

2002

Interview no. 1647

Moe Iba

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THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT EL PASO INSTITUTE OF ORAL HISTORY

Interviewee: Moe Iba

Interviewer: Luis A. Saenz

Project: 1966 NCAA Championship

Location: n/a

Date of Interview: n/a

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Transcript No.: 1647

Transcriber / Summary: Patrick Driscoll

Moe Iba was an Assistant Coach for the 1965-66 Texas Western College basketball team that won the 1966 NCAA Men's Division I Basketball Tournament; Don Haskins played for his father at Oklahoma A&M; Mr. Haskins hired him out of college; he mentions that he did not know if they would go to NCAA Championships but freshman from the previous year were now eligible to play for the varsity team and Bobby Joe Hill was getting better giving him confidence in the 1965-66 team. Addresses statement that Don Haskins called the 1966 team the worst team at the beginning of the season, a tactic he supposedly used to motivate players; he elaborates that players on the team had the tendency to lose focus and fall behind in points to only then get motivated to catch up; he states that they got other teams best effort due to their being undefeated, team still stopped others defensively. Mr. Iba recalls that teams they played in southwest tended to have black players too so he didn't witness overt acts of racism in those locations; he recounts that despite Haskins' reservations, the team was confident against The University of Kentucky in the championship due to their belief that they had tougher competition in the playoffs; he says team was quicker and better defensively than Kentucky; he mentions he did not have a chance to speak with Kentucky Head Coach Adolph Rupp about the game after it was over. Mr. Iba explains that initially they played their all-black starting lineup due to the players being the best, but over the years the significance of the all black starters did change basketball and gave black athletes new opportunities, especially in the south. He goes over how after the season he got a head coach job at the all-white Memphis State; he recalls recruiting the first black players for Memphis State and said the program accepted it, but one of his players experienced racism when they played Mississippi State. Mr. Iba closes by stating that the racial composition of the team was important, but that it was one of the best teams to ever play in the NCAA tournament.

Length of interview 9 minutes

Length of Transcript n/a