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Interview no. 1642

Louis Baudoin

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THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT EL PASO INSTITUTE OF ORAL HISTORY

Interviewee: Louis Baudoin

Interviewer: Luis A. Saenz

Project: 1966 NCAA Championship

Location: n/a

Date of Interview: February 28, 2002

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Transcript No.: 1642

Transcriber / Summary: Patrick Driscoll

Louis Baudoin played as a forward on the 1965-66 Texas Western Miners basketball team that won the 1966 NCAA Men's Division I Basketball Tournament; he believes that his father being stationed in Oklahoma for a time during World War II where Coach Don Haskins is from helped convince his parents to accept his decision to go to Texas Western College; he describes how it was close to his family, had just created a Liberal Arts department and had a strong engineering program. Describes Don Haskins' approach to basketball as simple, stressing proficiency in basic drills rather than relying on complicated plays; he describes practices as brutal and repetitive but that the team's success on the court proved Don Haskins right. Mr. Baudoin believed at the time that the 1965-66 team was very good but that they had not made the NCAA Championship a goal; he states that Don Haskins' genius was that he picked the best players to start, and put in players after the start based on the situation. He describes how the black players did not experience racism on campus at Texas Western College, but that incidents occurred outside of school in town and in places like Roswell, New Mexico; he mentions that the black players sometimes experienced racism from military personnel stationed at Fort Bliss. Mr. Baudoin notes the team winning the NCAA Championship against the University of Kentucky with an all-black starting lineup was remarkable by contributing to breaking race barriers that were a part of the time; he explains that African Americans and children from other backgrounds now had an avenue to college through athletics that was not previously available. To conclude, he talks about the hate mail and racist backlash that Don Haskins had to deal with after their victory.

Length of interview 12 minutes

Length of Transcript n/a