

JIM HULSMAN

Jim Hulsman has become a living legend in New Mexico high school athletics.

His continued success as basketball coach of the Albuquerque High School Bulldogs has emulated that of the late Coach F.M. "Tony" Wilson, the first member to be inducted into the Albuquerque Sports Hall of Fame in 1973.

Hulsman, with a 457-125 mark, is only 43 wins short of 500 career triumphs. If he continues his habit of winning 20-plus games a year, Hulsman could become Albuquerque's winningest coach in history early in his 24th season.

Wilson had a 485-164 mark at AHS in 24 years before he left the coaching ranks in 1947. Wilson died in 1962 as athletic director of the Albuquerque Public Schools.

Hulsman's 25-1 Bulldog team this year (his 1971 team was 26-1) tied Wilson's feat of taking 17 teams to the state tourney. And, in winning his fourth state title, Hulsman surpassed Wilson's mark of three AHS championship teams. Hulsman never has had a losing season in 22 years at AHS. He's had 15 teams with 20-plus wins and boasts 15 district championship clubs.

Few of his many fans are aware that Hulsman once considered leaving basketball to enter professional baseball as a coach and/or a manager.

Baseball, not basketball, was his first love. He made the biggest career decision in his life in 1970 when he decided to forego a managing baseball career.

A native of Pittsburgh, Pa., Hulsman came to New Mexico in 1940. He attended Monte Vista Elementary School, Jefferson Junior High School and graduated at Albuquerque High in 1949.

He lettered twice in football and once in track at Albuquerque High. He also played one year of varsity basketball at College of St. Joseph on the Rio Grande. He received a bachelor of science degree from the University of New Mexico in 1959.

He has received numerous awards. He also was head coach for the McDonald's All-American High School All-Star Basketball Game held in The Pit in 1988.

Hulsman served two years in the Army and was in the Air Force from 1952 until 1960.

Hulsman's coaching genius has spanned three sports.

He became assistant basketball coach at Albuquerque High in 1961 and was named head coach in 1968. He became athletic director in 1972.

He was assistant football coach at Highland High School in 1957 and 1958 and assistant coach at Washington Junior High in 1959. He became head coach at Harrison Mid School in 1960, then served as assistant football coach at Albuquerque High from 1961 to 1970. He also was head basketball coach and head track coach at both Washington and Harrison.

Hulsman was assistant track coach at Albuquerque High from 1954 to 1957. He served as head track coach at Washington in 1960, Harrison in 1961 and Albuquerque High from 1962 to 1969.

Hulsman compiled a 225-74 record as a baseball manager at all levels. His 1955 Rio Grande Lumber Co. team (32-18) won the state semipro title and was ranked 11th following the National Baseball Congress Tournament in Wichita.