

Biographical Description for The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Norm Van Lier

PERSON

Van Lier, Norm, 1947-2009

Alternative Names: Norm Van Lier;

Life Dates: April 1, 1947-February 26, 2009

Place of Birth: East Liverpool, Ohio, USA

Residence: Chicago, Illinois

Occupations: Basketball Player

Biographical Note

Chicago Bulls basketball great Norm Van Lier was born in East Liverpool, Ohio on April 1, 1947. Van Lier played both basketball and football while attending Midland Lincoln High School. While there, he led the 1965 basketball team to an undefeated state championship. Van Lier went on to St. Francis College in Loretto, Pennsylvania, where he continued to excel on the basketball court. He graduated with degrees in history and special education, and was the school's all-time assist leader.

In 1969, the Chicago Bulls selected Van Lier in the third round of the NBA draft, but he was traded to the Cincinnati Royals before the season began. With the Royals, Van Lier led the NBA in assists his rookie year, making the NBA All-Defensive Team his second year. Returning to the Chicago Bulls in 1971, Van Lier became part of the Bulls' powerhouse team of the 1970s, which included players like Bob Love and Jerry Sloan. He appeared in three NBA All-Star games, was named to the NBA All-Defensive First Team three times and the NBA All-Defensive Second Team five times. Van Lier's full court shot on January 19, 1977, against the San Antonio Spurs is ranked as one of the greatest moments in Chicago Bulls history.

Van Lier retired from basketball in 1979. He worked as a television basketball analyst for different stations (Fox Sports Net and Comcast Sports Net) since his retirement, as well as co-hosting a popular radio talk show, The Bull and the Bear, on WSCR-AM in Chicago. Committed to education and young people, Van Lier worked as a motivational speaker. He was also a member of Project Teamwork, a group formed by Reebok Foundation designed to improve racial and human rights sensitivity in school-age children.

Van Lier passed away on February 26, 2009 at the age of 61. He is survived by his wife, Susan, his two daughters, Hilary and Heidi, and one granddaughter.

Related Entries

Midland Elementary School [STUDENTOF]
[\[from ? to ?\]](#)

Midland Junior High/High School [STUDENTOF]
[\[from ? to ?\]](#)

Saint Francis University [STUDENTOF]

[from ? to ?]

B.A. in history and special education

National Basketball Association [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 1969 to 1979]

Professional basketball player, Point guard

WVON Radio [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 1980 to 1981]

Sports Commentator

ESPN, Inc. [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 1983 to 1983]

Sports Commentator

Compton Community College [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 1984 to 1985]

Head basketball coach

Chicago State University [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 1985 to 1986]

Assistant Athletic Director

Continental Basketball League [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 1986 to 1986]

Head basketball coach

World Basketball League [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 1989 to 1989]

Head basketball coach

Worcester Vocational High School [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 1990 to 1990]

Head basketball coach

Northeastern University [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 1990 to 1992]

Outreach counselor

Fox (20th Century Fox), Channel 32 [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 1994 to 1995]

Sports Analyst

SportsChannel [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 1994 to ?]

Sports Analyst

WMVP Radio [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 2003 to ?]

Sports Radio Talk Show Host

WSCR Radio [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 2003 to ?]

Sports Analyst