



# The Big O: My Life, My Times, My Game

*Oscar P. Robertson*

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## **The Big O: My Life, My Times, My Game** Oscar P. Robertson

Perhaps the greatest all-around player in basketball history, Oscar Robertson revolutionized basketball as a member of the Cincinnati Royals and won a championship with the Milwaukee Bucks. When he was twenty-three, in 1962, he accomplished one of basketball's most impressive feats: averaging the triple-double in a single season—a feat never matched since. Cocaptain of the Olympic gold medal team of 1960; named the player of the century by the National Association of Basketball Coaches; named one of the fifty greatest players in NBA history; and inducted into the Basketball Hall of Fame in 1980—Robertson's accolades are as numerous as they are impressive.

But *The Big O* is also the story of a shy black child from a poor family in a segregated city; of the superstar who, at the height of his career, became the president of the National Basketball Players Association to try to improve conditions for all players. It is the story of the man forced from the game at thirty-four and blacklisted from coaching and broadcasting. But two years after he left basketball, after six years of legal wrangling, Robertson won his lawsuit against the NBA, eliminating the option clause that bound a player to a single NBA team in perpetuity and ending restrictions on free agency.

*The Big O* is the story of how the NBA, as we now know it, was built; of race in America in the second half of the twentieth century; and of an uncompromising man and a complex hero.



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