



Stillwater Pioneer Athlete Memorial



JIM BARNES

April 13, 1941 - September 14, 2002
Stillwater High School Class of 1960

10th Annual Memorial Induction Ceremony
October 1, 2005

Jim Barnes of Adelphi, AR died at age 62 on September 14, 2002 in Washington D.C. He was born in Tuckerman, AR and attended school through the 10th grade in Adelphi, AR. He graduated from Stillwater High School in 1960 and attended Cameron Junior College and Texas Western University. (now the University of Texas at El Paso).

Jim moved to Stillwater when his father took a job in 1959. Jim was an instant hit at SHS. He was well liked by his classmates and his teammates. He was voted the Student Council Representative for his homeroom. He was the center and a team player on the basketball floor. In his senior year he made All State and the team won the State Basketball Championship. Several of the experts in the basketball media would say he was the best basketball player ever from Stillwater High and one of the all time best from Oklahoma.

After graduating from SHS he played two years at Cameron Jr. College where he averaged 30 points per game. From there Texas Western recruited him. He starred at Texas Western in 1963 and 1964. He averaged 19 points and 16 rebounds his junior year and 29 points and 19 rebounds his senior season. Texas Western sports information director Eddie Mullin can be credited with the Jim "Bad News" Barnes nick name. Jim earned All-American honors in 1964 and was selected to play on the 1964 USA Olympic Team, which won the gold medal. The team they beat in the finals was the Soviet Union and the score was USA 73 - Soviet Union 59. Some of his teammates were Walt Hazard, Larry Brown, Lucious Jackson, Jeff Mullins and Bill Bradley.

The New York Knicks then selected "Bad News" as the number one pick in the 1964 NBA draft. "Bad News" averaged 15 points per game his rookie season and was voted to the NBA All Rookie team, and later was the NBA players selection as the top rookie.

Nolan Richardson, who spoke at Jim's memorial service and one of Jim's teammates at Texas Western said, "Jim was one of those men who was thrilled to play for their country. He took the opportunity seriously and played every possession hard." He also said, "The thing I will remember most is Jim's heart and that he was truly a good man." Coach Andy Stoglin, another teammate from Texas Western, said that Coach Don Haskins related to him that they were going to make a movie about Coach Haskins in connection with the NCAA national championship year of 1966 and he wanted people to know that all the good things that happened to them were because of Jim Barnes. Another quote from Nolan Richardson about Coach Haskin's rules after Jim arrived at Texas Western; "Nobody takes a shot unless Jim touches it inside and you have to pass twelve times before you can shoot." He figured in all those passes Jim was going to touch it once.

In the NBA Jim played for the New York Knicks, Baltimore Bullets, Los Angeles Lakers, Chicago Bulls and Boston Celtics from 1964 to 1971. After retiring, he designed a "Bad News" BBQ Sauce. This commercial venture was very successful in the Virginia and Washington DC area. While developing the Bad News Sauce business he joined other NBA legends in talking to high school youths about finishing school and going to college. For those gym rats, playground want-a-be-stars and street ballers he stressed that when the air goes out of the ball, you will need an education to insure success in life.

Gerri, his wife said that Jim was competitive, hard working, and her best friend. He had the heart of a champion.

He was a great athlete who died at age 62. He was a team player throughout his lifetime. He obviously was an inspiration that ultimately led to Texas Western winning the NCAA in 1966 with the first ever all black team. As his friend Andy Stoglin said, Jim Barnes changed the whole structure of Texas Western basketball and ultimately the whole structure of college basketball.

Presenter
Michael "Chick" Davis
Stillwater High School, Class of 1978