

## Charlie Criss

Born: November 6, 1948, Valhalla, New York

High School: Yonkers (1965) Gorton (1966) High School (NY)

College: New Mexico State University

### High School

- 1964-1965 Westchester Rockland Newspaper All-County and All-City Team ... averaged 18.7 points per game.
- 1965-1966 Westchester Rockland Newspaper All-County (#2 vote-getter) and All-City Team ... averaged 25 points per game, top scorer in the city.
- Led Gorton High School to the Section 1 State championship and was named MVP scoring a tournament record 118 points.

### College

- 1966-1967 New Mexico Junior College averaged 30 points per game.
  - Ranks 3<sup>rd</sup> all-time in points in a season with 799 in 27 games and 29.6 points per game.
  - Holds the school's record for points in a game with 47 points against Lubbock Christian, December 7, 1966. In had another game with 42 points against Frank Phillips Junior College on November 18, 1966, which ranks #9 all-time.
  - Ranks #1 in Free Throws Made In s season with 214.
  - Ranks#2 in Free Throws Made in a game with 18.
  - His #799 ranks 30<sup>th</sup> in school history. He only played one year while most of the other 29 players played two seasons.
  - Ranks #4 in Field Goals made in a season with 299.
  - All-Region ... first player in school history to earn this honor.
- Played at NMSU from 1967-1970
  - 61 games; 13.4 points per game; 2.4 rebounds per game and 2.2 assists per game.
  - Instrumental in a record of 74-14 and three NCAA Tournaments during his years as an Aggie.
  - 1968-1969 Started all the games and averaged 16 points per game but was unable to play in the NCAA tournament because junior college transfer was ineligible to play in the first year of Division 1 basketball.
  - Starting guard on the 1970 Final Four team.
  - 1968-1969 United Press International Small America Second Team
  - The team's leader in assists and free throws made. Third leading scorer on the team.
  - 1969-1970 United Press International Small America First Team
  - Second on the team in assists and third leading scorer on the team.
  - Named to the NCAA Midwest Regional All-Tournament team.

### Professionally

- Began his professional career in the Eastern Basketball League, which today is the Continental Basketball Association. He played for the Hartford Capitols in 1973-1974; Cherry Hills Pros in 1974-1975; Scranton Apollos 1975-1976 & 1976-1977

- Led the Capitols to league championships in 1973-1974; and the Apollos in 1976-1977. MVP in both championship series.
- Earning the League Most Valuable Player honors for two seasons – 1974-1975 & 1975-1976.
- All League First Team - 1974-1975, 1975-1976 and 1976-1977.
- League's leading scorer in 1974-1975, 1975-1976 and 1976-1977; #10 leading scorer in 1973-1974
- Assists: #6 in 1973-1974; #8 in 1974-1975; 3<sup>rd</sup> in 1975-1976; 3<sup>rd</sup> in 1976-1977.
- Hold record of 72 points in one game.
- 1977 Atlanta Hawks of the National Basketball Association and played 418 games in eight seasons in the league with the Hawks, San Diego Clippers, and Milwaukee Bucks. When he entered the NBA, Criss was the league's shortest active player at 5'8".
  - NBA career, Criss averaged 8.5 points and 3.2 assists per game, with his best year being his first in 1978, posting averages of 11 points and 4 assists in 77 matches. During the 1980 NBA playoffs, Criss averaged 14 points and 4.4 assists per game, as the Hawks eventually lost to the Philadelphia 76ers in the Eastern Conference Semifinals. On February 20, 1982, while on the Clippers, Criss scored a career-best 34 points and recorded 8 assists during a 118–101 win over the San Antonio Spurs.
- After retiring as a player, he worked as a golf instructor, an Atlanta Hawks television color commentator, a minor-league basketball coach and a basketball summer camp coordinator.
- 1991 Head Coach of the Atlanta Eagles in the United States Basketball League.
- Ran a computer lab at a middle school.
- Assistant basketball coach at Woodard Academy, the high school where his son played.
- Owned Charlie Criss Graphics

## Honors

- First New Mexico State Aggie to be named to an All-American team.
- 1968-1969 United Press International Small America Second Team. UNM's Petie Gibson 2<sup>nd</sup> team. This team is for top players under 5'10" in college basketball.
- 1969-1970 United Press International Small America First Team. UNM's Petie Gibson 2<sup>nd</sup> team
- 1973 Named Top 15 All-Time Aggie Basketball Team.
- 1975 Inducted into the NMSU Athletics Hall of Fame with his teammates, Sam Lacey, and Jimmy Collins, which both are New Mexico Sports Hall of Fame inductee.
- 2004 1969-1970 team was inducted into the NMSU Athletic Hall of Fame.
- 2007 Named to the NMSU All-Century Team
- Named to the Eastern Professional Basketball League Top 25 All-Time team.
- Inducted into the Eastern Professional Basketball Hall of Fame
- Inducted into the Rucker Park Basketball Hall of Fame.
- Named to the Rucker Park Summer Basketball top 50 players.

## Community

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## Family