



James "Jim" Krebs
1935 — 1965
Basketball
Inducted 1976

Jim Krebs came from Missouri to show basketball fans in the Southwest Conference area he could become one of the best players in the nation.

At the time the Southwest Conference had produced few All-America basketball players. But Krebs was dedicated to becoming one of the best collegiate players when he enrolled in Southern Methodist University. He achieved his long-cherished All-America honors after his senior season.

Krebs, who towered six feet, eight inches and had the bulk and strength to go with his height, became the tallest basketball player at the Dallas school when he enrolled in 1954.

Probably due to his size, Krebs was a late bloomer in basketball at Webster Groves, Mo. High School. He didn't begin to show his true potential until late in his senior year. In the 1953 Class A Missouri High School tournament, Krebs began to attract the attention of a few college scouts and was named to the All-Tournament team and tied for the Most Valuable Player Award.

Krebs had several college scholarship offers, but wasn't on the recruiting list of many of the so-called big-time basketball schools.

Because of a Southern Methodist alumnus in the Webster Groves-St. Louis area and the persuasion of the basketball coach of the Dallas school at the time, E. O. (Doc) Hayes, Krebs cast his lot with the Mustangs.

Basketball fortunes at SMU soared with the arrival of Krebs. At that time, Krebs had to play freshman basketball his first season, but that frosh team could play on virtual even terms with the varsity and drew large crowds to its games.

Never before had basketball reached such a peak at SMU as it did the next three years, as Krebs led the Mustangs to three straight Southwest Conference championships.

With Krebs showing improvement in his play virtually every game, the Mustangs won the conference crown with a 9-3 record in 1956. In 1956 the Mustangs went through the 12-game conference season undefeated and went to the semifinals of the NCAA championships. The Mustangs were 11-1 in conference play in 1957. The Mustangs lost only four conference games in Krebs' three seasons.

"Krebs dedicated himself to becoming an excellent basketball player," said Bob Prewitt, who was assistant basketball coach at SMU at the time. "He worked hard. If he had a bad game shooting, he would come out early to practice. He had a great hook shot."

Krebs didn't lose his shooting touch often, as the SMU records indicate. With Krebs leading the way, the Mustangs lost few games. They won 22 straight conference games on their home court and 35 straight regular-season games at home during the Krebs era.

Naturally the long winning streaks began to produce larger crowds and the Mustangs outgrew their old playing court at Perkins Gym. The larger Moody Coliseum was built. The crowds increased by 600 percent during Krebs' reign.

Krebs' highest scoring game came in 1956 when he rang up 50 points, including 20 field goals, against the University of Texas.

At the end of Krebs' SMU career, he held school records of 50 points in a game, 282 points in a conference season, 624 points in a season and 1,753 points in his career.

Thirty-three years after he left SMU, Krebs' 20 field goals in a game remained as a league record, although the mark had been tied in 1971 by Gene Phillips, who also played at SMU.

Krebs led the Mustangs all the way to the NCAA semifinals at Northwestern University at Evanston, Ill. in 1956. They had to play the Bill Russell-led