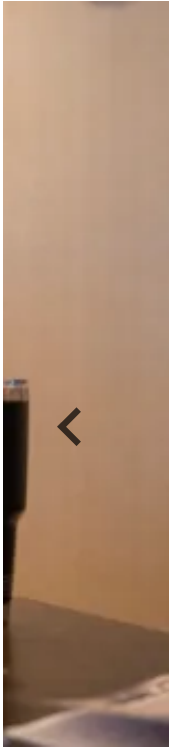


# WKU basketball legend Glover launches autobiographical book series

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by [Micheal Compton](https://bgdailynews.com/author/michealcompton/) (<https://bgdailynews.com/author/michealcompton/>)

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Clarence Glover, a former player for the Western Kentucky University Hilltoppers basketball team and one of the greatest Hilltoppers in history, is launching a book signing for his autobiography “My Journey” in Bowling Green on Saturday. Glover, who is retired from a long career as a school administrator and lives in Louisville, was in town Saturday at Springhill Suites for a book launch of “Horse Cave to Houston: Pursuit of a National Championship” as the first of a planned series of “My Journey” autobiographical books.

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“Actually, this is going to be a series of books – this is the introductory,” Glover said. “I have eight grandchildren and they’re in Connecticut, Colorado, Kentucky, etc. I write them letter for the past 10 or 12 years every month, each individual because they only know a little bit about me so I’m telling them about me. Then I started doing this series because beside the letter, each of them will get a book and it’ll be about seven books. This is the introductory book.

“Because Kentucky is a basketball state, so I’m doing a book about the only time that our university men’s basketball team has ever gone to the Final Four. That’s to get the attention of anybody who wants to read it, although the book’s actually being written for my grandchildren.”

Glover, who grew up Horse Cave and starred at Caverna High School as a powerful 6-foot-8 forward on the basketball court and dabbled at first base on the baseball diamond, was a standout player on that spectacular WKU team coached by John Oldham and also featuring superstar center Jim McDaniels.

Glover never meant to be a Hilltopper, but McDaniels changed that when his old rival from Scottsville convinced Glover and others on the Kentucky All-Star Team – Jerome Perry and Jim Rose – to join him at Western Kentucky and pursue a national championship. Glover joined McDaniels, Rose, Rex Bailey and Jerry Dunn as part of the first all-black starting five in Kentucky Division I college basketball history on that 1970-71 squad that came so very close to doing just that.

Glover played a key role for that 24-6 squad that won the Ohio Valley Conference title, then blitzed through the NCAA Tournament with wins against Jacksonville, Kentucky – WKU’s first-ever over the Wildcats, a 107-83 rout – and Ohio State before falling to Villanova in double overtime. The Tops regrouped to beat Kansas in the third-place game, although that NCAA run was later vacated by the NCAA after it was revealed McDaniels had committed a rules violation by signing with an agent before the tournament.

Glover, who averaged 8.4 points and 10.9 rebounds per game, pulled off the play of the game against Jacksonville in that NCAA first-round matchup, when he slid behind a Dolphins defender and pretended to tie his shoe during an inbounds play, only to spring up and catch the inbounds pass and score the game-winning layup in a 74-72 win.

“That was an impromptu play,” Glover said. “In baseball, I had done the hidden-ball trick where I pretended I was throwing it back to the pitcher with the ball still in my glove. I played first base, so I would be holding it on first base and I’d hold my glove up as if I was going to get the throw back from the pitcher, and of course when they’d step off the bag I’d yell for the official and tag the guy out. So I was always thinking in those types of ways.”

Glover discusses that play and much more of his career at WKU in the book, which traces his time helping integrate Caverna in the fourth grade through that NCAA Tournament appearance in 1971.

“It’s an autobiographical sequence of my life,” Glover said. “That’s the reason for the introductory (book). I’ll go back and pick up at the fourth grade where I tell them I’m starting the book there going through the Final Four. I’ll go back in a little bit more depth, painting a little bit better graphic picture of where I lived. In the letters that I’ve written to them, they know the different things about me. They know that I had a cross burned in my front yard. They know that I slept on the floor in a two-room house as a kid with no indoor plumbing. So they’ve got a little bit of that.

“Then I’ll pick it up so that they’ll know that I did not make a lot of money playing professional basketball, but that I did everything through education step-by-step-by-step. So those are the things I’m wanting them to know as they grow up, that they have to pursue their education at the highest degree that they can.”

The book, which benefits the College Heights Foundation Clarence Glover Scholarship Fund, will be housed at WKU College Heights Foundation, so anybody can read it for free if they want to, said Glover, who went on to become the No. 1 draft pick of the NBA’s Boston Celtics after that historic 1970-71 season at WKU.

Anyone who makes a donation to the Clarence Glover Scholarship Fund will be mailed an autographed copy of the book by the College Heights Foundation.

### **About Micheal Compton**



I am a sports reporter and movie critic for the Bowling Green Daily News.

<mailto:micheal.compton@bgdailynews.com>) More by Micheal

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