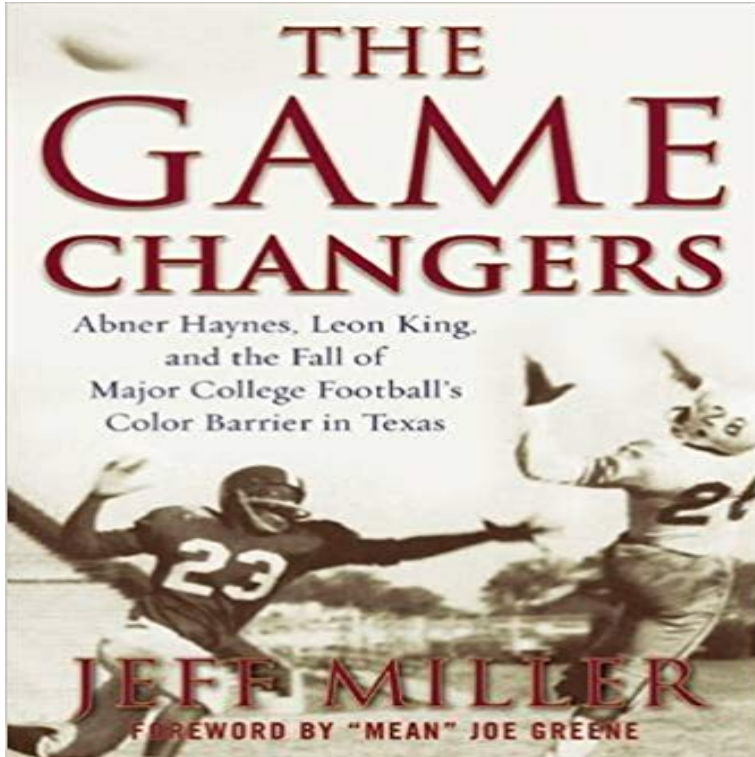


# The Game Changers: The Inspiring Story of Breaking Major College Football's Color Barrier in Texas



The accepted narrative in football-crazy Texas is that racial integration came to the state's national sport in the mid-1960s, generally associated with Jerry LeVias' celebrated arrival at SMU in Dallas. But the landmark achievement actually took place quietly almost a decade earlier only about an hour north of Dallas. In the town of Denton, two black football players from Dallas' segregated public school system boldly walked on to play for what was then called North Texas State College, known today as the University of North Texas. Abner Haynes and Leon King didn't know what to expect, and neither their dozen or so teammates on North Texas' freshman team. The players' arrival came only a few months after North Texas first welcomed a black undergraduate student in February 1956. The school worked its way through both that episode and the integration of its most public face, the football team, with no fanfare and without the hostility on campus that accompanied similar events at many other colleges and universities across the South. There were, though, tense situations when a racially integrated football team played road games in small, segregated Texas towns. Jeff Miller, a veteran Texas sports journalist, has visited with those who lived through it from the mixed welcome that Haynes and King initially received from their white freshman brethren to those same teammates standing with them after the two blacks were denied service at eateries on the road to a squad that grew into a Bowl team. In *The Game Changers*, Miller ties the tale of what happened at North Texas beginning in 1956 to contrasting events that took place not far away that reverberated into national relevance. He also chronicles the continued racial integration of major college football in Texas throughout the 1960s. Skyhorse Publishing, as well as our Sports Publishing imprint, are proud to publish a broad range of books for readers interested

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