAND, N.Y.

Son of Nancy and Max Washington
Sports management major
Born March 9, 2002



JR. / 6-6 178 / PERTH, WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Son of Stacey and Corey Kopa
Sports management major
Born July 8, 2002



FR. / 6-6 190 / FLUSHING, N.Y.

Son of Joyce Steele and Ruby Briggs
Entrepreneurship major
Born Feb. 29, 2004



FR. / 6-5 210 / THE BRONX, N.Y.

Son of Chauncie Smith and Ronald Green Sr.
Born Jan. 19, 2003



R-JR. / 6-0 175 / TAMPA, FLA.

Son of Cheryl and Rod Strickland
Sports management major
Born July 5, 2001



GR. / 6-2 185 / TAMPA, FLA.

Son of Cheryl and Rod Strickland
Data analytics major
Born Oct. 10, 1999



SO. / 6-8 210 / JONESBORO, ARK.

Son of Shavon Debro
Sport management major
Born May 14, 2003



SO. / 6-3 201 / WELLINGTON, NEW ZEALAND

Made LIU debut vs. Stonehill on Jan. 20
Born Nov. 20, 2002



FR. / 7-0 230 / BELGRADE, SERBIA

Son of Slobodanka and Ilija Djapa
Father Ilija played basketball professionally
Born June 23, 2004



FR. / 6-6 180 / TAMPERE, FINLAND

Son of Hanife and Zymer Bajrami
Born July 31, 2003



2 ERIC ACKER, G > Made LIU debut on Nov. 10 vs. Air Force... Scored 10 points, recorded four assists and two rebounds... High school Eagle Academy for Young Men II in Brooklyn won first borough and city championships in its history

3 GREG KENNEY, F > Selected All-NEPSAC at The Frederick Gunn School in Washington, Conn... All-state, all-county, all-league, team MVP at Kellenberg Memorial High School (NY)... DNP Monday...

4 TRE'SHAWN SHEPPARD, G/F > High school teammates with Eric Acker... Team MVP in 2023... Two-time all-state... Scored over 1,000 career points... Averaged 19.7 points and 20 rebounds per game as a senior... DNP Monday...

5 ANDRE WASHINGTON, G > Scored 10 points on Monday... Recorded nine points, five assists, three rebounds on Friday... Appeared in 18 games in '22-'23, averaging 11.5 ppg... Scored 37 points with six three-pointers vs Saint Francis U...

6 TANA KOPA, G/F > Started in LIU debut on Friday... Recorded a double-double with 11 points and 10 rebounds... Originally attended DII Spring Hill College in Mobile, Ala... Played in 52 games over two seasons, averaging 13.9 ppg and 3.5 rpg...

8 JASON STEELE, F > Graduated from Our Saviour Lutheran in the Bronx in 2023... Played four seasons of varsity basketball... Earned Bruer Service Award... DNP Monday

10 R.J. GREENE, G > Recorded a double-double on Monday (14 points, 10 rebounds)... Scored a team-high 12 points on Friday... Also scored seven rebounds, a steal and a block... NEC All-Rookie Team... Averaged 9.1 ppg in '22-'23...

11 TERELL STRICKLAND, G > Started in LIU debut on Friday... Scored 11 points with five assists and three rebounds... Originally attended James Madison... Played 50 games as a Duke, averaging 4.6 ppg and 2.3 rpg while tallying 95 assists and 65 steals...

13 TAI STRICKLAND, G > Made LIU debut on Monday, scored 10 points... Transfer from Georgia Southern... From 2018-22 played in 74 collegiate games (Wisconsin, Temple, Georgia Southern), having produced 439 points, 141 rebounds, 67 assists and 54 steals...

15 C.J. DELANCY, C > Scored nine points off the bench vs. Air Force, shooting 4/4 from the field... Also recorded six rebounds... Appeared in 25 games as a freshman, averaging 5.7 ppg... Season-high 12 rebounds vs. Purchase on Dec. 22...

21 AHMED ESSAHATY, G > Recorded two assists off the bench vs Air Force... Appeared in eight games after joining team mid-way through the '22-'23 season... Averaged 4.8 ppg... Tallied season-high 10 points vs. Sacred Heart... Forced eight turnovers vs. Merrimack...

23 NIKOLA DJAPA, F > Scored two points in LIU debut on Friday... Plays for the Serbian national team... Two-time Junior Adriatic League champion... Selected best five in Cadets League in Serbia... Won Adidas Next Generation tournament...

43 GEZIM BAJRAMI, C > Started in LIU debut on Friday... Scored three points and recorded three rebounds and two blocks... Averaged 17.3 ppg, 10 rpg while played for Pantterit Helsinki in Finnish 1st Division (B)...

2023-24 LIU SHARKS MEN'S BASKETBALL ROSTER

No.	Name	Pos.	Yr.	Ht.	Wt.	Hometown / High School / Previous Team
2	Eric Acker	Fr.	G	6-2	160	East New York, N.Y. / Eagle Academy for Young Men II
3	Greg Kenney	Fr.	F	6-6	176	Williston Park, N.Y. / The Frederick Gunn School
4	Tre'shawn Sheppard	Fr.	G/F	6-6	230	Brooklyn, N.Y. / Eagle Academy for Young Men II
5	Andre Washington	Jr.	G	5-11	178	Staten Island, N.Y. / Williston North Hampton
6	Tana Kopa	Jr.	G/F	6-6	178	Perth, Western Australia / Grace Baptist Academy / Spring Hall
8	Jason Steele	Fr.	F	6-6	190	Flushing, N.Y. / Our Savior Lutheran
10	R.J. Greene	Fr.	G	6-6	210	The Bronx, N.Y. / Iona Prep
11	Terell Strickland	R-Jr.	G	6-0	175	Tampa, Fla. / St. Petersburg / James Madison
13	Tai Strickland	Gr.	G	6-2	185	Tampa, Fla. / St. Petersburg / Georgia Southern
15	C.J. Delancy	Fr.	C	6-8	210	Jonesboro, Ark. / Valley View High School
21	Ahmed Essahaty	So.	G	6-3	201	Wellington, New Zealand / Onslow College
23	Nikola Djapa	Fr.	F	7-0	230	Belgrade, Serbia / Hoosac School
43	Gezim Bajrami	Fr.	C	6-9	264	Tampere, Finland / Omnia

STAFF

Head Coach: Rod Strickland (second season)

Assistant Coaches: Chris Thomas, Maurice Hicks, Charles Jones

Director of Basketball Operations: Dalmar Ali

Video Coordinator: Quentin Turner

Athletic Trainer: Michael Fiorella, ATC

PRONUNCIATIONS

Eric Acker	ACK-errr
Gezim Bajrami	GEZZ-im baj-RAH-mee
Nikola Djapa	nick-OH-la JA-pa
Ahmed Essahaty	AH-mid
Tana Kopa	tah-nah co-pah

MEDIA CONTACT: Assistant director of athletic media relations **David Patalano** handles publicity for LIU basketball. He may be contacted at (516) 660-4956 or David.Patalano@liu.edu

LAST GAME'S STATS

LIU (0-2,0-0 NEC) -vs- Pepperdine (3-1,0-0 WCC)
11/13/23 at Firestone Fieldhouse, Malibu, CA

Date: 11/13/23
Time: 7:00 PM
Attendance: 327
Site: Firestone Fieldhouse, Malibu, CA
Referees: Chance Moore, Randy Richardson, Robert Lehigh

Score By Period	1	2	Total
LIU	18	35	53
Pepperdine	39	49	88

LIU 53

#	Player	GS	MIN	FG	3PT	FT	ORB-DRB	REB	PF	A	TO	BLK	STL	PTS
10	Greene,RJ	*	39	2-9	0-0	10-11	1-9	10	1	1	5	0	1	14
11	Strickland,Terell	*	20	4-10	2-4	0-0	0-4	4	4	0	0	0	2	10
05	Washington,Andre	*	18	4-7	2-4	0-0	0-0	0	4	1	3	0	3	10
06	Kopa,Tana	*	35	0-8	0-6	2-2	0-3	3	0	1	2	0	2	2
43	Bajrami,Gezim	*	21	0-7	0-0	0-0	0-2	2	2	0	0	0	0	0
13	Strickland,Tai		21	2-5	0-0	6-8	0-2	2	5	1	0	0	1	10
23	Djapa,Nikola		13	2-3	0-1	1-4	1-2	3	5	0	3	0	0	5
02	Acker,Eric		30	1-4	0-0	0-0	0-4	4	1	1	2	0	0	2
15	Delancy,CJ		3	0-0	0-0	0-0	0-1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
TM	TEAM		0	0-0	0-0	0-0	2-0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0
Totals		-	200	15-53	4-15	19-25	4-27	31	22	5	15	0	9	53

Team Summary	FG		3PT		FT	
First Half	5-25	20.00 %	3-9	33.33 %	5-9	55.56 %
Second Half	10-28	35.71 %	1-6	16.67 %	14-16	87.50 %
Total	15-53	28.3 %	4-15	26.7 %	19-25	76.0 %

Technical Fouls: none Second Chance Points: 5 Scores Tied: 0 times(s) Points in the Paint: 20 Fast Break Points: 16
Lead Changed: 0 times(s) Points off Turnovers: 13 Bench Points: 17 Largest Lead: 0 0

Pepperdine 88

#	Player	GS	MIN	FG	3PT	FT	ORB-DRB	REB	PF	A	TO	BLK	STL	PTS
00	Mallette,Houston	*	25	6-14	4-6	8-9	1-5	6	2	0	4	0	1	24
20	Anderson,Ethan	*	24	4-7	2-2	1-2	0-2	2	0	4	1	0	0	11
35	Gassama,Aladji	*	24	1-3	0-0	4-4	6-3	9	3	2	1	0	0	6
03	Moore,Malik	*	23	1-8	1-5	3-4	0-2	2	2	4	1	0	0	6
01	Ajayi,Michael	*	23	1-11	0-1	0-0	2-10	12	3	1	1	0	1	2
21	Cooper,Nils		17	4-7	0-1	5-5	1-2	3	1	1	2	0	3	13
23	Williams,Curtis		21	4-6	0-1	4-4	1-2	3	1	1	1	0	0	12
02	Pitre,Jalen		19	4-7	2-3	0-0	1-6	7	3	0	0	2	0	10
13	Stansberry,Cord		11	2-3	0-0	0-0	0-2	2	1	1	1	0	1	4
24	Squire,John		7	0-0	0-0	0-0	1-1	2	1	0	0	0	0	0
10	Jordan,Paul		3	0-0	0-0	0-0	0-1	1	0	0	1	0	0	0
33	Mager,David		3	0-1	0-0	0-0	0-0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
TM	TEAM		0	0-0	0-0	0-0	2-1	3	0	0	0	0	0	0
Totals		-	200	27-67	9-19	25-28	15-37	52	17	14	13	3	6	88

Team Summary	FG		3PT		FT	
First Half	12-33	36.36 %	6-11	54.55 %	9-11	81.82 %
Second Half	15-34	44.12 %	3-8	37.50 %	16-17	94.12 %
Total	27-67	40.3 %	9-19	47.4 %	25-28	89.3 %

Technical Fouls: none Second Chance Points: 13 Scores Tied: 0 times(s) Points in the Paint: 28 Fast Break Points: 25
Lead Changed: 0 times(s) Points off Turnovers: 11 Bench Points: 39 Largest Lead: 0 0

SEASON STATS

Overall Record: 0-2 Home: 0-1 Away: 0-1 Neutral: 0-0

#	Player	GP-GS	MIN	AVG	FG		3PT		FT		Rebounds				PF	DQ	A	TO	BLK	STL
					FG-FGA	FG%	3FG-FGA	3FG%	FT-FTA	FT%	OFF	DEF	TOT	AVG						
10	Greene, R.J.	2-2	62	31.0	5-15	.333	0-0	.000	16-24	.667	5	12	17	8.5	4	0	1	6	1	2
11	Strickland, Terell	2-2	48	24.0	7-19	.368	4-7	.571	3-4	.750	0	7	7	3.5	7	0	5	5	0	3
13	Strickland, Tai	1-0	21	21.0	2-5	.400	0-0	.000	6-8	.750	0	2	2	2.0	5	1	1	0	0	1
05	Washington, Andre	2-2	49	24.5	7-17	.412	3-6	.500	2-2	1.000	1	0	1	0.5	5	0	5	3	0	4
06	Kopa, Tana	2-2	71	35.5	3-19	.158	3-14	.214	4-4	1.000	1	12	13	6.5	3	0	4	3	0	3
02	Acker, Eric	2-0	62	31.0	6-19	.316	0-2	.000	0-0	.000	0	6	6	3.0	2	0	5	3	0	1
15	Delancy, C.J.	2-0	23	11.5	4-4	1.000	0-0	.000	1-1	1.000	3	4	7	3.5	4	0	0	1	0	1
23	Djapa, Nikola	2-0	18	9.0	3-4	.750	0-1	.000	1-4	.250	1	2	3	1.5	7	1	0	3	0	0
43	Bajrami, Gezim	2-2	36	18.0	1-11	.091	0-1	.000	1-2	.500	2	3	5	2.5	3	0	1	0	2	0
21	Essahaty, Ahmed	1-0	10	10.0	0-1	.000	0-1	.000	0-0	.000	0	0	0	0.0	1	0	2	1	0	1
Total		2	400	200.0	38-114	.333	10-32	.313	34-49	.694	16	50	66	33.0	41	2	24	25	3	16
Opponents			400	200.0	55-122	.451	19-42	.452	41-51	.804	23	67	90	45.0	37	0	36	25	10	10

Team Statistics	LIU	OPP
SCORING	120	170
Points Per Game	60.0	85.0
Scoring Margin	-25.0	-
FIELD GOALS-ATT	38-114	55-122
Field Goal Pct	.333	.451
3 POINT FG-ATT	10-32	19-42
3PT FG Pct	.313	.452
3PT Made Per Game	5.0	9.5
FREE THROWS-ATT	34-49	41-51
FT Pct	.694	.804
FT Made Per Game	17.0	20.5
REBOUNDS	66	90
Rebounds Per Game	33.0	45.0
Rebounds Margin	-12.0	-
ASSISTS	24	36
Assists Per Game	12.0	18.0
TURNOVERS	25	25
Turnovers Per Game	12.5	12.5
Turnovers Margin	0.0	-
Assist/Turnover Ratio	1.0	1.4
STEALS	16	10
Steals Per Game	8.0	5.0
BLOCKS	3	10
Blocks Per Game	1.5	5.0
ATTENDANCE	812	327
Dates/Avg Per Date	1-812	1-327
Neutral Site #/Avg	-	0-0

Conf	Date	Opponent	W/L	Score
	11/10/23	AIR FORCE	L	67-82
	11/13/23	at Pepperdine	L	53-88

* = Conference game

Score by Periods	1st	2nd	Total
LIU	45	75	120
Opponents	82	88	170

2023-24 LIU SHARKS TV ROSTER



#2 ERIC ACKER
FR. | G | 6-2
EAST, NEW YORK, N.Y.
EAGLE ACADEMY FOR YOUNG MEN II



#3 GREG KENNEY
FR. | F | 6-6
WILLISTON PARK, N.Y.
THE FREDERICK GUNN SCHOOL



#4 TRE'SHAWN SHEPPARD
FR. | G/F | 6-6
BROOKLYN, N.Y.
EAGLE ACADEMY FOR YOUNG MEN II



#5 ANDRE WASHINGTON
JR. | G | 5-11
STATEN ISLAND, N.Y.
WILLISTON NORTH HAMPTON



#6 TANA KOPA
JR. | G/F | 6-6
PERTH, AUSTRALIA
SPRING HILL (AL)
(TAH-NAH
CO-PAH)



#8 JASON STEELE
FR. | F | 6-6
FLUSHING, N.Y.
OUR SAVIOR LUTHERAN



#10 R.J. GREENE
SO. | G | 6-5
THE BRONX, N.Y.
IONA PREP



#11 TERELL STRICKLAND
R-JR. | G | 6-0
TAMPA, FLA.
JAMES MADISON



#13 TAI STRICKLAND
GR. | G | 6-2
TAMPA, FLA.
GEORGIA SOUTHERN



#13 C.J. DELANCY
SO. | C | 6-8
JONESBORO, ARK.
VALLEY VIEW



#21 AHMED ESSAHATY
SO. | G | 6-3
WELLINGTON, N.Z.
ONSLow COLLEGE
(AH-MID
ESSA-HAH-TY)



#23 NIKOLA DJAPA
FR. | F | 7-0
BELGRADE, SERBIA
HOOSAC SCHOOL
(NICK-OH-LA
JA-PA)



#43 GEZIM BAJRAMI
FR. | C | 6-9
TAMPERE, FINLAND
OMNIA
(GEZZ-IM
BAJ-RAH-MEE)