



Name: Rik "The Dunking Dutchman" Smits

Years: August 23, 1966 to Present

Residence: Naples, Florida (Currently)

Brief Biography: Born in Eindhoven, Netherlands, Smits moved to Poughkeepsie to pursue his athletic and academic career at Marist College. He played on the Dutch National Team after his sophomore and junior seasons at Marist. The Indiana Pacers selected the 7'4" center with the second overall pick in the 1988 NBA Draft. "The Dunkin' Dutchman" averaged 11.7 points and 6.1 rebounds his rookie year, earning him All-Rookie First Team honors.

Rik continued to average double-digit point tallies during every year of his career, averaging a career-high 18.5 points per game during the 1995-1996 season. By the latter end of his career, Smits had grown into his own as a team leader for the modestly successful Indiana Pacers.

Smits remains a favorite among Pacer fans, partially because of his outstanding playoff performances. He is best remembered for a catch-and-shoot basket during Game 4 of the 1995 NBA Playoffs against the Orlando Magic. Smits received the ball off an inbound pass with 1.3 seconds left. He quickly faked to trick his defender and released the ball as time expired. The shot went in, and Pacers tied the series at two

games apiece.

Smits was named to the Eastern Conference All-Star team in 1998, delivering 10 points, 7 rebounds and 4 assists, including a spectacular behind-the-back pass to New Jersey Nets forward Jayson Williams who followed immediately with a slam dunk.

Foot problems hobbled Smits for the majority of his career, and he retired at the conclusion of the Pacers' 1999-2000 season following an Indiana Pacers loss to the Los Angeles Lakers in the NBA Finals. In his retirement Rik is devoting time to racing vintage motocross bikes.

Major Accomplishments: 1x NBA All-Star (1998), 1989 NBA All-Rookie First Team

Resources: <http://www.interbasket.net/players/riksmits.htm>,
<http://www.statemaster.com/encyclopedia/Rik-Smits>