Udonis Haslem: The True HeatLifer

Udonis Haslem has spent his entire life in the state of Florida. Born and raised in Miami, Florida, Haslem assisted Miami Senior High School to back to back state titles in 1997 and 1998. He continued on to play basketball on the collegiate level at the University of Florida. His efforts assisted the Gators to the 2007 NCAA Championship title behind the coaching of future NBA coach, Billy Donovan. He also played with future Miami Heat shooter, Mike Miller, during his time in Gainesville. He was an AP third team all-american selection in 2001 and NABC second team all-american selection in 2002. During his time at the University of Florida, he met his wife, Faith Rein, who was a member of the Gators Track and Field team. In 2012, he was inducted into the University of Florida’s Athletic Hall of Fame as a “Gator Great”.

For the 2002 NBA Draft, Udons Haslem was not selected. He spent a year in France losing weight while also averaging 16.1 points and 9.4 rebounds with Chalon-Sur-Saone, In 2003, he signed with the Miami Heat. The 2018-19 season, will be Haslem’s 16th season in the NBA and with the Heat. He has been healthy every season, and has been accustomed to many different roles on the Heat roster. He has spent his entire career in Miami, helping the Heat to win three NBA Championships. He is currently holding the fourth longest streak by an active player with only one team in the league.

During the time that Shaquile O’Neal was in Miami, Haslem’s game was a perfect complement to Shaq’s game. Haslem took the starting role after Lamar Odom was traded. He scored 17 points in Game 6 of the NBA Finals against the Dallas Mavericks in 2006. Haslem remained with the Heat during the acquisition of Lebron James and Chris Bosh. He could have received $10 million more if he signed with Dallas or Denver in 2010, but he chose to stay in his hometown. After defeating Oklahoma City Thunder in the 2012 NBA Finals, Dwyane Wade and Haslem were the only remaining players from the 2006 Championship team. In 2012, Haslem surpassed Alonzo Mourning to become the franchise leader in total rebounds (5701). He also holds the Miami Heat record for most defensive rebounds (4101), offensive rebounds (1600), and offensive rebounds in the NBA playoffs (230). He is the first undrafted player to lead a franchise in rebounding.