



**ERIC PIATKOWSKI**



**Eric was born in** 1970 and grew up in Scottsbluff, Neb. He moved to Rapid City before his sophomore year. At Stevens, he was a three-time first-team Class AA all-stater and scored 1,517 points (No. 2 all-time in "AA"). As a senior, he averaged 25.6 points and 10.3 rebounds, set a state Class AA single-game record with 51 points, led the Raiders to the state Class AA title and was named Mr. Basketball.

Piatkowski's height and bloodlines made him a natural for basketball – he stood 6-foot-7 and his father, Walt, played in the ABA – but his skill and coordination made him a star. He wasn't in the post and under the basket at Stevens: Rather, Piatkowski had the ballhandling skills and coordination to break presses and run the floor for the team.

Piatkowski took his career from Stevens to the University of Nebraska, where he played for four years and was named first team all-Big Eight in his junior and senior seasons. He finished his career with the Huskers having scored the second-most points in school history and had a 42-point game against Oklahoma to his credit. Piatkowski was a two-time first-team all-Big Eight pick. He averaged 21.5 points as a senior and finished as the No. 2 all-time scorer in Nebraska history (1,934 points). He left Nebraska as the only player in school history to collect 1,000 points, 600 rebounds and 300 assists. In 2006, he became just the third player in Cornhuskers history to have his jersey (No. 52) retired.

Nicknamed the "Polish Rifle" for his deadly long-range shooting, Piatkowski was the first South Dakotan to be an NBA No. 1 draft pick. He was the 15th pick overall in the 1994 draft. The next day the Indiana Pacers traded him to the L.A. Clippers, where the 6-foot-7, 215-pounder played nine seasons. He also played for Houston, Chicago and Phoenix.

Piatkowski made 865 3-pointers and shot 39.9 percent from beyond the arc in his career while averaging 7.5 points a game. He played in 789 games, starting 250. Twice he was among the league leaders in 3-point accuracy - third in 2001-02 (a career-best .466) and ninth in 2004-05 (.425). He also was in the top 10 in free-throw percentage twice - 10th in 1998-99 (.863) and ninth in 2000-01 (.873) - while shooting 83.9 percent for his career. His best season was 1997-98, when he had career highs in points (11.3) and rebounds (3.5). He also scored in double figures in 1998-99 (10.5) and 2000-01 (10.6). He scored a single-game high of 36 points on Feb. 16, 2002, against Dallas. He ended his Clippers career as the franchise leader in games played (616), 3-pointers made (738) and 3-pointers attempted (1,835).

Piatkowski is the 13th-leading scorer in Clippers history and is still one of the most recognized and renowned names around the Nebraska basketball program, serving on the TV broadcast crew for Huskers game broadcasts in the years after his retirement.

Piatkowski currently lives with his family in Omaha, Nebraska. Eric now does color commentary on Husker games for Fox Sports Midwest.