

= Bill Spivey =

William Edwin " Bill " Spivey (March 19 , 1929 ? May 8 , 1995) was an American basketball player . A 7 ft 0 in (2 @. @ 13 m) center , he played college basketball for the National Collegiate Athletic Association 's (NCAA) Kentucky Wildcats from 1949 to 1951 . After his high school career , Spivey was recruited to the University of Kentucky . During his time with the Wildcats , he led the team to the 1951 NCAA Tournament championship , and was voted Most Outstanding Player of the event . When a point shaving scandal was revealed that year , Spivey was accused of being involved , which he denied . He left the Wildcats in December 1951 , and the university banned him from the squad in March 1952 .

After he testified before a grand jury in New York , he was indicted on perjury charges . Although Spivey was not convicted when the case went to trial in 1953 , he was prevented from competing in the National Basketball Association (NBA) afterward . Spivey instead played professionally for various minor league teams . In 10 Eastern Basketball League (EBL) seasons , his teams won three championships . Spivey retired in 1968 and became a businessman , working in sales and operating restaurants . Upset by the accusations against him in the early 1950s , he was reclusive in his final years .

= = Early life = =

William Edwin Spivey was born in Lakeland , Florida , and had moved to Columbus , Georgia , by 1944 , at which time he was 6 ft 9 in (2 @. @ 06 m) . After taking up basketball , he played for his high school 's team and had 18 points in his first half of game action . The following year , he moved to Warner Robins , Georgia , which did not have a basketball team before he arrived . The principal of Warner Robins ' high school created a team , however , once Spivey came . During one of his high school seasons , he was forced to play without shoes ? since none of the school 's shoes fit him ? and wear three pairs of socks . Spivey had over 1 @ , @ 800 points in his three @ - @ year high school career .

= = College career = =

= = = Recruitment = = =

Several universities wanted to give Spivey a basketball scholarship in 1948 . The University of Kentucky first became aware of Spivey when a Georgia newspaper publisher phoned Fred Wachs , whom writer Earl Cox called " the most powerful man in Lexington " ; according to Cox , Wachs " ran the University of Kentucky " . After hearing of Spivey from the publisher , who indicated a desire to have him attend the university , Wachs notified Kentucky 's men 's basketball coach , Adolph Rupp , who elected to have a scout watch Spivey play . Following positive feedback from the scout , Rupp gave Spivey an invitation to a camp held at Alumni Gymnasium , where he would try out against other leading high school seniors . He received a scholarship on the camp 's first day , one of two players to do so .

= = = 1948 ? 49 to 1949 ? 50 = = =

Even though he offered a scholarship to the seven @ - @ foot Spivey , Rupp was concerned about his weight , which was between 160 and 165 pounds . Rupp told him that he would play only if he added 40 pounds (18 kg) , and Spivey bulked up to 200 pounds (91 kg) during the summer of 1948 . At the time , first @ - @ year players were not allowed to compete on varsity teams . Therefore , Spivey spent his first year at Kentucky on a freshman team , while the varsity team won its second consecutive NCAA Basketball Championship in 1949 . The two teams practiced against each other , and varsity team member Ralph Beard later said that Spivey outplayed the Wildcats ' All @ - @

American center , Alex Groza . The U.S. Olympic team , which had six Wildcats players on it , practiced in Lexington , and Spivey gained knowledge and skills from team members Groza , Vince Boryla and Bob Kurland . Spivey also competed in games against other freshman teams , including one against Xavier in which he posted 31 points . In 15 games , he averaged about 20 points per game .

In the 1949 ? 50 season , the Wildcats lost several of the leading players from their championship @-@ winning teams to graduation , including Beard and Groza . In response , Rupp made Spivey the focal point of the team , and the team exceeded expectations . In a February 18 , 1950 game against Georgia Tech , which the Wildcats won 97 ? 62 , Spivey broke the team record for points in a game with 40 , two more than Groza scored in a game the previous season . That record has since been broken , but his 42 field goal attempts remain a school record as of 2010 . Spivey tied another of Groza 's point @-@ scoring records on March 5 with a 37 @-@ point performance in a Southeastern Conference (SEC) Men 's Basketball Tournament game . Kentucky won over Tennessee 95 ? 58 to win the SEC Tournament for the seventh consecutive season . Kentucky ended the regular season with a 25 ? 4 record , and Spivey averaged 19 @.@ 4 points a game . Despite the Wildcats ' record and SEC title , the NCAA Tournament selection committee did not give the team a berth in the 1950 tournament . Kentucky did gain a berth to the National Invitation Tournament , but was eliminated in the quarterfinals by City College of New York (CCNY) , 89 ? 50 . In that game , Spivey was forced to the bench for the final nine minutes of the first half after accumulating four personal fouls . At the end of the season , Spivey was named to the All @-@ SEC team , and the Associated Press selected him for its 1950 All @-@ American third team .

= = = 1950 ? 51 = = =

Spivey set another school record in a February 13 , 1951 , game , gathering 31 rebounds . As of 2010 , he remains tied for the team record with Bob Burrow , who had the same number of rebounds in a 1955 game . For the season , Spivey again averaged more than 19 points per game , and he added 17 @.@ 2 rebounds per game . His point total led the SEC , and his 479 regular season points were the third @-@ most in league history at the time . The Wildcats had a 28 ? 2 record during the regular season , and entered the postseason as the top @-@ ranked team in the country . One of those losses came in the SEC Tournament against Vanderbilt , but it did not affect the team 's prospects for an NCAA Tournament berth because the SEC had decided to send its regular season champion to the newly expanded 16 @-@ team tournament . Kentucky advanced to the Tournament 's Final Four , where Spivey had 28 points and 16 rebounds in a 76 ? 74 win over Illinois . The Wildcats then faced Kansas State in the NCAA championship game . Despite falling behind early in the contest , they took the lead in the second half and pulled away to win 68 ? 58 . Spivey played an important role in the victory , scoring 22 points and pulling down 21 rebounds . Rupp said after the game that " Spivey made the difference after he went to work . " For his performance in the Final Four , Spivey was named the event 's Most Outstanding Player . He was later selected to the 1951 All @-@ American team , as well as the All @-@ SEC team for the second straight season .

= = Implication in gambling scandal = =

The CCNY Point Shaving Scandal was revealed in 1951 . A series of college basketball players had conspired with gamblers to shave points to ensure that their teams lost against the point spread . According to Manhattan District Attorney Frank Hogan , 32 players were involved in point shaving or match fixing , and 86 games were affected . That figure included three ex @-@ Kentucky players : Dale Barnstable , Beard , and Groza , who engaged in point shaving during a 1949 National Invitation Tournament game . Having been sidelined in the early part of the 1951 ? 52 season after knee surgery , Spivey gave up his eligibility to play for the Wildcats on December 24 , 1951 . He denied rumors that he was involved in the scandal , calling them " false and malicious " .

Spivey intended to return to the Wildcats once the situation was resolved , which Kentucky 's

athletic association expected before reinstatement . On February 16 , 1952 , he and the association 's directors agreed to have him testify before a grand jury in New York . After Spivey 's grand jury appearance later in February , however , the university banned him permanently on March 2 . In its statement , Kentucky 's athletic board said evidence pointed to him fixing games during the 1950 Sugar Bowl Tournament . Gambler Jack West was charged with bribing two Wildcats players , Spivey and Walter Hirsch , to engage in point shaving during one of the tournament 's games , and eventually pleaded guilty . In his grand jury testimony , Spivey denied receiving \$ 1 @, @ 000 to shave points in games from December 1950 to January 1951 , or talking about doing so with gamblers . In April , the grand jury indicted him on charges of perjury for lying under oath during his testimony , claiming he had done so on seven occasions .

= = = Trial = = =

On June 9 , Spivey was arrested in New York , and was released pending a trial , which started in January 1953 . Hirsch testified that Spivey asked to be included as a point shaver , and was upset that the payment for his role in shaving during the 1950 Sugar Bowl game was less than he anticipated . This , however , contradicted his original grand jury testimony , which had no mention of Spivey 's involvement . Hirsch also told the grand jury that Spivey and West , the ringleader , had not met . West declined to testify , leading to criminal contempt charges against him . Spivey again denied taking part in the scandal , stating that he had turned down a different gambler on two occasions . According to him , ex @-@ teammate Jim Line mentioned his name to the grand jury ; Spivey said he learned this from Line . The trial lasted for 13 days before the case went to a jury . By a 9 ? 3 margin , the majority of jurors supported acquittal for Spivey , and the hung jury caused a mistrial . The grand jury eventually dropped the charges against Spivey .

= = Professional career = =

Although Spivey was not found guilty in the scandal , he found himself blackballed from the NBA after league president Maurice Podoloff banned all 32 players involved in the CCNY scandal for life . The Cincinnati Royals later tried to sign Spivey , but Podoloff refused to approve the contract . Spivey filed a lawsuit against the NBA and Podoloff in 1960 , seeking more than \$ 800 @, @ 000 in damages . Afterward , he claimed that his rights under the Sherman Antitrust Act had been violated and sued the league in federal court , dropping his initial case . In response , Podoloff offered to settle with Spivey for \$ 10 @, @ 000 , which he accepted . According to sportswriter Jim Murray , Spivey felt that he had no choice but to accept because the court schedule was so full that even if he had won his case , he would have been too old to be a viable NBA prospect in any case . Future Kentucky coach Joe B. Hall said that " most people feel [Spivey] would have been one of the top five centers of all @-@ time had he had the chance to mature in the NBA . " Instead , Spivey spent his professional career playing for numerous minor league and barnstorming teams .

In October 1952 , Spivey played in two games for the American Basketball League 's Elmira Colonels , scoring 21 and 32 points in the contests . That season , he also was a member of the Detroit Vagabonds barnstorming team . For the next three seasons , he spent time with three teams connected to the Harlem Globetrotters exhibition team : the Boston Whirlwinds , the House of David , and the Washington Generals . In one game with the Whirlwinds , Spivey got into a fight with Globetrotters player Bobby " Showboat " Hall . For the 1955 ? 56 and 1956 ? 57 seasons , Spivey played for another barnstorming team , the New York Olympians , later renamed the Kentucky Colonels .

Beginning with the 1957 ? 58 season , Spivey spent 10 of his remaining 12 professional seasons in the EBL . The first two of those EBL seasons were spent with the Wilkes @-@ Barre Barons , and Spivey led the team to consecutive league championships . On April 20 , 1958 , he scored 62 points in the title @-@ clinching game against the Easton Madisons , setting an EBL playoff record . In 1958 ? 59 , he became the first player in league history with a 1 @, @ 000 @-@ point season , and had 64 points in a March 1959 game . Along with his play in the EBL , Spivey reached an

agreement to join the Ansonia Norwoods of the semi @-@ professional Connecticut Basketball Association (CBA) in 1958 . Over two years with the Norwoods , his points @-@ per @-@ game average exceeded 30 @.@ 0 . Spivey moved to the Baltimore Bullets for the 1959 ? 60 season , and played two seasons for the club . In Spivey 's first season with the Bullets , he had 36 @.@ 3 points per game , the highest average of his EBL career . Outside EBL competition , he received an opportunity to play opposite leading NBA center Wilt Chamberlain in a 1960 exhibition game , held in Milford , Connecticut , against the CBA 's Milford Chiefs . Spivey had a 30 @-@ point , 23 @-@ rebound performance ; his statistics were comparable to those of Chamberlain , who recorded a 31 @-@ point , 27 @-@ rebound game .

The Bullets won the league championship in 1960 ? 61 , after which Spivey played two seasons in a different American Basketball League , with the Los Angeles Jets and Long Beach ? Hawaii Chiefs . Spivey was named to the 1961 ? 62 All @-@ ABL Second Team after averaging 22 @.@ 7 points per game and 11 @.@ 2 rebounds per game with the Chiefs ; his total of 1 @,@ 773 points was second behind Connie Hawkins . In the 1962 ? 63 season , which was shortened when the league suspended operations , he had an average of 22 @.@ 5 points per game in 24 games with Long Beach . In ABL history , Spivey was third in points scored and fourth in rebounds .

Spivey returned to the EBL in 1963 to join the Scranton Miners , for whom he played five seasons . His highest scoring average for the Miners came in the 1964 ? 65 season , when he had 27 @.@ 0 points per game . In 1967 ? 68 , his final professional season , Spivey went back to the Barons . Playing for about \$ 200 in salary per contest , he had 10 @.@ 4 points per game . On February 11 , 1968 , Spivey participated in his final professional game . Taking advantage of a loophole in the NBA 's rules , he took part in an all @-@ star game in Baltimore featuring former Baltimore Bullets players before a Bullets ? San Diego Rockets game . Spivey led both teams by scoring 12 points , but his team lost by one point . One day later he retired , saying " It really meant something for me to finish off my career with a game like that . " By the end of his career , Spivey 's physical condition had declined ; Lou Tsioropoulos , who had played with him at Kentucky , said , " He was just completely disabled . He could barely walk . "

= = Later life = =

After retiring from basketball , Spivey became a businessman , and moved back to Kentucky . The majority of his jobs involved sales ; these included the selling of building materials and insurance . He also helped to develop real estate and owned restaurants , including a Lexington @-@ based eatery , Bill Spivey 's Restaurant and Lounge . For a time he was the state 's deputy insurance commissioner . Spivey ran in the primary election for Lieutenant Governor of Kentucky in 1983 as a Democrat , but came in last in the seven @-@ person race .

Spivey made his final public appearance in 1991 , at a reunion of the 1951 Kentucky Wildcats team in Lexington . Writer Greg Doyel says that " he was a recluse " at the time . According to his wife , Audrey Spivey , " He never got over [his accusation in the 1951 college basketball scandal] . Bill could not let that go . He was just devastated . " Then living in Daytona Beach , Florida , he was later hurt in an automobile accident , which aggravated a lower @-@ back injury . Spivey 's son , Cashton , said that " He never made a full recovery from that . It affected his posture , and he had chronic pain from that . " In a post @-@ accident bone grafting operation , a piece of equipment became lodged in Spivey 's lower back ; according to Cashton , he won a small amount from the hospital in a lawsuit .

Spivey moved to Quepos , Costa Rica , around 1993 , after vacationing there with a friend six months before . Audrey did not come with him , although the couple did not separate legally . On May 8 , 1995 , he was found dead of natural causes at the age of 66 . Spivey received two notable honors posthumously : his jersey number , 77 , was retired by the University of Kentucky in January 2000 , and the Kentucky Sports Hall of Fame inducted him in September 2004 .