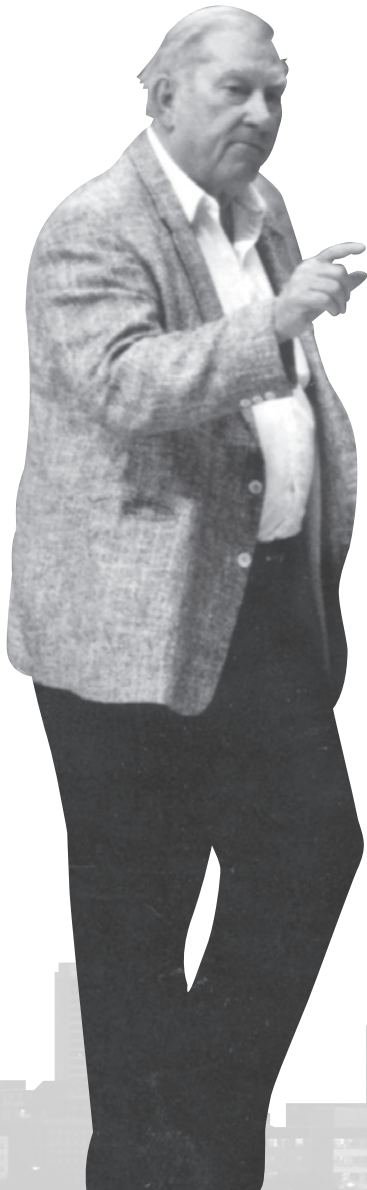


# UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT EL PASO

## DON HASKINS • UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT EL PASO • COACH (1961-99)

Don Haskins is simply one of the greatest coaches in college basketball history. Haskins, who was nicknamed "The Bear," was the head coach at UTEP from 1961-99, leading the Miners to 719 wins (against just 354 losses), as well as the 1966 National Championship, 14 NCAA Tournament appearances, and seven Western Athletic Conference championships.

CBSSportsline.com named him the greatest Division I men's basketball coach of all time in July, 2001. "UTEP - with no recruiting base, no media attention and substandard budgets - had no business winning much of anything," said sports columnist Dan Wetzel. "No coach did more with less, maximized his talent and made strange parts fit better than The Bear."



He was born on March 14, 1930 in Enid, Okla. He played his college ball at Oklahoma A&M (now Oklahoma State) from 1949-52, where he was a second-team All-Conference selection as a senior. Haskins split time at the guard and forward positions as a collegian, leading Oklahoma A&M to the NCAA semifinals in 1949 and 1951.

Haskins' coaching career began at Benjamin High School in Benjamin, Texas, in 1955. He was a teacher and coach of both boys and girls teams at Benjamin High from 1955-56. Haskins also headed the basketball programs at Hedley (Texas) High School from 1956-60 and Dumas (Texas) High School from 1960 -61.

Haskins took over the UTEP program prior to the 1961-62 season. His first Miner squad notched an 18-6 record. His second UTEP team posted a 19-7 mark during the 1962-63 campaign and made the first of Haskins' 14 NCAA Tournament appearances.

The Miners (then known as Texas Western) captured the NCAA title on March 19, 1966, shocking heavily-favored Kentucky, 72-65, for the championship. That year Haskins became the first coach ever to start a lineup of five black players at the major college level. The achievement was documented in a book by Wetzel and in the 2006 motion picture, "Glory Road."

Kentucky was an eight-point favorite entering the game and UK head coach Adolph Rupp called his 1965-66 team his finest shooting team ever. However, the Miners held the Wildcats to just 38.6 percent from the floor in the title game compared to 49 percent the rest of the season. Kentucky's last lead of the game was 9-8 with 12:24 remaining in the first half. After the Miners went ahead 10-9, Bobby Joe Hill stole the ball from the Wildcats' Tommy Kron and drove in for an uncontested layup. Hill stole the ball from Louis Dampier on the next possession and scored again. Hill's two steals were viewed as the turning point of the game by Rupp.



An estimated 10,000 fans greeted the national champions at the airport when they returned to El Paso. The motorcade caused a traffic jam, which police said was the worst they had seen in El Paso.

Haskins' teams captured WAC championships in 1970, 1983, 1984, 1985, 1986, 1987 and 1992, and advanced to the NCAA Tournament in 1963, 1964, 1966, 1967, 1970, 1975, 1984, 1985, 1986, 1987, 1988, 1989, 1990, and 1992.

Haskins tutored numerous players who went on to play in the NBA, including Antonio Davis, Tim Hardaway, and Jim Barnes, the first pick by New York in the 1964 NBA Draft.

Haskins' last Miner team notched a 16-12 record during the 1998-99 season, his 32nd winning season in 38 years as head coach.

Haskins was inducted into the Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame on Sept. 29, 1997, and the Jim Thorpe Association Oklahoma Sports Hall of Fame on Aug. 9, 1999 in Oklahoma City. UTEP's playing facility is named the Don Haskins Center in his honor.