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Interview no. 1651

Richard Myers

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THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT EL PASO INSTITUTE OF ORAL HISTORY

Interviewee: Richard Myers

Interviewer: Luis A. Saenz

Project: 1966 NCAA Championship

Location: n/a

Date of Interview: February, 2002

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Transcript No.: 1651

Transcriber / Summary: Daniel Santana

Richard Myers discusses his background and experience playing for the Texas Western College basketball team that won the 1966 NCAA championship. As a native of Kansas, he discusses his optimistic first impressions of El Paso, coach Haskins, and his team. While his team attained notoriety for having five all-star African American players, Myers notes that their placement was due to their abilities, not because of their skin color. The media was responsible for placing such a heavy emphasis on his teammates' skin color as the season progressed. He maintains that his team was not racially discriminated against as they travelled. Myers also recalls an incident where his team had eggs thrown at them once when they played in Dallas. The games he played in Oklahoma City and Kansas was very important to Myers because his family and friends from his hometown were able to attend his games. His team's ability to defeat Kansas State was also iconic because Kansas rejected Myers from their team before he was recruited into Texas Western's team. Mr. Myers considered their games in Cincinnati and Kansas as the toughest wins they were able to attain, which contributed to their confidence and success when they played against Kentucky State. Myers discusses his most memorable events during the game such witnessing the steals made by his teammate Bobby Joe against the opposing team. After Texas Western College defeated Kentucky in the 1966 NCAA championship, he learned about some of the assumptions made of his team; in one incident, Myers recalls that some in Wisconsin assumed that he was part of an all-black team. He concludes by stating that he never confronted problems with his team.

Length of interview 7 minutes

Length of Transcript n/a