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## **Oscar (The Big O) Robertson**



Oscar Robertson (The Big O) forever changed the game of basketball- on the court and in the courtroom. He is not only the National Association of Basketball Coaches “Player of the Century”, but he also distinguished himself as a social activist, business owner, mentor, teacher and philanthropist.

On the court, the 6’5” Robertson set new standards of excellence at every level and is considered the greatest all-around player in the history of basketball. The first big point guard who score from anywhere, rebound, could pass and play defense- he created the template for much later NBA stars. In his second NBA season 1961-62, Robertson set a record which may never be broken, averaging the first and only “triple double” for an entire season (30.8 points per

game, 12.5 rebounds, and 11.4 assists). He is the NBA’s all-time leader in triple doubles and in rebounds by a guard. Oscar is the first player to lead the league in assists and scoring in the same season. He led the league in assists six times and free throw percentage twice and is the only guard to ever lead his team in rebounding.

As President of the NBA Players Association from 1965-74, Robertson made an even more lasting impact with a class action anti-trust lawsuit against the NBA. A 1976 legal settlement, known as the Oscar Robertson Rule, helped NBA players become the first professional athletes to achieve free agency, forever changing the balance of power in professional sports and leading to a new era of expansion, growth and prosperity for the NBA. In 1992, The Big O was one of five co-founders of the NBA Retired Players Association and served as its first President until 1998.

In 1997, when his daughter Tia’s kidneys were failing as a result of lupus, The Big O performed the assist of a lifetime with a kidney donation. Since then, he has advocated for health and wellness, organ transplantation and kidney disease prevention.

His pre-NBA accomplishments include three-time first team All-American, NCAA’s first three-time scoring leader, first to win College Player of the Year honors three times, he is listed among the NCAA’s all-time leading student athletes, In 1998, the U.S. Basketball Writers renamed their College Player of the Year award The Oscar Robertson Trophy. The Big O Co-Captained the undefeated 1960 U.S. Olympic Gold Medal Team, often considered the greatest basketball team. He then embarked on a 14-year Hall of Fame NBA career during which time he led his teams to 10 playoff appearances. He was Rookie of the Year in 1961, MVP in 1964 and MVP in three All-Star games. Robertson holds a Lifetime Achievement Award for entrepreneurship from the University of Cincinnati College of Business Entrepreneurship Center. At the University of Cincinnati, the Oscar and Yvonne Robertson Scholarship Fund provides assistance to deserving minority students. Robertson is the author of an autobiography “The Big O: My Life, My times, My Game” and “The Art of Basketball” the definitive instructional book on the fundamentals of the game.

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