THE OFFICIAL MAGAZINE of the NATIONAL BASIC BRAILDRETIRED PLAYERS ASSOCIATION

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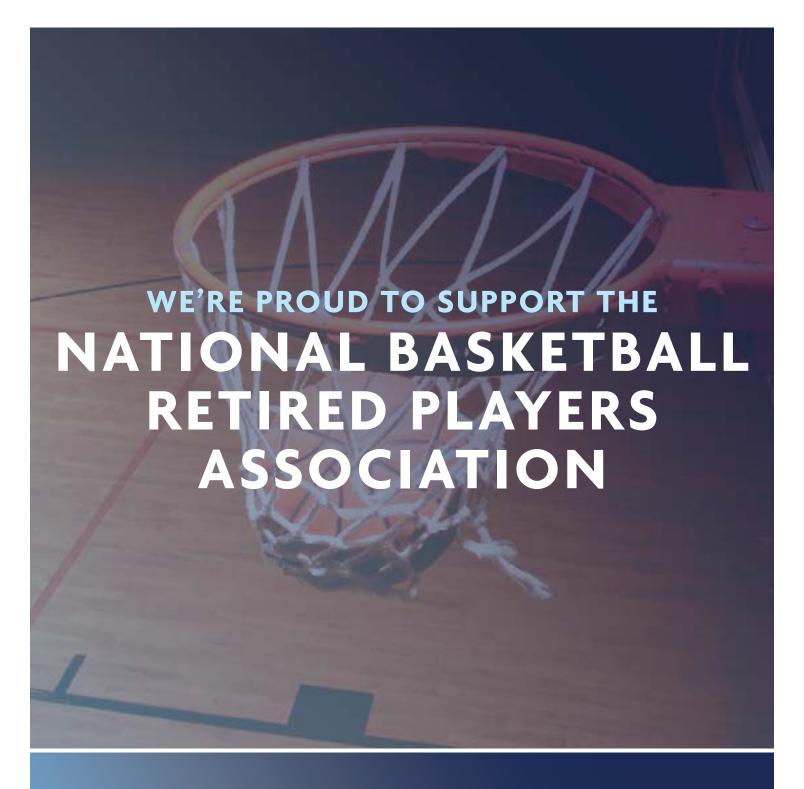


TWO PEAS AND A POD

KNUCKLEHEADS PODCAST

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE PLAYERS' TRIBUNE, THE KNUCKLEHEADS PODCAST HAS BECOME A HIT WITH FANS AND INSIDERS ALIKE POWER FORWARD

By Nancy Lieberman



Being Chicago's Bank™ means doing our part to give back to the local charities and social organizations that unite and strengthen our communities. We're particularly proud to support the National Basketball Retired Players Association and its dedication to assisting former NBA, ABA, Harlem Globetrotters, and WNBA players in their transition from the playing court into life after the game, while also positively impacting communities and youth through basketball.



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KNUCKLEHEADS PODCAST

TWO PEAS AND A POD



In Partnership with The Players' Tribune, the Knuckleheads Podcast Has Become a Hit with Fans and Insiders Alike.



"IT'S ABOUT GOOD VIBES. NOT CONCENTRATING ON ANYTHING NEGATIVE. WE WANT TO TALK ABOUT **JOURNEYS AND STORIES."**

DARIUS MILES



NANCY LIEBERMAN **POWER FORWARD** BY NANCY LIEBERMAN

It's a great time to be a female in the game of basketball.



KEYON DOOLING





"I JUST WANT EVERY PLAYER TO BE ABLE TO REACH OUT TO SOMEONE. AND TO HAVE THE KIND OF HELP THEY NEED ONCE THEY DO."

KEYON DOOLING



HOMECOMING: JUWAN HOWARD IS BACK AT MICHIGAN



Ready to bring NBA swagger to the storied program where he once played

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TWO PEAS AND A POD

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE PLAYERS' TRIBUNE, THE KNUCKLEHEADS PODCAST HAS BECOME A HIT WITH FANS AND INSIDERS ALIKE

JOHN FAWAZ

arius Miles and Quentin Richardson are grateful for all the praise they have received for their podcast, Knuckleheads. But the most meaningful feedback comes from those within the fraternity.

"One of the best compliments we got is from the head equipment guy for the Pistons, he's been in the League a long time," says Richardson. "He said, 'Man, it's the first podcast I can listen all the way through. It reminds me of how things are when we're traveling, in the locker room, guys talking."

"That's the atmosphere we want....Talk about some cool, fun stories that people don't know about. See them in a different light."

This isn't new media, social media, or any kind of media to Richardson and Miles. It's two friends (who have known each other since they were teenagers) shooting the breeze with a guest. Except those two old friends also happen to be former NBA players, and the discussion is the same as if no one was listening.

"That's the best part of what we have going for us. We have regular talks," Richardson says. "It's little things here and there, if there was no camera or mic. We have normal conversations."

And like their usual banter, basketball is only part of the conversation.

"It's about good vibes," Miles says. "Not concentrating on anything negative. We want to talk about journeys and stories."

Miles and Richardson, who spent 13 and nine years in the league respectively, have had their own journeys, from Midwest childhoods to AAU to college ball to the NBA and the post-NBA life, the "what next?" phase that all players grapple with.

They came in together with the Clippers in 2000 and became fondly known as the Knuckleheads because of their on-court celebration involving two taps to the head with balled-up fists. (The salute originated at L.A.'s Westchester High School, whose players asked the duo to do it in an NBA game.) They captured the attention of Michael Jordan, and he and Nike showered them with glam and put them in an ad for Air Jordans. They hung out with hip-hop artists. Ahead of their time? You could say that.

They only played together for two seasons in Los Angeles, so their current gig is not wholly the result of any connections made then. No, this wasn't even on their radar.

"It was something that we just stumbled into," Richardson says. "I first did the story for The Players' Tribune, the 'Letter to My Younger Self,' and that got a lot of response.

"Darius did his letter ['What the Hell Happened to Darius Miles?'] a year later. Same type of response. We had a relationship with the Players' Tribune and we had done a couple other things. What should we do next?"



JR Smith poses for a photo with Quentin Richardson and Darius Miles of the Knuckleheads Podcast in Los Angeles. (Guillermo Hernandez Martinez/The Players' Tribune)

How about a podcast from Richardson's Orlando home featuring former NBA player Drew Gooden? Just a lark, a one-off. But they were hooked.

"Literally after we did it, we felt like it was good and we just went from there," Richardson says.

Initially they booked guests based on two factors: players they knew, and the schedule for the Orlando Magic. Boston will play the Magic on this date. Boom! Kyrie Irving and Jayson Tatum are on. When are the Hornets coming to town? Let's get Kemba Walker.

They knew they had a hit when after a few episodes, Kevin Durant called them. He said he liked what they were doing and wanted to come on the show.

"We spent two days with [Durant], gave me a whole new perspective and made me more of a fan," says Miles.

"We didn't have a plan to reach out to KD...we didn't plan this," Richardson says. "We didn't know there was this whole iTunes pop chart. We were just doing it."







Kevin Durant joins Quentin Richardson and Darius Miles of the Knuckleheads Podcast. (Jed Jocobsohn/The Players' Tribune)

More episodes followed and they even took the show on the road for All-Star Weekend in Charlotte, and to Miami to hang out with Udonis Haslem and Dwyane Wade, who had played AAU ball with Miles.

But the duo doesn't want you to call themselves media or even interviewers. They're not trying to re-invent the wheel or break into the show business. Fans eat up athlete-produced content. What could be more authentic? For the hosts, though, the fact that people like the show is a bonus.

"If you watch the D-Wade interview, we talked about experiences. That's not an interview," Richardson says.

"Ninety percent of the stuff they're saying we don't even know about," Miles says. "It's the first time we're hearing it."

There are hoops stories, of course, but guests also have talked about music, world travel, bungee jumping, vegan diets, playing overseas, and so on. They plan to expand their guest list for future podcasts, still with no scripts and no direction other than their curiosity.

"It's not really a popularity thing, Miles says. It's more like stories we want to talk about...It's us being fans of the game. We want entertainers, people who circulate around basketball. It's more us being fans of the world." ■



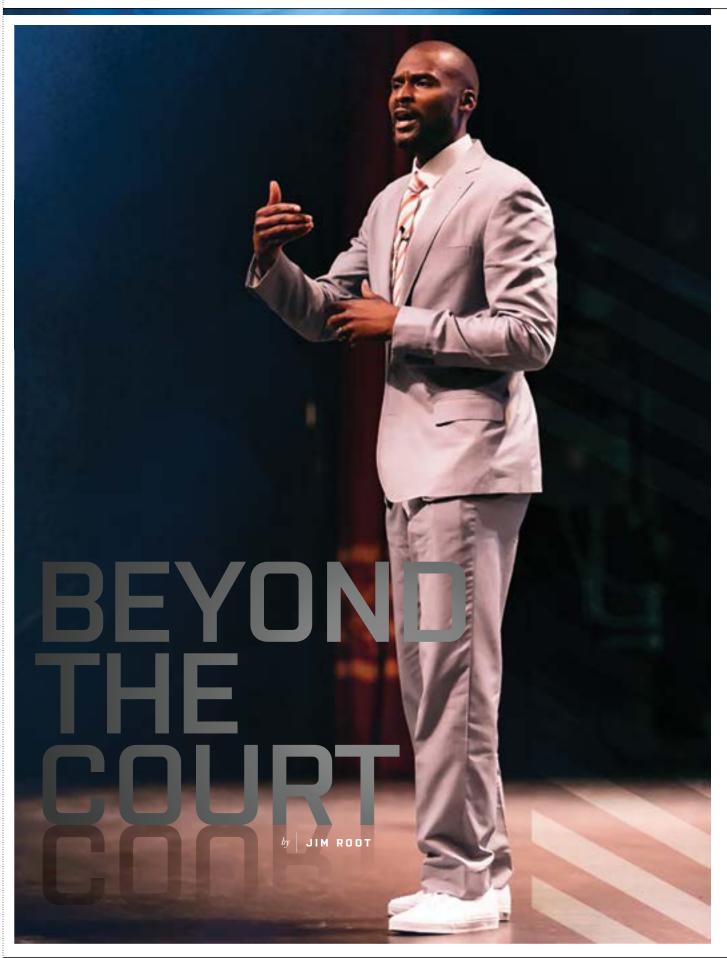




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BEYOND THE COURT

It's Time to Look Deeper Because these Men and Women are More than just Athletes

hen we look at professional athletes, we tend to see what we want to see. They are paragons of physical achievement, have jobs that pay millions of dollars, and have reached the absolute highest level of competition within their field. For many of us, that sounds like a dream come true. But projecting happiness and personal satisfaction onto these individuals is unfair and often wrong. The job is not all bliss; the long seasons under the public microscope are a grind, and players deal with copious amounts of outside pressure and attention. They are people too, fully and unequivocally, and they face their own struggles every single day.

While using athletes as an example, it's worth pointing out that parallels exist between physical and mental health. In both, specific injuries/illnesses can occur, demanding urgent and specific treatment. Additionally, the body and mind can both be trained to function at a more optimal level, helping to deal with stressful situations and bouts of extreme exertion. The former is obviously more critical and time-sensitive, but disregarding the latter ignores another potential path to complete mental health. At separate times, each can be vital to healing and peak mental performance.

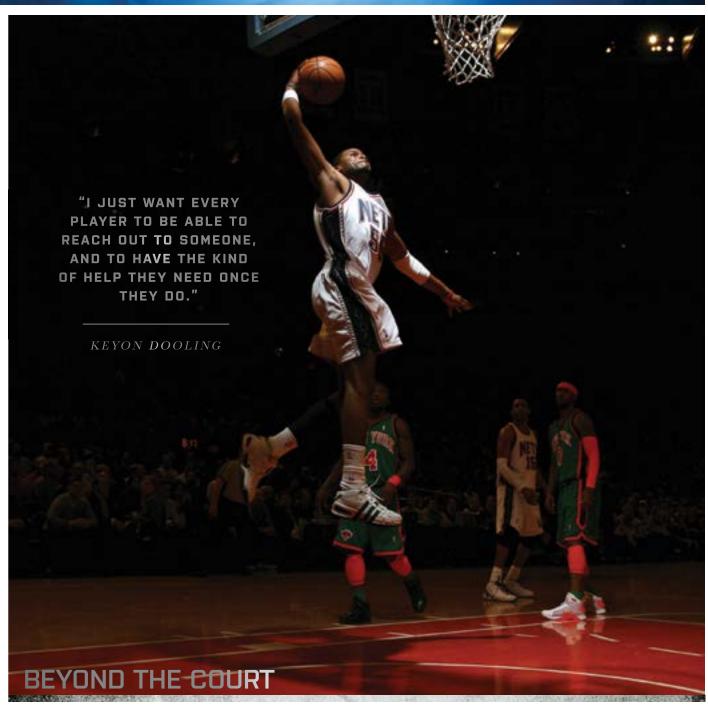
Similar to a torn ACL or a broken arm, clinically-diagnosed mental illnesses require professional attention and care. Mental health issues come in all shapes and sizes. They can manifest through anxiety, depression, or numerous other debilitating





Keyon Dooling addresses the crowd during a ceremony honoring him at the Yale Club's Norman Vincent Peale Awards in Manhattan.





symptoms, and they can result from a specific trauma or simply as a disease. They are potent, and they do not discriminate, impacting everyone, even the professional athletes that many people idolize. Take someone like Keyon Dooling, who reached the pinnacle of the basketball world, while playing 13 seasons in the NBA and earning a reputation as a respected, hard-working veteran. Dooling opened up about his struggles just over a year ago in a wrenching article in The Players' Tribune, laying his demons bare for the basketball world and beyond to see. And he did so with a purpose.

By that time, Dooling had found some sense of healing, "I had done the work, you know, put in the time to work on getting better," he said. Years of therapy and self-reflection helped him process an earlier trauma, and he was ready to be an example for others to follow. He was confident in his ability to be a healer and to show other athletes fighting their own mental health battles that they weren't, and aren't, alone.

Like many around the mental health community, Dooling's ultimate goal is to normalize the conversation around mental health. Other players, like DeMar DeRozan and Kevin Love, have recently come forward about their own struggles. Rather than being vilified as "damaged," they have received support from players and fans alike. In May 2018, the NBPA established an official mental health and wellness program, expanding the resources offered to its athletes and acknowledging the very real need to make mental health a priority.

"I just want every player to be able to reach out to someone, and to have the kind of help they need once they do," said Dooling, and his pivotal role in helping bring about change in the league exemplifies this desire.

Unfortunately, treatment for trauma is just one step, albeit an absolutely crucial one. More can be done, and longtime mental conditioning coach Trevor Moawad is adamant about the benefits that come from a trained mind: developing strong habits that can help empower people in stressful situations.

BEYOND THE COURT



Keyon Dooling presents to a group at the NBPA's Off the Court Program, which prepares players for life after the game.

"The leagues [NBA and others] right now are checking an important box, but a lot more is needed, and it's up to the teams to change it," says Moawad. Mental conditioning is another step for individuals exposed to high strain to become fully mentally healthy, he said.

For example, one of his chief tenets is the importance of "neutral" thinking. It's not the friendly fluff of constant positive thoughts ("I can do anything!"), but rather, a more matter-of-fact, practical approach ("I will give my absolute best effort") that is realistic and controllable in all scenarios.

Moawad has worked with a wide variety of organizations — Alabama and Georgia football, the Memphis Grizzlies, and US Navy SEALs, just to name a few—and he believes more professional athletes could benefit from this type of training. Despite his stint with the Grizzlies in 2014-15, Moawad does not believe the culture around professional basketball is prepared to commit to widespread adoption of mental conditioning.

"Sports are way behind businesses. Executives are far more willing to embrace this type of change," said Moawad.

He sets the responsibility on the shoulders of the coaches to commit to the rigorous, time-consuming process, and hopes that an innovative leader (or leaders) can make

the difficult choice to ask their front offices for the means to invest in training the whole player. He's sympathetic to the challenge teams face, acknowledging that the pool of effective mental coaches is quite shallow, but NBA franchises have the power/means to change the narrative over time.

Ultimately, though, no amount of training can defend against a devastating illness or traumatic experience like Dooling's, and even the most mentally strong individuals can be subject to struggles. Thus, it's worth reiterating the positive strides the NBA continues to make in offering proper treatment to its players and creating a more supportive climate around mental health.

Slowly but surely, society is becoming more aware and accepting of open mental health discussions, and as part of that society, we must continue to normalize the conversation. That includes letting everyone know that they have options: friends and family that care about them, doctors who can help them discuss and deal with the challenges they're facing, and fans that will understand and even appreciate their vulnerability. And it doesn't stop there: learning and applying the benefits of mental conditioning can strengthen the minds of every single player, protecting against life's constant struggles and challenges.









THE NATIONAL BASKETBALL RETIRED PLAYERS ASSOCIATION HOSTED ITS ANNUAL SUMMER CONFERENCE ON JULY 7-10 IN LAS VEGAS AT CAESARS PALACE.

he National Basketball Retired Players Association hosted its annual Summer Conference on July 7-10 in Las Vegas at Caesars Palace.

The Conference welcomed over 180 members for four days of programming and hospitality events, which included a number of panel conversations to discuss shared experiences and offer advice to other players about various aspects of life after basketball. The week's conversations touched on a wide range of topics, notably the

state of women in basketball, bridging the age gap between current and former players,

and how Legends are succeeding in business ventures in their post-playing careers.

Members and their guests also ate, drank, laughed, and danced at one of Vegas' hottest nightclubs, the Omnia, before breaking out some friendly competition at TopGolf Las Vegas the next night.

The week was one for the books, bringing together seasoned vets and newly retired players alike to learn from one another, all set to the background of Summer League. We can't wait for next year!

WOMEN OF INFLUENCE SUMMIT PUTS SPOTLIGHT ON OPPORTUNITY

A ballroom full of legends was present for The National Basketball Retired Players Association's (NBRPA) Women in Influence Summit on Monday, July 8 at Caesar's Palace. The summit featured an esteemed panel headlined by Hall of Famers Sheryl Swoopes and Nancy Lieberman.

Rounding out the panel was accomplished analyst LaChina Robinson, front office pioneer Kathy Behrens and Las Vegas Aces Manager of Player Programs and Franchise Development Rushia Brown.

An array of WNBA stars past and present were seated toward the front, while former NBA players such as Shawn Marion, Steve Smith, and Grant Hill were scattered about the venue. The camaraderie was tangible in the room. Plenty of jokes were made as the ladies reminisced on stage, and the audience collectively shared laughs throughout the discussion.

The poignancy of the ladies' messages hit home. Each woman on stage came from a different area of expertise, providing exceptional balance to the panel and making the experience a compelling one.

Sheryl Swoopes shared her vision of becoming an example for all women's basketball players to look up to, noting that too often, female athletes are told that they can't start a family and simultaneously continue their career. Sheryl bucked that notion in 1997, missing the WNBA's debut because she was pregnant with her son, Jordan. She then returned to the court just six weeks after giving birth to play in the final nine games of the season. Her Houston Comets won the championship that year.

Nancy Lieberman, or "Lady Magic" as some called her back in the day, was the darling of the crowd. She shared unbelievable anecdotes that illustrated her success story. Most importantly, Nancy wanted us to know that everything she earned she had to work hard to attain.

"These jobs are not like Skittles, everybody doesn't get one," Lieberman said. "So tell people what you want. Hang around the people that will hire you."

Next down the line was LaChina Robinson. While she played basketball competitively in college, LaChina found her specialty as a broadcast analyst. In her time working closely with the Atlanta Dream, she also began a mentorship program with young women of color looking to break into the sports media world called Rising Media Stars.

She credits discovering her passion to, "focusing on what I am versus focusing on what I'm not." In the future, she wishes to see more girls following in the paths of the final panel member, Kathy Behrens.

Today, Kathy serves as President of Social Responsibility and Player Programs for the NBA. She began working for the association in 2000, and stated countless times throughout her career she was the only woman amongst her decision-making peers. A successful career in New York politics landed her in the NBA's crosshairs, again especially unique from the other ladies' journeys.

The women collectively cited legends such as Doris Burke, Pam McGee, Robin Roberts and even Kara Lawson as pioneers they look up to. But undoubtedly, the four women on stage were the stars of the night. On behalf of the Las Vegas Aces, Rushia Brown presented the panel with gifts at the summit's conclusion.

In all, the night was one that both celebrated and empowered women. Rushia Brown was particularly eloquent in her closing remarks. She referenced a quote made by entertainment mogul Tyler Perry from this year's BET Awards where he said, "If you're tired of not having a seat at the table, then build your own table."

Rushia followed that with her own comments stating, "You can make a job out of anything you're passionate about."

Her final punchline played off of Perry's comments about a seat at the table, but serves as a reminder for everyone. Rushia said, "Remember, if you're not at the table, you're on the menu."







Rushia Brown, Sheryl Swoopes, Nancy Lieberman, LaChina Robinson and Kathy Behrens

NBRPA HOSTS 'BRIDGING THE GAP' SUMMIT CONNECTING CURRENT AND FORMER PLAYERS

As part of the 2019 National Basketball Retired Players Association (NBRPA) Legends Conference in Las Vegas, former NBA and WNBA players Grant Hill, Spencer Haywood, Keyon Dooling, Rushia Brown and Antonio Davis hosted a seminar entitled "Bridging the Gap," in which player discussed how retired players can best maintain relationships and connect with current players.

Hill led the conversation by asking a series of questions, and each of the participants began by explaining why they were present at the conference and what is next for them in their post-playing careers.

As the conversation evolved, Haywood said the NBRPA must get younger in order to modernize the association and grow membership. Dooling, who has been outspoken as an advocate for mental health, said players need to transfer the skills they cultivated as athletes into productive post-playing endeavors.

"We have to find a way to be able to transfer those skills we had as athletes into other aspects of life."

Brown discussed the non-profit organizations she has started to help at-risk youth, as well as what it's like to be a mother.

Davis underscored how making the extra effort to reach out to someone and understand their point of view can make a world of difference.

The conversation subsequently transitioned to what each player would have done differently during their careers. Hill said he wished he fully grasped the global platform he had as an NBA player.

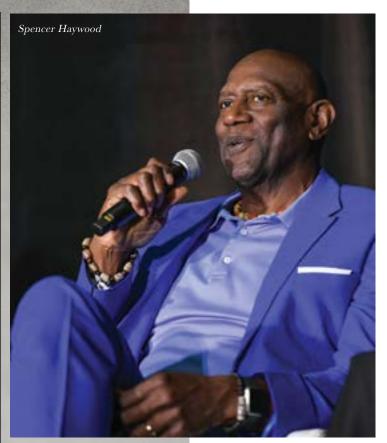
"That is what they do," Hill said in reference to the league's power to act as a PR vehicle for players. "They market all of us. That gives you tremendous access."

The players then discussed the challenges of re-acclimating to life at home after their playing days given the profound change in their dayto-day lifestyles.

At one point, the conversation shifted to the future of the NBA. Davis talked about how he was nervous about players coming into the NBA at young ages and how the lack of maturity for players entering the league straight from high school or after one year of college could impact retirement decisions. He noted the impact social media has had on this new wave of NBA younglings.

Hill spoke on making it a responsibility for young players to have a voice of leadership in the locker rooms and commended Vince Carter's valuable role with the Hawks last season.

Brown talked about including various perspectives, particularly those of women, in these conversations about the future of basketball and its growth.





BUSINESS AFTER BASKETBALL

The National Basketball Retired Players Association (NBRPA) held an Entrepreneurship Summit as part of its annual Legends Conference in Las Vegas. The speakers—former NBA players Roger Mason Jr., Stephen Bardo, Al Harrington and WNBA agent Allison Galer—discussed their own entrepreneurial pursuits and offered advice for others.

Roger Mason Jr., a 10-year NBA veteran, talked about his role as a co-founder of "Vaunt", which is a platform that creates the lifestyle content globally for athletes. With Vaunt, athletes are able to publicize their genuine personalities and connect better with their fans in an intentional, authentic way. Mason Jr. wanted to pursue this venture to allow athletes to showcase themselves to the world without the media creating a negative image of them.

Mason Jr.'s motivation behind the creation of Vaunt was that he was frustrated that the media would take his and other athletes' comments out of context as a way to generate headlines. He started a test run of Vaunt, "Vaunt 1.0," which proved successful and drew investors. He called the launch the proudest moment of his career.

Galer, meanwhile, is an agent who represents WNBA players and wants to change how WNBA players are represented. Galer, who represents Lisa Leslie, Chiney Ogwumike, and Liz Cambage, is the founder of "Disrupt the Game Agency." Galer said that, while she did not play professional basketball, she earned her way into the agency business regardless, in part because she got a law degree. She began working in sports at 22-years old after she interned with the Los Angeles Dodgers.

Though she received guidance along the way, Galer was largely inexperienced at the beginning and had to teach herself different parts of the industry.

"I was going into this business young for one, being a female two, along with not playing in the WNBA," Galer said.

Harrington, a 16-year NBA veteran, owns the company Viola, which is a business that sells marijuana. Harrington wanted to help his grandma alleviate pain with the use of cannabis, which inspired him to use his company to help minorities, especially black people.

"When I first started, I was looking to help find a cure for HIV or Cancer," Harrington said. "I started the company Viola when I was playing and decided to name it after my grandma."

Viola started in Colorado and continues to grow nationwide as Harrington seeks out business opportunities throughout the country.

At a time when NBA players are increasingly starting their business careers while still playing, the conversation focused on transitioning to business after basketball and leveraging the NBA's powerful platform and robust network to workshop ideas and launch players' post-playing careers. Years ago, business interests may not have been at the forefront of most players' minds while still in the league and immediately after retirement, but the presence of social media and the interconnected nature of today's society have elevated the urgency to transition from basketball to business.

The panel conversation served to inform that transition and give firsthand voices to the situation many newly-retired players currently face. The different panelists' brought varying areas of expertise and experience to the discussion, which demonstrated the expansive range of options players have after their playing careers end. Whether it's spearheading an innovative marketing concept, creating an agency, capitalizing off the legalization of marijuana or anything in between, retired players have more post-playing paths than ever before.









THE FUTURE IS FRANCHISING

After being selected fourth overall by the Memphis Grizzlies in 2002, Drew Gooden spent a whopping 14 years in the NBA, playing for teams all across the country.

During the unforgettable 2011 lockout, Gooden witnessed the unfortunate financial crises that fellow players found themselves in. This harsh reality made it clear to him that that was not what he wanted for his own future. The lockout ultimately provided him with an early glimpse of retirement, and the motivation to begin considering what his next step would be after basketball. The break in the basketball season also gave him a leg up, as he was able to use his free time to begin studying and preparing for what was ahead.

Gooden took time to asses a number of potential opportunities, and finally concluded that franchising would be most suitable for his next move. As an NBA vet, though, he was all too aware of the many failed restaurant businesses and franchises owned by other professional athletes. He was committed to not becoming another one of these bad business stories.

The power forward conducted extensive research for months on end on a number of companies that he felt would be good fits for his next move. What he found was that the popularity of chicken wings has sharply risen in recent years. His own affinity for the food and Wingstop itself aided his decision to make Wingstop his primary investment. He began the outreach process to the company just like any other Average Joe would; nothing was immediately handed to him, and he had to make his case as to why he would be a good fit for the franchise. His hard work ultimately paid off, and in 2012, Gooden signed an agreement to open four Wingstop franchises in Orlando, FL, his offseason home.

During the 2019 NBA Summer Conference, Drew Gooden partnered with Wintrust to speak on the Franchising Forum. He shared his personal experience of franchising Wingstop restaurants, and provided notable advice to former players in the audience who are considering a similar path.

Gooden noted that the process is a long one, and that it's easy to be discouraged. After all, it took two and a half years of work before his first franchise ever opened its doors. He spoke to the need for self-awareness and, just like on the court, the importance of building a strong team. He understands that many athletes have the habit of taking on responsibilities that should be delegated to other, but insisted that all great owners understand their own weaknesses and surround themselves with people who can effectively fill those gaps. He compares this to the idea of owning your own basketball team. If you're the owner, you're not also the general manager or the coach or on the bench as a player. For athletes like Gooden who are still in their playing careers (Gooden is currently playing in the BIG3), this advice is invaluable as a strong team must lead the day-to-day operations while owners are away.

The NBRPA is proud to have Wintrust as a dedicated partner, and encourages its members to utilize their resources for all of their commercial banking needs.





HAIRSTYLES ON THE HARDWOOD

Here's a Look at our All-Time Favorite Hairsyles to Grace the Court

ADAM MORRISON MOP

From Gonzaga to Charlotte to Los Angeles, Adam Morrison rocked his iconic mop and peach fuzz that just. Wouldn't. Grow. Today, Morrison opts for a less unkempt look, defaulting to a slicked-back ponytail and clean-shaven face instead. But let's not forget the unbeatable combo that landed him on this list.

LARRY BIRD MULLET-STACHE

While the mullet game has been strong for many players over the years (see Dwayne Schintzius), what really sends Larry Legend over the greatest-of-all-time threshold here is his mullet-mustache combo. While some may say the double-flex is reckless, we know it's nothing but respectable.

DENNIS RODMAN RAINBOW

Leopard spots. Swirly whirlies. Smiley faces. Kermit green. Bleach-blonde Mohawk. Is there anything Dennis Rodman hasn't done to his hair? And no word yet as to which of his best friend's hairstyles Kim Jong Un will be adopting next. Our money is on the leopard spots – fabulous!

BEN WALLACE 'FRO

Go big or go home. For more than a decade, Ben Wallace's opponents feared the fro and in the process, made him the most easily recognizable stars of the 2000s.

DREW GOODEN BRAIDS

Yes, plenty of players in the league have sported braids and rows, but no one did it quite like Drew Gooden. During his time with the Bulls, he adopted the braided-beard look, making his face appear like it was literally dripping with style.











HAIRSTYLES ON THE **HARDWOOD**

BILL WALTON CURLY DEADHEAD

This list wouldn't be complete without everyone's favorite Deadhead. Bill Walton can rock any look, including the curls-beard combo, long locks and headband, and even the John-Wooden-approved chop.

DWAYNE SCHINTZIUS THE LOBSTER

This hairdo was so popular, it had its own nickname. Known as The Lobster, the haircut was a fan favorite. But when Schintzius was traded to the Spurs, GM Bob Bass requested The Lobster be chopped off. Schintzius obliged, and then sent the clippings in an envelope to Bass. Schintzius was traded shortly thereafter.

CHRIS ANDERSEN MOHAWK

The Birdman's hair went through many iterations over the course of his 15-year NBA career, with none being more distinct than his Mohawk. With both sides of his head shaved and a spiky, gelled strip down the middle, Andersen—who also had tattoos covering most of his arms and neck-stood out whenever he was on the floor.

ALLEN IVERSON CORNROWS

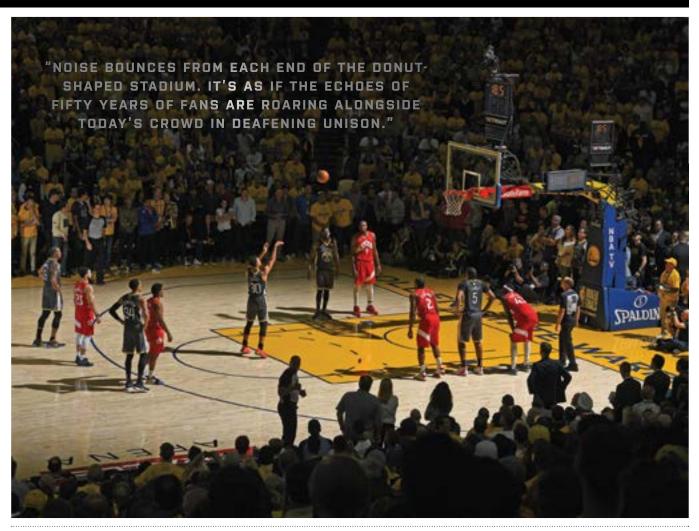
Iverson had the meanest crossover in the league during his playing days - and an iconic hairstyle to boot. Iverson tucked his cornrows underneath a headband, which was the perfect look for the shortest player ever to go No. 1 overall in the NBA Draft.











Stephen Curry, No. 30 of the Golden State Warriors, shoots a foul shot against the Toronto Raptors during Game Six of the NBA Finals on June 13, 2019 in Oakland, California. (Photo by Garrett Ellwood/NBAE via Getty Images)

FAREWELL, ORACLE ARENA

AFTER MORE THAN 50 YEARS OF MEMORIES, GOLDEN STATE TURNS THE PAGE ON ITS HISTORIC ARENA

LUKAS STACHTIARIS

oise bounces from each end of the donut-shaped stadium. It's as if the echoes of fifty years of fans are roaring alongside today's crowd in deafening unison.

Once the chant starts, it hauntingly hovers through the air. If you're from out of town, it might just follow you home after the game.

WAAAAAAAARRIOOORRRRRSSSS.

For five decades, this chant and the fanatics who do it called Oracle Arena home. These fans will have to leave a part of this history behind, though, with the Warriors moving across the bay into a new arena beginning this season.

In its storied history, Oracle Arena hosted 43 playoff series, 15 NBA Finals games, and an unforgettable All-Star Weekend in 2000. Four championship banners hung in the rafters alongside six retired numbers, not to mention the

handful of players that graced Oracle's court whose jerseys will inevitably enter the attic at the new arena.

The stadium perfectly encapsulated the city that it represented. Golden State spent almost their entire tenure at Oracle as scrappy underdogs, much like the city of Oakland itself. Season after season, the Warriors epitomized their name by refusing to surrender. They played the underdog role well, completing three of the NBA's 10 upsets of a one or two seed since the NBA changed its playoff formatting.

Still, for a long time the largest domino would not fall for Oracle Arena: a championship to call its own.

Hall of Famer Rick Barry notes Game 7 of the 1975 Western Conference Finals as his highlight at Oracle. He remembers his son Jon, a ball boy at the time, being

FAREWELL, ORACLE ARENA



The Golden State Warriors raise a banner for 47 incredible seasons at Oracle Arena before the game against the LA Clippers on April 7, 2019 in Oakland, California. (Photo by Noah Graham/NBAE via Getty Images)

swept away by a Warrior's employee to safety as fans poured onto the hardwood to celebrate the team's unexpected ride to the Finals and what would inevitably become their first championship in Oakland. Yet the 1975 Finals were played at the Cow Palace rather than Oracle because the Ice Capades were performing at Oracle.

It took 42 years for the final Oracle domino — a championship — to tumble, but when it crashed, the whole world heard the bang. An NBA Finals finally graced the Oracle Arena floor in 2015, when the Warriors defeated the Cleveland Cavaliers in six games. The Finals would go back for seconds in 2017, the first Warriors title clinched at Oracle, and thirds in 2018 to cement the Dubs' dynasty.

Oracle's legacy is lasting, with some of the NBA's most recognizable records and moments standing as a reminder of the feats that took place inside the arena.

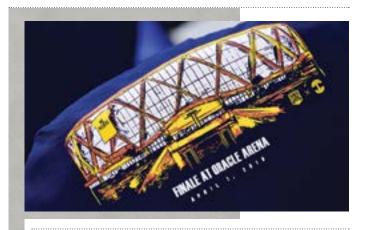
Vince Carter's high-flying 2000 Slam Dunk Contest Performance. Klay Thompson's single game three-point record, followed by Steph Curry's single game three-point record (which would later be broken again by Thompson). The best regular season in NBA history, followed by arguably the best team in basketball history. Fifty-four straight wins spanning over two seasons. The stadium may be standing on its last legs, but no bulldozer nor relocation can take these moments from the Oakland faithful.

Oracle's final season did not conclude with the third consecutive championship trophy that Warriors fans dreamed of, yet the sold-out retirement tour still represented the growth that the city, the fans, the team, and the arena underwent over its five-decade run.

"It was not a basketball city when I first went out there," Rick Barry told me. "That matured and it grew. It developed to the point where it is now, with some of the best fans in the country when it comes to basketball."

In 1975, when the Warriors brought the Bay Area its first championship, the Ice Capades took priority. By 2019, there was not a human, event, or otherworldly creature that could move the finals from Oracle. In Oakland–and around the world–the Golden State Warriors were the show.

Farewell Oracle. You are soon gone, but impossible to forget.



T-shirts for fans attending the last regular season game in Oracle Arena against the LA Clippers and the Golden State Warriors on April 7, 2019 in Oakland, California. (Photo by Noah Graham/NBAE via Getty Images)



Jerome Williams and Grant Hill speak before Game One of the NBA Finals on May 30, 2019 in Toronto, Ontario, Canada. (Photo by Nathaniel S. Butler/ NBAE via Getty Images)



Teresa Weatherspoon poses for a photo with Sheryl Swoopes and Tina Thompson while holding her trophy during the 2019 Basketball Hall of Fame Enshrinement Ceremony on September 6, 2019 in Springfield, Massachusetts. (Photo by Annette Grant/ NBAE via Getty Images)



Lisa Leslie and the Triplets pose with Ice Cube and Clyde Drexler as they celebrate with the trophy after defeating the Killer 3s to win the BIG3 Championship on September 1, 2019 in Los Angeles, California. (Photo by Harry How/BIG3 via Getty Images)

LEGENDS SIGHTINGS

HERE'S WHAT THE LEGENDS HAVE BEEN UP TO LATELY



The 2019 Hall of Fame Class poses for a portrait during the 2019 Basketball Hall of Fame Enshrinement Ceremony on September 5, 2019 in Springfield, Massachusetts. (Photo by Chris Marion/NBAE via Getty Images)



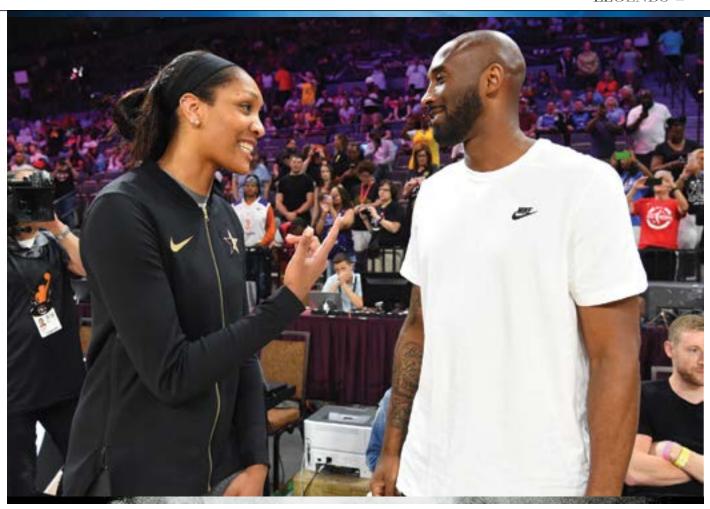
Shawn Marion, Stephen Bardo and Kendall Gill donate backpacks to young kids in Chicago as part of the National Basketball Retired Players Association's Legends Care BACK2BACK Program.



Bill Russell and Kawhi Leonard shake hands after Game Six of the NBA Finals against the Golden State Warriors on June 13, 2019 in Oakland, California. (Photo by Andrew D. Bernstein/NBAE via Getty Images)



Grant Hill and Ric Bucher speak on a panel during the Sports PR Summit on May 21, 2019 in New York.



 $Aija\ Wilson\ shares\ a\ laugh\ with\ Kobe\ Bryant\ at\ the\ AT\&T\ WNBA\ All-Star\ Game\ on\ July\ 27,\ 2019\ in\ Las\ Vegas,\ Nevada.\ (Photo\ by\ Brian\ Babineau/NBAE\ via\ Getty\ Images)$



 $Lynette\ Woodward,\ Dawn\ Staley,\ Sheryl\ Swoopes,\ Rebecca\ Lobo\ and\ Teresa\ Weatherspoon\ are\ recognized\ during\ the\ AT\&T\ WNBA\ All-Star\ Game\ 2019\ on\ July\ 27,\ 2019\ in\ Las\ Vegas,\ Nevada.\ (Photo\ by\ Brian\ Babineau/NBAE\ via\ Getty\ Images)$





NBA Commissioner Adam Silver, Disney CEO Bob Iger, Mike Conley, Aaron Gordon, Swin Cash, Grant Hill, Rachel Nichols, Kareem Abdul-Jabbar, Dwyane Wade, Brook Lopez and Victor Oladipo pose for a photo during the grand opening of NBA Experience on August 12, 2019 in Lake Buena Vista, Florida.



Sam Perkins and Bo Outlaw at the Jr. NBA Global Championships - Day of Service in Kissimmee, Florida on August 8, 2019. (Photo by David Dow/NBAE via Getty Images)



Kareem Abdul-Jabbar and Giannis Antetokounmpo of the Milwaukee Bucks pose for a photo on the red carpet before the 2019 NBA Awards Show on June 24, 2019 in Santa Monica, California. (Photo by Juan Ocampo/NBAE via Getty Images)



AN INSIDE LOOK AT WNBA LEGEND TAMIKA CATCHINGS

BEN LADNER

hese days, Tamika Catchings doesn't wear her hearing aids quite as often as she used to. She might break them out for special appearances and events, but seldom does so within the rhythm of a typical day. That wasn't always the case for Catchings, who was born with a hearing impairment that affected both of her ears and caused her to spend much of her childhood grappling with the physical and social consequences of compromised hearing. She faced ridicule at a young age for wearing aids that other kids didn't have to; she was reluctant to speak in front of people because of the speech challenges that came with the hearing impairment. When, out of frustration, she tossed her hearing aids away in third grade, her parents refused to replace them, leaving Catchings to navigate the rest of her childhood without them.

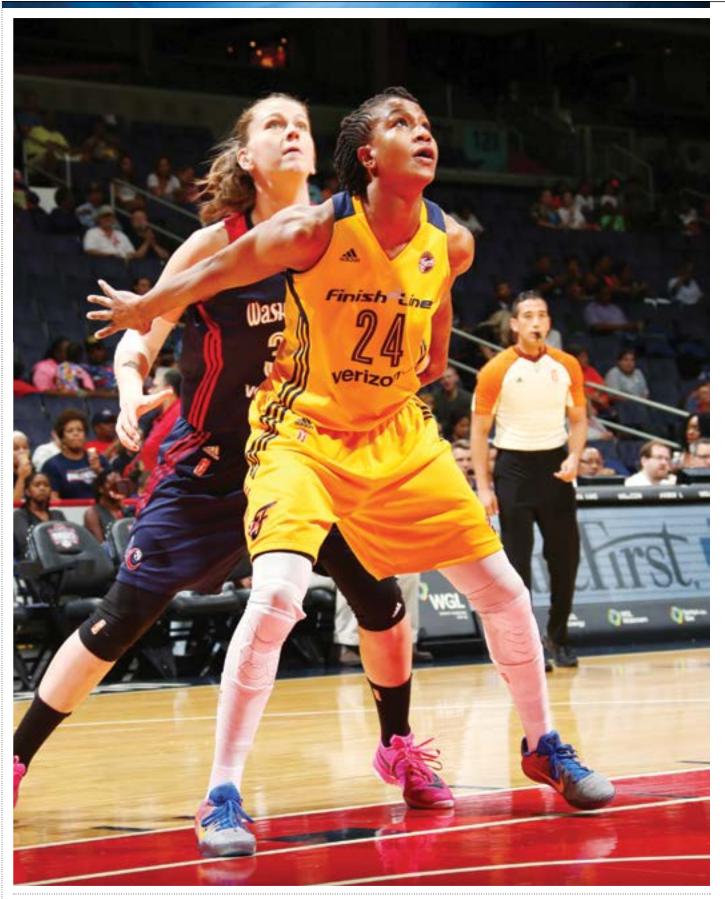
"Every day was a challenge for me," she said in an essay on ESPN.com in 2011, "There were plenty of days that I wished I was normal."

Eventually, Catchings realized she didn't have to be. She decided to tune out and outwork those that derided her, and used sports as her escape and motivation. As the daughter of former NBA player Harvey Catchings, she eventually gravitated to the basketball court (though she admits soccer was her first love). She earned a scholarship to play at the University of Tennessee under legendary coach Pat Summitt, who became instrumental to Catchings' success as a basketball player and as a person. When Catchings arrived in Knoxville, still hard of hearing and shy of speaking, Summitt was one of the first to urge her to go back to wearing hearing aids as a means of embracing who she was.

"I think for her she was more of a visionary in kind of looking ahead," Catchings said. "For me, being hearing-impaired, she was one of the ones that was saying 'One day your story will impact thousands, maybe millions of people."

Summitt encouraged – even demanded – excellence from her players not only on the court, but in all their endeavors in life. "I think that she played a really important role," Catchings said. "One thing that she always talked about was, 'We're not just going to be great on the basketball court, we're going to be great in the classroom and great in the community, but I want great people."

After years of reticence, Catchings had fully found her voice by the time she graduated from Tennessee. Over two decades later – and three years after Summitt's death – she still uses the coach's words as guidance.



Tamika Catchings, No. 24 of the Indiana Fever, fights for position against Emma Meesseman No. 33 of the Washington Mystics on September 11, 2016 in Washington, DC. (Photo by Ned Dishman/NBAE via Getty Images)



Tamika Catchings of the Indiana Fever addresses the crowd after the game against the Dallas Wings on September 18, 2016 in Indianapolis, Indiana. (Photo by Ron Hoskins/NBAE via Getty Images)

Since retiring, she has worked in media, player development, and basketball operations with the Indiana Pacers and Fort Wayne Mad Ants, and most recently was promoted to Vice President of Basketball Operations with the Indiana Fever. "I wanted to do something to impact players," she said. "I think for me it was really cool to be able to see them all differently, from the W, to the NBA, to the G League, just being able to see even the operations side of things."

While she leaves strategy and skill development to coaches and players, Catchings remains involved with Fever players' off-court development. She helps players network with people around the league as a means of preparing themselves for life after basketball and set personal goals on and off the court. Most importantly, she encourages them to get comfortable being uncomfortable. "I feel like as basketball players, we're so used to getting into our routines and getting into our rhythm that anything that kind of takes us outside of our box, we

tense up a little bit," she said. "And so trying to get them to understand you being uncomfortable sometimes is good, and that it allows you to kind of see things from a different light and from a different perspective."

In 2004, while she was starring for the Fever in the WNBA, Catchings started the Catch the Stars Foundation, which offers basketball, mentoring, and educational programs for underprivileged children. During her career, she frequently spoke out on issues of civil and human rights and protested gun violence on multiple occasions. "I feel that each one of us has a responsibility to making the space around them better," Catchings said. "Eventually, the ecosystem that we live in, all we breed and all we breathe is love. So how come we can't do that, and how come we can't teach that? I think it really starts with each one of us individually taking ownership of what we have."

Catchings learned long ago that "taking ownership of what we have" can make a world of difference. Since then, her message has been heard loud and clear. ■



MOVING UP THE BENCH

TODAY'S RETIRED PLAYERS ARE MAKING WAVES AS BASKETBALL EXECUTIVES

CALEB FRIEDMAN

or professional basketball players, the decision of what to do after retiring from basketball is often difficult. With plenty of options both in and outside the game, finding a new passion after playing for so many years can be an arduous process. Many players opt to stay in the game in some capacity, using relationships from their time in the league to get a foot in the door and work their way up in the industry. We've seen that process come to fruition in

coaching, broadcasting, player personnel and various other business ventures, as former legends have re-invented their careers and brought tremendous value to the game in off-court roles. With years of basketball experience to draw on, legends are uniquely positioned to see and affect the game from an informed perspective. Here are some former players who are doing just that and making waves in basketball:

JUWAN HOWARD

UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN HEAD COACH

Howard, who played in the NBA from 1994-2013, recently took the head coaching job at the University of Michigan, where he played from 1991-1994. After spending the final three seasons of his NBA career with the Miami Heat, he began his coaching career by becoming an assistant with Miami. Howard went on to serve as an assistant coach under head coach Erik Spoelsta for six seasons, mentoring big men and gaining valuable experience. When former Michigan head coach John Beilein resigned in the 2019 offseason, Howard's former school came calling. He accepted the position calling it an opportunity to come home.



NANCY LIEBERMAN

HEAD COACH OF POWER (BIG3)

Upon the conclusion of her illustrious playing career, Lieberman got into coaching, first leading the Detroit Shock in the WNBA in 2000. After a break from the bench, Lieberman got another opportunity with the Dallas Mavericks G League affiliate, the Texas Legends, making her the first-ever woman to coach a men's professional team. After a successful coaching stint with the Legends, Lieberman moved into a front office role with the team. Eventually, after working as a television analyst for a brief period, Lieberman was hired as an assistant coach for the Sacramento Kings in 2015, a role she held through 2017. In 2018, she began coaching in the BIG3, leading her team to their first championship. Accomplished at nearly all levels of the game, Lieberman has been a trail blazer for women in basketball and has proven herself to be one of the game's great teachers.



KARA LAWSON

BOSTON CELTICS ASSISTANT COACH

Kara Lawson played in the WNBA from 2003-2015 and for the USA Olympic team in 2008, which helped propel her broadcasting career. She began broadcasting while still playing, serving in various NBA and WNBA roles for ESPN after getting experience as a local studio analyst for the Sacramento Kings. In 2017, Lawson became the TV analyst for the Washington Wizards, which allowed her to stay around the game and familiarize herself even more with NBA circle. Lawson, who had also been coaching USA Women's Basketball 3-on-3, accepted a job as an assistant coach for the Boston Celtics during the 2019 offseason. Lawson joins a growing number of female coaches on NBA benches.



JERRY STACKHOUSE

VANDERBILT UNIVERSITY HEAD COACH

Stackhouse played for eight NBA teams across a span of 13 years before making his way into coaching. He spent a brief stint broadcasting immediately after he retired, before ultimately becoming an assistant coach for the Toronto Raptors. He served in that role for just one season, before subsequently taking the head coaching job for Raptors 905, the Toronto Raptors G League affiliate. Stackhouse coached in the G League for two seasons, winning NBA G League Coach of the Year in 2017 as his team won a championship. In 2018-2019, he went back to the NBA as an assistant with the Memphis Grizzlies. In 2019, Stackhouse took the head coaching job at Vanderbilt, joining a growing number of college head coaches with NBA backgrounds. Stackhouse hasn't been involved in the college game since he was a player in 1995, but his pro experience should allow him to relate to high school players on the recruiting trail and sell prospects on his ability to help them get to the NBA.



SWIN CASH

VICE PRESIDENT OF BASKETBALL OPERATIONS AND TEAM DEVELOPMENT, NEW ORLEANS PELICANS

Swin Cash retired from the WNBA in 2016 after a 15-year career with Detroit, Seattle, Chicago and New York. A two-time WNBA champion and four-time WNBA all-star, Cash was named director of franchise development for the New York Liberty in 2017. She would follow in the footsteps of Los Angeles Sparks General Manager Penny Toler as the only former WNBA players to hold a front office position immediately following their playing career. Cash was named vice president of basketball operations and team development for the New Orleans Pelicans in June 2019. In her role, she is responsible for overseeing the team's player development program, as well as handle additional responsibilities within the organization.





GERALD MADKINS

NEW YORK KNICKS ASSISTANT GM

Gerald Madkins spent the better part of the 1990s playing professionally overseas and in the NBA. After he retired, Madkins began his coaching career at California State and later at his alma mater, UCLA. After three seasons with the UCLA Bruins, Madkins pivoted from coaching to player personnel as a scout for the Knicks and he's risen up the NBA ranks since. After a stint in Houston as director of scouting and in New Orleans as vice president of player personnel, Madkins worked as an executive for the Los Angeles Clippers for five years, ultimately rising to assistant general manager. In 2017, Madkins made his return to the Knicks front office, where he is currently the assistant general manager. With experience as a player, coach and scout, Madkins is well-equipped to handle the day-to-day management of coaches, players and talent evaluation, all of which are important responsibilities for a front office executive.



ELTON BRAND

PHILADELPHIA 76ERS GM

The No. 1 overall pick in the 1999 NBA Draft, Brand played in the NBA from 1999 until 2016, at which point he retired and became a player development consultant—for the Philadelphia 76ers. In 2017, Brand became the general manager of the Philadelphia 76ers G League affiliate and in 2018, he was named general manager of the Philadelphia 76ers. With his vast playing career and front office experience, Brand brings a blend of basketball understanding and operations expertise to the job. Since taking over the Sixers front office, Brand has negotiated trades to acquire stars Jimmy Butler and Tobias Harris, making the Sixers an Eastern Conference contender. Brand's quick rise from NBA player to NBA general manager underscores his savviness as an evaluator and the respect he garners in Philadelphia.



ALLAN HOUSTON

NEW YORK KNICKS SPECIAL
ASSISTANT TO THE GM

Another former-player-turned-executive, Houston parlayed more than a decade of playing experience in the NBA into a job with the New York Knicks as assistant to the president in 2008, before subsequently getting promoted to assistant general manager. In 2014, Houston became general manager of the Knicks G league affiliate, the Westchester Knicks, and he has served in that role since. Houston oversees the day-to-day operations for the club, making personnel decisions and communicating with the Knicks to ensure organizational alignment. Leveraging his experience as a former player and his more recent knowledge of transactions and roster administration, Houston serves as a link between players and upper-management, and is a key voice in the Knicks basketball operations department.



TIM DUNCAN

SAN ANTONIO SPURS ASSISTANT COACH

After an illustrious 19-year NBA career that involved five NBA Championships, three NBA Finals MVPs and 15 NBA All-Star appearances, among many other accolades, Tim Duncan is now an assistant coach on Gregg Popovich's staff. Duncan played his entire career in San Antonio under Popovich, who brought Duncan on as an assistant during the 2019 offseason. Duncan always had tremendous floor vision and awareness as a facilitating big man who also anchored the Spurs defense on the inside. Now he'll have an opportunity to take that basketball knowledge and use it to teach and develop current players.

TAYSHAUN PRINCE

VICE PRESIDENT OF BASKETBALL AFFAIRS,
MEMPHIS GRIZZLES

Tayshaun Prince joined the Memphis Grizzles front office in 2017 as special adviser to the general manager after a 14-year NBA career with Detroit, Memphis, Boston and Minnesota. He retired from the NBA in 2016 and it wasn't long before he was back in the league in a front office capacity. Prince was promoted to vice president of basketball affairs for the Memphis Grizzles in April 2019. Prince is responsible for facilitating alignment between the front office, coaching staff and locker room, while also evaluating talent at all levels.



HEAD COACH OF TRIPLETS (BIG3)

One of the most decorated WNBA players in history, Lisa Leslie has added several other accomplishments to her resume following her playing career. Leslie has authored her own book and has worked as a sports commentator and analyst for ABC, NBC, and Fox Sports Net. In 2019, she became a head coach in the BIG3, leading the Triplets to the best record in the league (7-1). The role has further engraved her legacy as she is just one of two female head coaches of a professional men's team. In her breakout season, she led the Triplets to their first BIG3 Championship, and was named BIG3 Coach of the Year.

MALIK ROSE DETROIT PISTONS ASSISTANT GM

After an illustrious career in the NBA that garnered two NBA Championships, Malik Rose has risen through the ranks off-the-court and now serves as the Detroit Pistons assistant general manager. The Pistons organization leans on Rose to serve as a reliable outlet for players to voice their concerns. Prior to joining the Pistons in 2018, Rose was the manager of basketball operations for the Atlanta Hawks, and also the general manager for the club's G League affiliate, the Erie BayHawks.

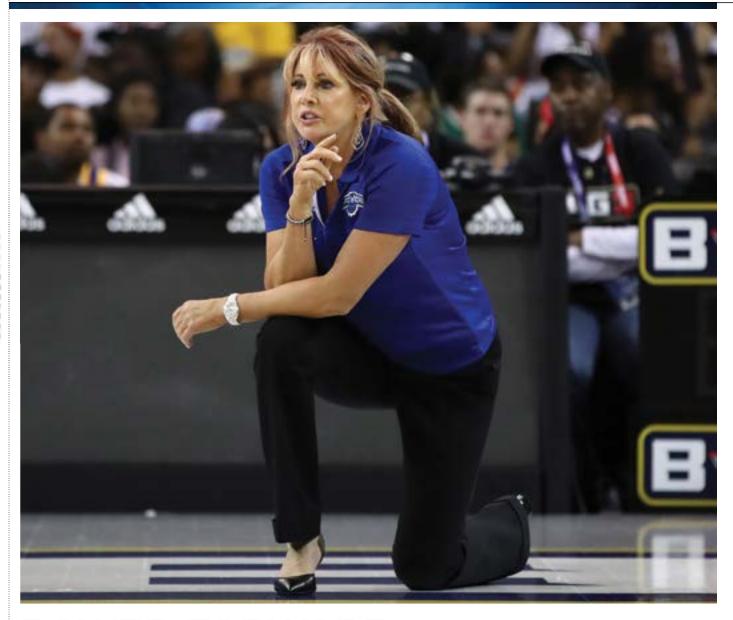












POWER FORWARD

NANCY LIEBERMAN

t's a great time to be a female in the game of basketball. Opportunities are all around us, and the WNBA is on the verge of major growth. The creation of the WNBA inspired hope – a hope that women can not only play basketball at the highest level, but can earn a good living doing so.

I have experienced this dynamic first-hand. I have witnessed how the game of basketball has become bigger, better and stronger for women. More importantly, I acknowledge the great opportunities still ahead of us. In order to take steps toward that brighter future, it's time to take a step back and really understand the facts and expectations for the future.

First, we can't continue to believe the myth that men are holding women back—it's just not true. I was hired by men for every major job I've had. I was hired by men from the USBL. I was hired by men to work at Fox and ESPN. I was hired by men to be the first female head coach in NBA G League history. I was hired by men to be the assistant coach of the Sacramento Kings. Ice Cube took my career to the next

level, making me the first female head coach in any men's professional league when I joined the BIG3. I can go down a long list of men who wanted to help me succeed.

Furthermore, there is a healthy respect from male players toward women who play the game. I have never had an issue with men in the league respecting me, especially the players. It's the outside world that says, "Wait, there's a girl on the court." They were the ones who didn't think it was normal because they hadn't built the camaraderie we had as players.

For these reasons, we cannot blame the men of the game, as they will only continue to push us toward a better future. I have so much respect for Adam Silver, who so badly wants the WNBA to succeed. It's men like him who will help put us in the best positions to prosper.

In addition, we must look at the WNBA as a business through an unemotional and unbiased lens. If you want an accurate perspective, go back to when the NBA first started in 1946. Players were making \$10,000 when the league began. When

I started in the WNBA in '97, I was making \$40,000, and the top salary was \$50,000. The NBA helped put us in the spotlight instantaneously, but the onus is still on us. It's not our birthright to have a WNBA. It's not Skittles. Everybody doesn't get one. It's business. We still have to sell tickets and fill the stands, and sometimes that takes sacrifice.

We women are getting the opportunities to coach, learn, network and share, but we have to grind. In the name of gender equity, it's nice to be thought of, but we still have to earn the right to be there and have to create the necessary relationships. The women currently in the league have busted their behinds to get there – nothing was handed to them. That's what it takes to be a pioneer.



Nancy Lieberman of the Sacramento Kings talks with Rajon Rondo prior to the game against the Cleveland Cavaliers on March 9, 2016 in Sacramento, California. (Photo by Rocky Widner/NBAE via Getty Images)





Nancy Lieberman of the Texas Legends speaks to her team during a timeout as they take on the Tulsa 66ers in an NBA G League game on December 14, 2010 in Dallas, Texas. (Photo by Layne Murdoch/NBAE via Getty Images)

I, along with many other women from my era, have made sacrifices for what we have today. I'm not mad or jealous that I didn't make the money that today's players are making. I understood what it took and what I had to sacrifice to create a better future for the game. For five years I went to the NBA summer league on my own nickel. I invested in myself because I knew I had to be around the people who would give me the opportunity one day. If I didn't believe in myself, why should anyone else?

Every player in the WNBA, past and present, is a role model, a barrier-breaker, a pioneer and a trailblazer. To hold that responsibility, I will ask this: are you willing to make sacrifices today so others can thrive in the future?

I feel a tremendous amount of humility and gratitude to have done something right for a game that changed my life on so many levels. What my greatest role model and friend Muhammad Ali taught me when I was younger was that there are two people in life: givers and takers. He inspired me to be a giver, and I encourage the rest of the young women currently playing basketball to be givers and make sacrifices to better the future of the game.



Nancy Lieberman of Power celebrates after defeating 3's Company during the BIG3 Championship on August 24, 2018 in Brooklyn, New York. (Photo by Al Bello/BIG3/Getty Images)

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3/9

HOMECOMING: JUWAN HOWARD IS BACK AT MICHIGAN

READY TO BRING NBA SWAGGER TO THE STORIED PROGRAM WHERE HE ONCE PLAYED

bv

CALEB FRIEDMAN

uwan Howard stands at the podium, taking a deep breath as those in the room applaud and cheer. About to speak, he stops. He bows his head and covers his eyes before they begin to swell with tears – tears that embody the emotion Howard feels in this punctuating moment for what has been a crazy few days.

He turns around with his back facing the wall, taking a few final deep breaths to compose himself.

"Tears of joy," he says.

You will understand the tears if you understand the place. Juwan Howard is back in Ann Arbor at the University of Michigan, where he once captivated the country as a player. This time around, Howard is donning a block "M" pin on

his lapel - he's just been introduced as the head men's basketball coach.

You can tell Howard is reflecting back to the journey that led him to this defining moment in his career. He mentions the last time he had a press conference at Michigan, where he was declaring for the 1994 NBA Draft. Howard touched on his late grandmother and best friend and what they meant to him, before speaking to the tradition and pride he has to coach his new players – his new family.

Howard calls this his "dream job," and tells the origin story of his path to Ann Arbor more than two decades ago. Howard is raw and genuine, his words impassioned. It's clear just how much this all means to him.

Juwan Howard is home.



Juwan Howard addresses the crowd during his introductory press conference on May 30, 2019 at the Crisler Center in Ann Arbor, Michigan. (Photo by University of Michigan Athletics)

Juwan Howard sits at a table during Big Ten Media Day in Chicago, and he sticks out like a sore thumb.

Howard is the only head coach without previous college coaching experience. The other 13 coaches in the Big Ten Conference average 24.5 years of college coaching experience, and 12 of them have 15 or more years of college coaching under their belts.

Then there is Howard who took the Michigan head coaching job after he spent his entire coaching career in the NBA from 2013-2019. After six seasons on the Miami Heat bench under head coach Erik Spoelstra, Howard jumped at the opportunity to return to his alma mater, despite frequently being a candidate for NBA head coaching vacancies.

"I've always been asked the question, 'Will I ever want to coach college basketball?" Howard tells Legends Magazine. "My answer was always 'One job, if it became available. The University of Michigan."

At its core, the main part of Howard's new job is comfortable to him. He has been around the sport professionally for the past 25 years and around youth basketball and AAU circuits through his sons. From a coaching and teaching standpoint, Howard is confident his NBA experience will translate to the college level.

It is all the other stuff that is new and will take some getting used to, chiefly recruiting. Howard is getting used to being on the phone a lot more to talk to recruits, and that relationship-building isn't something foreign to him. After all, he was once at the other end of those calls as the recruited player.

"The NCAA rules and regulations will take some time to learn and understand," Howard says. In the NBA, for example, there is no limit on how often a coach can work with players. At the college level, Howard can only work with players for a set number of hours per day and week.

In addition to his basketball duties of coaching and recruiting, Howard serves as a face and ambassador for the school, which means meetings with alumni and donors are also a major part of his job.

"Being a head coach in college, I'm not only coaching the players, but I'm helping run an institution," Howard says. "I have to choose my staff, hire those guys, make sure I balance a budget. I'm like an Erik Spoelstra, a Pat Riley and Andy Elisburg all in one."

Still, Howard makes the leap at a time when former NBA players are coming to college seemingly in droves, with names like Penny Hardaway and Patrick Ewing also returning to coach their alma maters. Success has been difficult to come by for many of the former NBA players coaching in college, but there has been a clear advantage in recruiting, particularly for Hardaway.

"There's been a changing of the guard with coaches that have been around a long time," former NBA player and current Vanderbilt head coach Jerry Stackhouse tells Legends Magazine. "There's a new wave of coaching. I think athletic directors are thinking outside the box, just trying to find guys that can relate to this generation of players...a lot of those guys are one-and-dones now coming into the NBA."

Speaking to that trend, Howard's college teammate and current ESPN personality Jalen Rose voiced his support on ESPN for Howard getting the Michigan job early in the process, in part because of his ability as a recruiter.

"He would be a terrific head coach," Rose said. "He would be terrific at developing young talent. He would own the Michigan market."



Juwan Howard gets emotional during his introductory press conference on May 30, 2019 at the Crisler Center in Ann Arbor, Michigan. (Photo by University of Michigan Athletics)





Juwan Howard takes a moment to reflect during his introductory press conference on May 30, 2019 at the Crisler Center in Ann Arbor, Michigan. (Photo by University of Michigan Athletics)

If Juwan Howard's opening press conference at Michigan signified a symbolic beginning, his first day of summer workouts was the real start.

It was then, when Howard walked into a gym with players to coach and a team to prepare, that Howard finally felt he arrived.

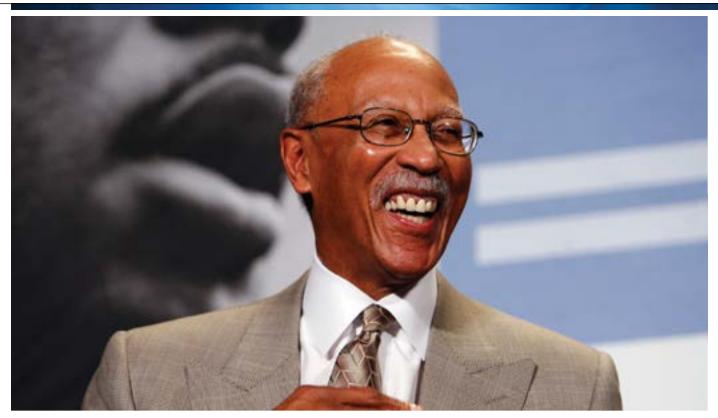
"It was that day, the first day of workouts, when it hit and sunk in. I'm the head coach at the University of Michigan," Howard says. "That was my epic moment, an epic time of sinking in that 'this is real now."

This upcoming season will bring a number of firsts and milestones for Howard,

who's ready to embark on his first season as a head coach. Now, as the season gets going, and the initial emotions fade, everything turns to actual basketball.

As Howard prepares to lead a team for the first time as head coach, he thinks back to the years he's spent in and around the game, giving him a lifetime of experience to fall back on. He knows he can do this.

"I played this game before for many years, I've had a lot of success doing it at all levels, high school, college and pro," Howard says. "I've learned a lot, and I know the game and I know I can coach the game."



DAVE BING

FROM THE NBA TO MAYOR OF DETROIT, DAVE BING HAS TAKEN ADVANTAGE OF EVERY OPPORTUNITY... AT EVERY TURN

BEN LADNER

efore the NBA's popularity exploded to a point of national interest, before player contracts exceeded those of corporate executives, before stars could devote offseasons exclusively to training and vacationing, Dave Bing spent his summers working at a bank.

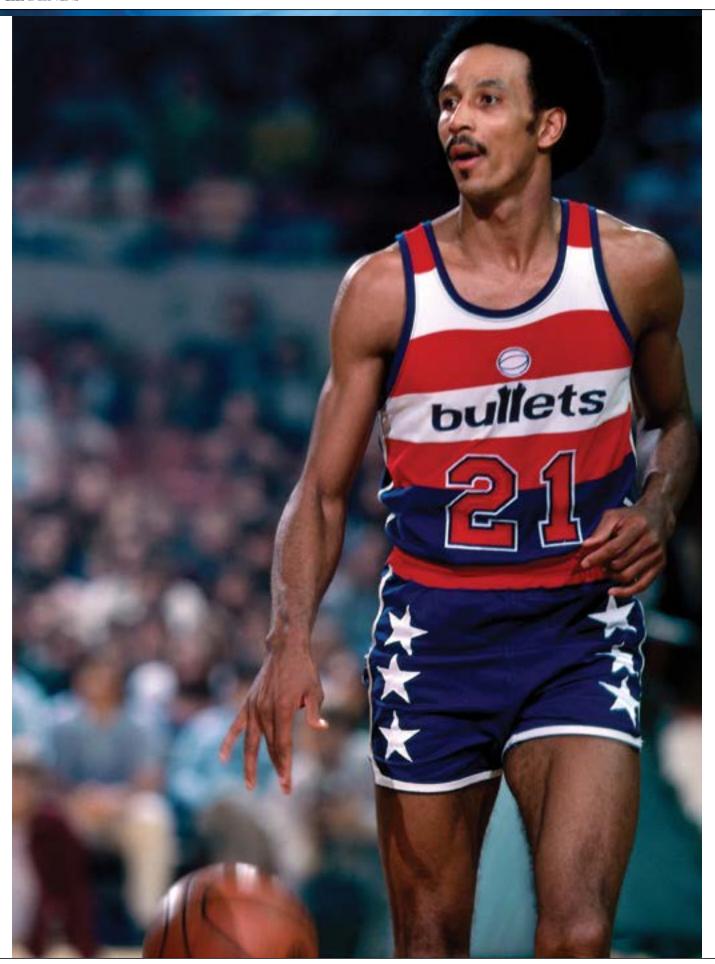
Coming out of college at age 22 and in search of a home, Bing had applied for a mortgage on a house, but was turned down after the National Bank of Detroit deemed his lack of credit history too risky for a mortgage. The following year, after Bing won Rookie of the Year and established himself as the best player on the Detroit Pistons, Bing had secured a mortgage from a different bank altogether. The first bank, however, didn't forget about Bing, and reached out to apologize - and offer him a job.

"The relationship wasn't sour," Bing said, "because I was big enough, strong enough to say, 'Look, they made a mistake. They now want to employ me.' And I needed a job, because back then, obviously, we weren't making a lot of money."

Bing worked at the National Bank of Detroit for seven offseasons, and while he went on to play 12 seasons in the NBA, those summer jobs helped prepare him for what was in store once his basketball career ended. While many retired athletes dabble in business ventures via investments or partnership, Bing had dreamt of starting and operating a business long before he entered the NBA. His father, Hasker, ran his own bricklaying company in Washington D.C., and while Bing vowed never to work in that industry after Hasker suffered a life-threatening injury, he long hoped to emulate his father as a businessman. "I always wanted to be an entrepreneur," Bing said. "I saw what [my father] did, what he accomplished. I saw the struggles that he had."

In spite of his own obstacles - namely his diminutive stature and impaired left eye - Bing excelled in both basketball and baseball at Spingarn High School in Washington, D.C., the same school that produced Elgin Baylor. After a growth spurt and an illustrious high school career, he earned a basketball scholarship at







Dave Bing and Isiah Thomas speak at the half time jersey retirement ceremony for Chauncey Billups during the game against the Denver Nuggets on February 10, 2016 in Auburn Hills, Michigan. (Photo by Allen Einstein/NBAE via Getty Images)

Syracuse, where he blossomed into one of the most dynamic guards in college basketball. He went on to lead the league in scoring and earn two First Team All-NBA nods in an era that featured Walt Frazier, Earl Monroe, Oscar Robertson, and Jerry West. Though his Pistons never ventured far into the postseason, the success they did have was driven mostly by Bing's scoring and playmaking.

In 1980, two years after he retired from the NBA, he started Bing Steel, which supplied steel to automotive companies out of Detroit. In the two years between retirement and founding the company, Bing devoted himself to learning the steel industry, taking classes and studying other companies to prepare himself for this new venture. Bing Steel struggled in its first year, and with just four people on staff, took time to find its footing in the industrial world. By the company's second year, however, it took on General Motors as its main client and turned a \$4.2 million profit. In 1984 Bing was named the National Minority Small Business Person of the Year by President Ronald Reagan, and by 2008 the company had sold \$300 million of materials, opened five different plants in Detroit, and employed over 1300 people — most of them African American. "I was an African-American entrepreneur," Bing said. "I felt it was important to make sure I hired as many African-Americans from the city of Detroit as I could."

Bing's devotion to the black community became the basis for much of what he did after his NBA career, both in business and in politics. In a city whose population is over 80 percent black, Bing felt an obligation as a successful and prominent member of the community to serve and represent its people. When the







Dave Bing helps announce a new partnership that will directly impact Detroit Public School students at Osborn High School on February 29, 2016 in Detroit, Michigan. (Photo by Allen Einstein/NBAE via Getty Images)

city's mayor, Kwame Kilpatrick, was removed from office in 2008 for committing perjury and obstruction of justice, several prominent members of Detroit's business community – including Roger Penske and Tony Earley – identified Bing as Kilpatrick's logical successor – at least for the remainder of the term. "They basically asked me to run for it," Bing said. "It's not something I [sought] out." He deliberated for a few months before deciding to run among a field of 15 candidates – and won.

After completing Kilpatrick's term, Bing was reelected in 2009. The latter portion of his tenure proved trying for Bing and his administration, and much of their work involved rectifying the mistakes of previous administrations. Still, in 2013, four years into Bing's second term, Detroit filed for bankruptcy – the largest

city in U.S. history to do so. Despite an unceremonious ending, Bing learned and grew from what he called "the toughest four years of [his] life," and maintains that he would do it all over again if given the choice. He also believes that his experience as an entrepreneur and NBA team captain gave him the necessary skills and background for a political career. As a player, Bing knew not only his own strengths and weaknesses, but those of his teammates, and sought to mesh complementary skills with one another. In both the business and political realms, he surrounded himself with people who possessed expertise in areas he didn't.

"Picking the right people to be part of my team was very, very important," Bing said. "It's a people business, and you've got to make sure you give people the respect and the dignity to let them do their job."



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