Frank O'Brien was born on July 2, 1943, in Elizabeth, NJ, as the oldest of four children. It was an old industrial city that allowed a young man to grow up with many friends and the ability to compete at a high level on both the basketball court and the baseball diamond.

After grammar school, Frank attended St. Benedict’s Prep in Newark, NJ, and played both basketball and baseball, earning seven varsity letters. As a result of his efforts, Frank was awarded All-State Prep honors in New Jersey for both basketball and baseball. He was also the captain of the basketball team his senior year.

Upon graduation from high school, Frank was put in contact with an elderly gentleman from New York City by the name of Bill Kenney who was known as a basketball birddog, a person who had contact with college coaches throughout the country. Those contacts led to the introduction of Joe Turner of Kilgore College.

After several discussions, Coach Turner decided to sign Frank O'Brien. Coach Turner picked up Frank at the airport in Shreveport with Frank not knowing what he was getting himself into.

To Frank’s pleasant surprise, he found welcoming teammates, an enthusiastic student body and townspeople of Kilgore who cared greatly for the young men who were far from home. He had a very successful freshman year with the team finishing with a 26-5 record and second place in the Texas Eastern Conference. Frank averaged 12 points per game and led the team in assists, starting every game during the 1963-64 season.

For the 1964-65 season, KC had seasoned veterans back including himself, George Roderick and Donald Kruse – plus some terrific freshmen with John Underwood, Tom Farrell and Dave Gale.

Coach Turner worked the team hard, knowing he had a special group that was going to represent KC during the season. They finished the season 30-0 before losing twice at the NJCAA Tournament to close the year with a 31-2 record. The team played fast-break basketball, averaging 86 points per game in front of capacity crowds in Masters Gymnasium. Frank averaged 13 points per game and again led the team in assists.
After graduating from Kilgore, Frank attended Oklahoma City University and played for the legendary Abe Lemons. The 1965-66 OCU team was ranked No. 14 in the AP poll and was invited to the NCAA Tournament, which at that time had 32 teams. His senior season, the team was young and inexperienced but led the nation in scoring.

After graduating from OCU in 1969 with a Bachelor's of Science in Management, Frank headed back to New Jersey to start a business career. Also in 1969, Frank married his wife Ruth and they were blessed with four children: Megan, Kara, Christine and Kevin. They now have 12 grandchildren.

Frank has been involved in the financial services business for the past 40 years and is President of The O'Brien Group, which deals in Investments and Insurance Consulting. Aside from work, Frank’s life is consumed with family, whether it be coaching his own children or attending numerous athletic events that his grandkids participate in.

Frank is an avid golfer and has been a member of Plainfield Country Club for 37 years where he served on the board of trustees in various capacities before becoming president of Plainfield Country Club from 1998-2001. His involvement in golf led him to be elected to the board of trustees of the NJ State Golf Association in 2011. From 2013-15, he served as the president of the NJSGA, the second-oldest golf association in the nation – established in 1900.

He continues his work today with the NJSGA, heading their Youth Foundation which provides funds for needy youth groups throughout New Jersey.

Frank currently resides in Warren, New Jersey, with his wife, Ruth.

Today we are pleased to induct Frank O’Brien into the KC Athletics Hall of Fame.