

THE OFFICIAL MAGAZINE of the NATIONAL BASKETBALL RETIRED PLAYERS ASSOCIATION

LEGENDS

MAGAZINE

2023 Summer

BASKETBALL AFRICA LEAGUE

*BOLSTERING THE NBA'S
GLOBAL PRESENCE*



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*PAVING THE WAY FOR
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*REDEFINING THE
IMPACT OF
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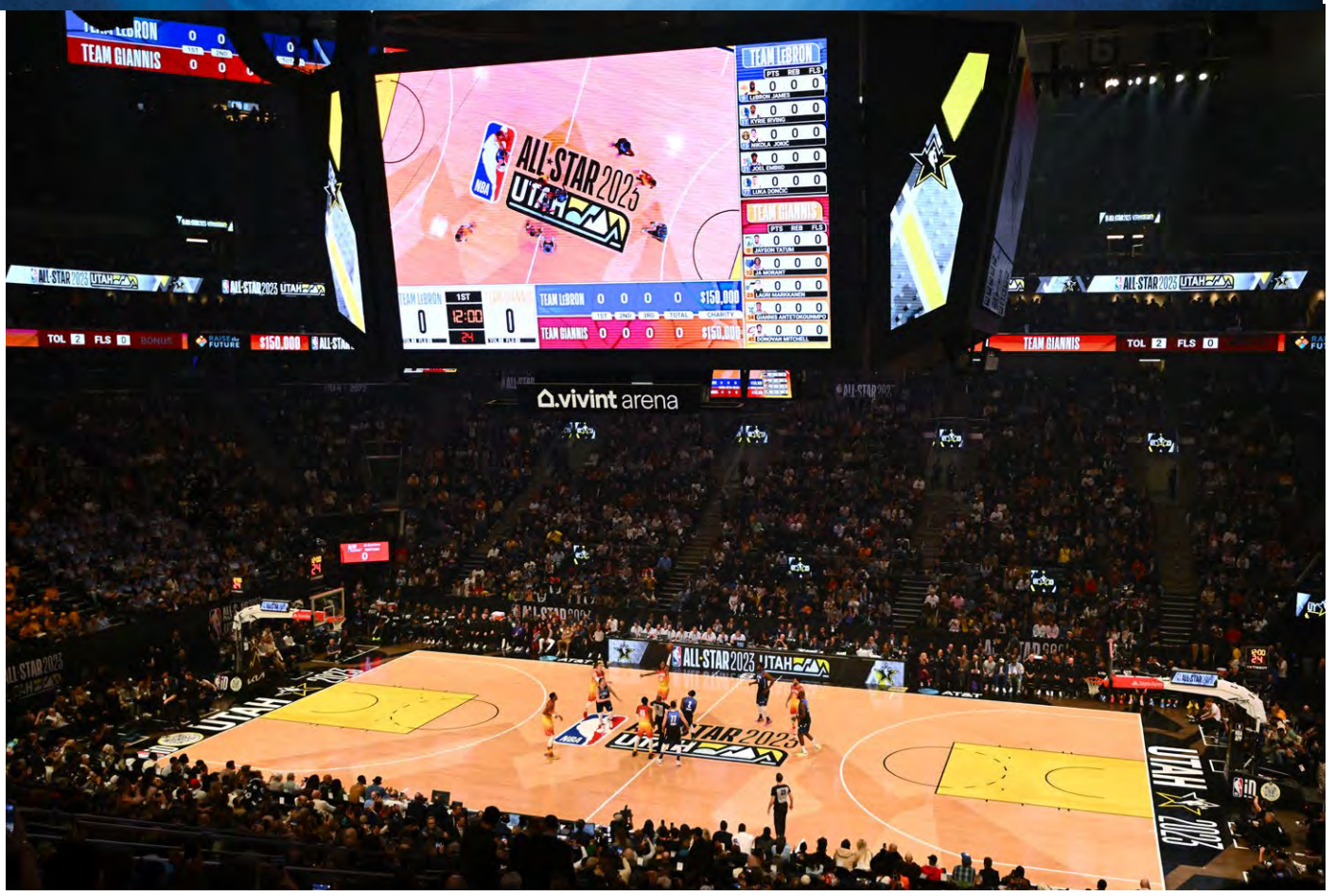


BASKETBALL AFRICA LEAGUE

WITH ASSIST FROM NBA LEGENDS, BAL BOLSTERS NBA'S PRESENCE AND CULTURAL FOOTPRINT IN AFRICA



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NBA ALL-STAR 2023 REACHES NEW HEIGHTS

A LEGENDARY WEEKEND IN SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH

by ERIN LAW



Lisa Leslie poses with the NBRPA's 2022-2023 Class of Legends HBCU Scholars.



The NBRPA Board of Directors meets with NBA Commissioner Adam Silver and NBA Deputy Commissioner Mark Tatum.



Willie Burton and Allen Iverson pose for a photo in the Legends Lounge.



Shawn Marion and Dwyane Wade talk courtside prior to the NBA HBCU Classic.

In a city that reaches 4,265 feet in elevation, the 2023 NBA All-Star Weekend reached new heights.

NBA All-Stars, fans, and Legends alike headed to the west to the mountains for a weekend full of star-studded reunions, parties, and displays of NBA excellence, culminating in the highly anticipated 72nd NBA All-Star Game at Vivint Arena.

In its 76th season, the brotherhood of the National Basketball Association steadily grows and strengthens with every passing year, as do the unbreakable familial ties of former players of the game. Like every NBA All-Star Weekend, the National Basketball Retired Players Association (NBRPA) creates an oasis for NBA Legends — as well as former players in the ABA, WNBA, and Harlem Globetrotters — to gather for what many would agree is the tallest annual family reunion in the US.

This year's NBA All-Star Weekend tipped off on Friday, February 17 at the beautiful Salt Lake City Marriott Downtown with the highly anticipated opening of the NBRPA's Legends Lounge adjacent to the hotel lobby. Basketball greats from around the world enjoyed the hospitality of the Legends Lounge in a space that was as private and intimate as the locker rooms and team flights during their playing days. Included in the Legends Lounge was, as always, a half court where Legends never miss the chance to talk some smack and re-live old rivalries and teammate connections alike both on and off the court.

Adjacent to the Legends Lounge was the Legends Media Day, the central hub for all US and international media to conduct interviews, record podcasts, and disseminate the timeless stories of NBA Legends. This year's Legends Media Day resulted in over 1,200 placements that reached an audience of over 850 million NBA fans around the world. Guillermo from Jimmy Kimmel Live, Brandon "Scoop B" Robinson of Bally Sports, and so many other recognizable media faces spent the afternoon curating countless legendary conversations.

Later in the day, the Legends Lounge closed to create a private media room for two of the greatest to ever play in the NBA — Allen Iverson and Kareem Abdul-Jabbar. In partnership with the NBRPA, these Legends dedicated their afternoons to speaking with select media outlets to share never-before-told stories and perspectives on their careers and today's game. Marc Spears and Howard Beck sat down for intimate interviews with "The Answer" while reporters from ClutchPoints, New York Times, and The Athletic transcribed insights from "The Captain," including his perspective on LeBron James passing his long-held all-time NBA points record.

On Friday night, as the Ruffles NBA All-Star Celebrity Game and Jordan Rising Stars Game were captivating NBA fans, NBRPA members, guests, and partners got the weekend's nighttime festivities started with the Tip-Off Party at Soundwell.

In the spirit of honoring Utah Jazz Legends, the NBRPA teamed up with Karl Malone and several of his brands — including his La Aurora cigars, E. León Jimenes rum, and Trinity vodka — to host the Tip-Off Party and celebrate Salt Lake City just a few blocks from his former home arena for the majority of his remarkable NBA career.



THE LEGENDS BRUNCH SHOWCASES LEGENDS WHOSE LEGACY AND COMMITMENT CONTINUE TO IMPACT THE GAME

THIS YEAR'S AWARD RECIPIENTS WERE:

BOB LANIER COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARD

PAU GASOL

HOMETOWN HERO AWARD

JOHN STOCKTON

LEGEND OF THE YEAR AWARD

KARL MALONE



Saturday morning began as always with the crucial Health Screenings program. Previously managed in partnership with the National Basketball Players Association (NBPA), the NBRPA now solely operates these Health Screenings in large part due to the expertise of the NBRPA's Chief Medical Officer, Dr. Joe Rogowski.

NBA Legend and Turner Sports analyst Steve Smith was the first to receive his Health Screening on Saturday morning. "I went through everything, and just want to encourage more retired players, and all of us, to take our health seriously. We need it, and I'm definitely going to take it a little more serious," said Smith on NBA TV later that day.

Saturday afternoon continued with more reunions and storytelling in the Legends Lounge, followed by the NBA HBCU Classic between Grambling State and Southern University, with Willis Reed and Bob Love serving as the honorary captains for each of their alma maters.

The 2022-2023 Class of Legends HBCU Scholars, who the NBRPA had the honor of hosting throughout the weekend, attended the game and had a blast cheering on the HBCUs participating.

As the sun set over the mountains in Salt Lake, the city continued its weekend of hoops action as Legends gathered for a Players Party at Flanker Kitchen + Sporting Club to watch the State Farm All-Star Saturday Night.

The Portland Trail Blazers' Damian Lillard bested the Indiana Pacers duo of Buddy Hield and Tyrese Haliburton in the final round to win the Starry 3-Point Content crown. The excitement continued with a dominating performance by Mac McClung,





Former Los Angeles Lakers teammates Spencer Haywood and Kareem Abdul-Jabbar pose for a photo in the Legends Lounge.

propelling him to a decisive win in the AT&T Slam Dunk contest. Renowned rapper G-Eazy, who spent the night mingling with some of his favorite former NBA players at the NBRPA Players Party, remarked that due to McClung's thrilling showmanship that night, "The Dunk Contest is back!"

Sunday morning brought, for many Legends and fans alike, the highlight of NBA All-Star Weekend — the 23rd Annual Legends Brunch. Like in years past, the most notable names of the NBA world gathered at the Salt Palace Convention Center for a morning dedicated to honoring impactful players and dignitaries of the game and paying tribute to the Legends who have passed over the last year, which was done beautifully with a slideshow and a moving musical performance by Utah Jazz Legend Thurl Bailey.

As part of the program — hosted once again by Ernie Johnson — Pau Gasol received the first Bob Lanier Community Service Award, John Stockton received the Hometown Hero Award, and Karl Malone received the Legend of the Year Award. NBA Commissioner Adam Silver, NBPA Executive Director Tamika Tremaglio, and NBRPA President & CEO Scott Rochelle shared remarks throughout the Legends Brunch highlighting the rich history and promising future of the league. Jaylen Brown, Grant Hill, and Kareem Abdul-Jabbar paid tribute to the late Bill Russell and his lasting impact on the game of basketball and the world.

Sunday evening led to the culmination of the weekend's events with the 72nd annual NBA All-Star Game at Vivint Arena. After a pre-game draft to Team Giannis or Team LeBron, the stars of the league put on a show

for the Legends seated courtside and throughout the sold-out arena. Jayson Tatum scored a record-breaking 55 points, earning the NBA All-Star Game Kobe Bryant MVP Award.

With each new city and roster of NBA All-Stars, one thing remains the same: the love for the game and the eternal bond that NBA players past and present will always share. At the end of the day, the spectacle of 3-pointers, dunks, and buzzer beaters will always add to the magic of NBA All-Star Weekend, but the relationships between teammates and the legacies they leave truly make this annual celebration unlike any other.

From the picturesque backdrop of the Utah mountains to all the beautiful new memories made, the NBA All-Star Weekend 2023 was truly one for the books. And now, on to the next: Indianapolis in 2024!



Allen Iverson and Marc Spears sit down for an in-depth interview in the Legends Lounge.

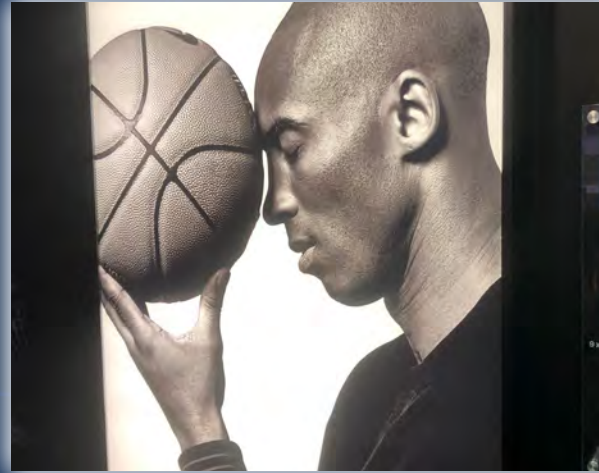


VIPs celebrate during the Legends All-Star Players Party presented by REVOLT, with cocktails by exclusive liquor partners Ciroc & DeLeón.



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2023 HALL OF FAME

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TONY PARKER



BECKY HAMMON



The NBRPA congratulates NBA Legends Dwyane Wade, Dirk Nowitzki, Pau Gasol and Tony Parker and WNBA Legend Becky Hammon on their selection to the Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame Class of 2023! These former players, along with other basketball greats including Coach Gregg Popovich, will join be formally inducted during Enshrinement Weekend, which will take place on August 11 in Uncasville, CT and August 12 in Springfield, MA.





LEGEND AMONG LEGENDS
SWIN CASH

*WNBA LEGEND AND HALL OF FAMER SWIN CASH IS REDEFINING
THE IMPACT THAT WOMEN HAVE IN SPORTS*

by **HOWARD MEGDAL**



For Swin Cash, simply inhabiting one world has never been the way she approaches her professional life.

As a player in the WNBA, she combined longevity with skill, exceptional personal performance with championships — from the NCAA titles at UConn in 2000 and 2002 to her three WNBA titles with Detroit and Seattle, and gold medals at both the 2004 and 2012 Olympics. It was Cash, not her teammates Sue Bird or Diana Taurasi, who won Most Outstanding Player at the 2002 Final Four. But most significantly, Swin Cash always shows up. Her 479 games rank eighth in WNBA history, and she led the league in games played five different seasons.

Even as Cash enjoyed this success on the court, she has always worked strategically, an analytical mind that's brought her to the elevated position with the New Orleans Pelicans of vice president of basketball operations. It is less a question of pursuing that particular position — Cash is always quick to credit those who opened the doors for her — and more about always being ready to not only excel in new challenges but hold open the door for those behind her.

That's why Swin Cash is running point on *She's Got Time*, an annual summit to be held in New Orleans from June 28-30, with a focus on eliminating gaps in opportunities for women between sports and media, instead looking for commonalities between groups.

"A lot of times I felt like we work in silos," Cash said in a phone interview in June. "And so it's like, oh, someone in basketball operations, so she talks to everybody who works in operations, and then there's someone in business ops who only talk to corporate partnerships or sales. And sometimes, women don't understand the power of not only access to connecting with other women but having that tribe, that sisterhood, of, let's communicate."

Don't get it twisted: Cash dislikes networking events. That's not the way she has designed *She's Got Time*. It's about "elevating our full self," whether it's balancing work and family, as Cash does with her two sons, or finding equality within a marriage as well as in the workplace.

"One of my friends said it best," Cash explained. "She said, if there's a space that can be created for diversity like Swin as a Black woman, you have power in that whether you realize it or not. Other women see that it's not about seeing you and being you, it's about how do I achieve my goals to get there?"

For Cash, the stated goal is one that has come to be seen as a matter of when, not if, around the league: she'd like to run team operations for an NBA team someday. The progress is undeniable for women in both NBA front offices and coaching. Yet I couldn't help but note that we have seen a woman get the nod as a general manager in Major League Baseball — Kim Ng, Miami Marlins — but not yet in basketball, either at the GM or even head coaching level.

Cash sees the way Dawn Staley talks about these goals — with intention, naming them and unapologetically chasing them — as the way to eliminate these last barriers in the NBA.

"Dawn has been consistent," Cash stated.

"She has been unapologetic in her pursuit to amplify not only the voices of women but also Black women in that conversation ... NBA, WNBA, but you cannot deny the limitations that have been there for Black women. And so, as a Black woman, of course, I want to speak to that through my advocacy because I know the direct effects that it could have not only on me but other young Black girls that look Black and brown girls that look like me."

These women saw Cash get inducted into the Naismith Hall of Fame last September. And just as she took a path directly from playing into the front office of the New York Liberty — an unexpected detour, she

"THE BIGGEST THING THAT I CAN DO IS FOR US, ESPECIALLY WOMEN WHO HAVE KIDS OR HAVE THESE CAREERS, IS TO HELP SUPPORT EACH OTHER."

SWIN CASH



Adam Silver, Hannah Storm, John Skipper, Laurel Richie, Swin Cash and Bill Laimbeer pose for a photo as they announce their partnership extension at the ABC Studios on March 28, 2013 in New York City.

says, having planned to expand her media career before Isiah Thomas and the Liberty came calling — it is no coincidence that Tanisha Wright, a teammate of hers on the Liberty, is now coaching the Atlanta Dream, and Kia Vaughn, one of the first players she signed after joining New York's front office, is in an executive role with Atlanta now as well.

"I talked to Tanisha when they were going through the process," Cash recalled. "And [former Liberty executive, now Dream general manager Dan [Padover]'s down there as well. So we all get it. And when they were talking about what that transition will look like in hiring Kia, like you know, I was jumping to the moon about it.

"I have had an opportunity on a few occasions to talk with [former WNBA player,

current Connecticut Sun executive] Morgan [Tuck], and she's doing phenomenal stuff, too. So we try to tap in with them all when we can."

It all comes back to being in the room, Cash says. She still remembers back when the NBA All-Star Game used to feature NBA players right up front, in the first row. And WNBA players? No VIP seating.

Cash never worried about being called a diva, she says. And she even got warned not to do it — but she calmly, consistently explained the problem to anyone who would listen.

"It was this taboo thing of, like, how could you even ask to sit there, right? And so for me, you know me, Howard, I'm like, I popped up here. I'm gonna have a seat here. And I'll never forget getting calls like, 'Hey, what are you doing? We shouldn't be doing that.' And

in my mind, I was like, Yes, we should be doing that. There should be at least a few seats here for WNBA legends."

You'll see Cash in plenty of seats this summer — she's as locked in on the WNBA as ever and recently took in a Dream game down in Atlanta with her two sons. But *She's Got Time* is also planning events at NBA Summer League and WNBA All-Star Game.

Swin Cash is enjoying the ride. But she never loses sight of the destination. And there's always more room in the car.

"The biggest thing that I can do is for us, especially women who have kids or have these careers, is to help support each other," Cash said. "And if we build that, then it's just easier for all of us. So I'm looking forward to it."



BASKETBALL AFRICA LEAGUE

WITH ASSIST FROM NBA LEGENDS, BAL BOLSTERS NBA'S PRESENCE AND CULTURAL FOOTPRINT IN AFRICA

by ED ODEVEN

For the second straight May, the Basketball Africa League (BAL) crowned a continental champion in Kigali, Rwanda. This time, Egypt's Al Ahly defeated AS Douanes 80-65 to win the 2023 BAL on May 27.

The 12-team 2023 BAL season featured six nations' domestic league titlists (Angola, Egypt, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal and Tunisia) and automatic berths for another half dozen (a team apiece from Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, Mali, Mozambique, South Africa and Uganda) that earned spots via the BAL Qualifying Tournaments throughout the continent.

A year ago, Tunisia's US Monastir beat Angola's Petro de Luanda 83-72 at BK Arena before a full-capacity crowd of 10,000 in the Rwandan capital. That title game put the finishing touches on a successful second season that showcased the league's enormous global reach — broadcast coverage of games aired in 214 countries and territories in 14 languages.

Two six-team conferences competed in the

2023 campaign before the playoff extravaganza in Rwanda. Staging games in Dakar, Senegal (Sahara Conference, March 11-21), and Cairo, Egypt (Nile Conference, April 26-May 6), before eight teams advanced to Kigali, underscored two ever-present aspects of the fledgling league's long-term strategy: planting the seeds for growth and bolstering its popularity.

"We want the BAL to be a Pan-Africa product, and so as we go forward, we're also going to be looking at other potential markets," NBA Africa CEO Victor Williams said in a May interview with Legends Magazine.

The objective, he said, "is to spread it around the continent and make something that all Africans can identify with."

Indeed, the BAL's talent pool encompasses not just Africa but the world. The 156 players on the 12 teams represented 22 countries in Africa, Europe, Oceania and North America, according to a BAL news release published on May 18.

Recent conversations with Williams and BAL President Amadou Gallo Fall shed light on the novel league's ambitious goals and dedication to promoting the sport and developing basketball talent in Africa.

Williams and Fall exude enthusiasm for the BAL's mission to be recognized as a world-class league with a thriving fan base and a flourishing economy.

And enthusiasm for the BAL shared by some of the sport's biggest influencers adds credibility and a promotional boon throughout Africa and elsewhere. For example, three-time NBA champion Dwyane Wade's picture accompanied numerous articles in May, showing him rooting for his son Zaire's BAL team, the Cape Town Tigers. Wade, who has 9.5 million Twitter followers, also retweeted a video of him hugging his son in Cairo during the Nile Conference.

Adding some electric buzz in the run-up to the BAL championship game, the league's official Twitter account shared a short video



of ex-NBA standouts Luol Deng and Joakim Noah playing one-on-one in Kigali. Call it a conversation starter and plenty of free publicity.

PLAYER DEVELOPMENT

There's a vital emphasis on player development in building the league. For instance, each team is required to have two under-22 players on its roster, including one spot filled by a player from the NBA Africa Academy, which opened in 2017 in Saly, Senegal.

Opportunities in the BAL provide valuable pro experience for U-22 players. And at the same time, it's about "identifying promising prospects we think can play at the NBA level and grooming them with that in mind," said Williams, a corporate and investment banking executive for five years for Standard Bank Group's Africa Regions before joining the NBA in 2020.

Connected to this objective is the BAL Elevate program, which started in 2022. How does it work? Each of the 12 teams selects one player in the BAL Elevate Draft from the aforementioned academy. The second annual draft took place on Feb. 24, several weeks before the 2023 season.

A few days after the draft, Fall commented on the positive impact of the BAL Elevate players in 2022.

"The inaugural group of BAL Elevate players who joined our league from NBA Academy Africa last season not only showcased their talent and potential but also contributed greatly to the improved play in season two," Fall said, according to a BAL news release. "We have received terrific feedback from the teams and coaches who worked with the players, some of whom went on to sign with NBA G League Ignite or commit to NCAA Division I schools in the U.S."



OVERALL ASSESSMENT OF THE BAL'S GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

Asked to assess the BAL's growth from its inception to May 2023, its overall development in all facets of operations and the quality of play, Williams and Fall shared detailed viewpoints and concrete examples.

Although the inaugural season was postponed from 2020 to '21 due to the pandemic, BAL leaders were able to glean helpful information from the NBA, WNBA and NBA G League about setting up and operating a tournament in a bubble.

Indeed, the health of all players and everyone else in the bubble was the top priority for the 2021 campaign. No players tested positive for COVID-19 inside the bubble.

"We wanted to create a spectacle that moved the broadcast experience to a new level, where people would look at that and say, 'Wow, that's an amazing tournament that's being put on in Africa,'" Williams stated.

"We also wanted to begin to build the competitive dynamic of getting the teams playing against each other and getting all of them into that environment and helping them to understand what the BAL was and how it worked," he continued. "And I think we succeeded really well on all those counts."

Williams explained that the league took a huge step in season two by shifting from the bubble to a "longer-term direction that we always envisioned."

This meant staging games in two conferences (Sahara and Nile) before holding the playoffs in Kigali.

By all accounts, having fans in the stands for

the first time marked another important step for the league.

Fall, who worked as the Dallas Mavericks' director of scouting (2001-05) before becoming director of player personnel and vice president of international affairs (2005-09), shed light on the overall growth of the league, starting at what he called "ground zero," in the pandemic.

"It's a huge undertaking," Fall told Legends Magazine. "The good news is we are building on the foundation of many decades of work that the NBA has engaged on the continent. It's focusing on the grassroots; all the work has been done before. The league is really the culmination of all the effort."

Recognizing how important this commitment was and continues to be for the NBA (it established its first NBA Africa office in Johannesburg in 2010) and its partners in Africa, Fall continued by saying, "Many decades of focusing on grassroots engagement on the continent, building relationships, working with FIBA and the federations to set up a grassroots infrastructure first, and now the league came about."

In summing up the state of the BAL, Fall pointed to two key factors to highlight his analysis, saying the on-court product and the culture of basketball have both improved.

"As a result," he commented, "we are finding that there is interest not only in Africa but around the world because we are fortunate to have a very strong broadcast footprint in over 200 countries ... and we are working very hard to attract world-class partners."

THE BUSINESS OF THE BAL

In July 2021, former U.S. President Barack Obama became a strategic partner with a minority equity stake in the league.

"The NBA has always been a great ambassador for the United States — using the game to create deeper connections around the world, and in Africa, basketball has the power to promote opportunity, wellness, equality and empowerment across the continent," Obama said in a statement. "By investing in communities, promoting gender equality and cultivating the love of the game of basketball, I believe that NBA Africa can make a difference for so many of Africa's young people."

Like Obama, several former NBA players have also invested in the league, including Dikembe Mutombo, NBRPA Board Secretary Grant Hill, Joakim Noah, Luol Deng, Ian Mahinmi and Junior Bridgeman. (Hill is a co-owner of the Atlanta Hawks.)

"This investment opportunity allows them to build even stronger ties with NBA Africa and our activities on the ground," Williams said.



Wassef Methmani of the Union Sportive Monastirienne poses for a photo with Dikembe Mutombo after winning the 2022 Dikembe Mutombo BAL Defensive Player of the Year at the Kigali Arena on May 28, 2022.



Ian Mahinmi and Dwayne Wade talk before the game between the CFV - Beira and the Cape Town Tigers at the Dr. Hassan Moustafa Sports Hall in Cairo, Egypt on May 3, 2023.



On a related point, Williams mentioned that the BAL has held talks with Bridgeman's business associates, who offered helpful guidance. The former NBA guard (1975-87) became an ultra-successful entrepreneur after his playing days, becoming the owner of a business empire that included more than 250 Wendy's and 120 Chili's restaurants.

Investors with global recognition, like Mutombo and Hill, who received a combined 15 NBA All-Star selections, add credibility and gravitas to the BAL as a brand. As a result, Nike, Jordan Brand, Wilson, Visit Rwanda and Hennessy are among the league's world-class partners.

Legends Magazine explored Deng's commitment to making a positive societal impact throughout basketball in a previous edition ("A Lifetime of Philanthropy and Efforts to Help His Native South Sudan"). The BAL ambassador's love for the game and for helping people connect throughout Africa, especially in South Sudan, is genuine. Working as the president of the South Sudan Basketball Federation puts him in the spotlight, but also in a position to be a force for change, spearheading efforts to refurbish gyms and develop and grow the game in Africa.

"I really had a passion and a vision that I can change what people think about South Sudan through sports," Deng said in the Legends profile.

FUTURE ASPIRATIONS

Williams and Fall both spelled it out quite clearly that NBA Africa and BAL leaders support expansion for the new league in the future.

The question isn't if but when and where expansion will take place and how it will alter the competition.

Looking back on the BAL's establishment, Fall noted that starting with 12 teams seemed about right with the goal to "build a model, perfect it and then in due course expand."

Would that mean two more teams? Four more? Six?

"We are looking at all possibilities. Obviously, we'll get there gradually," said Fall, who previously served as NBA Africa's vice president and managing director. "As I say, we don't want to skip steps. We are very deliberate in terms of how we want to expand. Obviously, we have to stabilize and show long-term sustainability, but it's no question that the number of teams will increase.

"There is tremendous demand and pressure to expand, but we have to be disciplined and



really stay the course and focus on perfecting this model."

One of the focal points of this quest to strive for perfection is waiting for the number of world-class basketball facilities to increase in Africa. The BAL is committed to playing in top venues, Fall added.

SETTING STANDARDS AND CREATING BENCHMARKS

Sparking growing interest among fans, new rivalries have been established in the BAL, and all of the games in the first three seasons share a common theme: Getting better is a constant focus.

Or as Fall put it: "It's really about focusing on ways to always improve the quality of basketball on the court."

This target isn't just for the players. The BAL employs one NBA G League referee in each three-person crew, along with two refs from Africa. Referees with experience in AfroBasket and FIBA international basketball competitions are among those who've officiated BAL games.

All of the refs receive feedback and training from the NBA. Monty McCutchen, the NBA's head of referee development and training, was instrumental in working with the BAL to establish officiating standards. In addition, former NBA ref Greg Dandridge led BAL referee operations in 2023.

"They are spending a lot of time on talent development," Fall noted, praising the efforts of McCutchen and Dandridge.

In sizing up the various levels of management overseeing pro teams throughout Africa,

Fall referred to "different degrees of organizational capacity." This is why a BAL online leadership series started in 2020, when the inaugural season was postponed, proved to be helpful for virtual attendees.

Teams that played in BAL qualifiers were invited to participate via Zoom in this biweekly program with "some of the best minds in basketball," Fall recalled before rattling off a slew of names, including NBA coaches (Gregg Popovich, Steve Kerr, Mike Brown, Dwane Casey) and basketball operations executives (R.C. Buford and Masai Ujiri) and PR and marketing executives to discuss their specialized areas of work. Moreover, the late Houston Rockets scout Brent "B.J." Johnson and a pair of current global scouting execs, Luca Desta (now with the Utah Jazz) and Patrick Engelbrecht (Toronto Raptors), took part in past Zoom seminars.

In 2022, in-person events also became a part of the leadership series, with former Atlanta Hawks bench boss Lloyd Pierce conducting a coaching clinic in Kigali. Clinics also took place in Cairo this May.

"Ultimately, that capacity-building exercise we feel is going to add value to all the teams," Fall declared, underscoring the NBA's involvement with the BAL is a total commitment.

So what's the ultimate ambition of the BAL?

"Our ambition is to be the best professional basketball league outside of the U.S.," Fall concluded without hesitation.

WNBA LEGEND KIA VAUGHN IS LEAVING HER MARK

*HELPING PAVE THE WAY FOR
NEXT GENERATION OF PLAYERS*

by HOWARD MEGDAL



It is almost unfathomable to think of the WNBA without Kia Vaughn playing in it. The league finished its 26th season in 2022, and Vaughn played in 13 of those campaigns, a 6-4, high-IQ center with the ability to bring locker rooms together. Long after the league moved away from the classic five, it still had room for Vaughn's old-school game, not just on rosters, but in rotations, with a career that eventually spanned 386 games.

As someone who has covered Vaughn for a long time, I told her the thought of not seeing her postgame to get her insight into whichever team she was playing for — New York, Washington, Phoenix, Atlanta — had me feeling melancholy. As usual, Vaughn's ability to find the bright spot won the day.

"Thank you, Howard. Don't be sad," Vaughn chuckled "As long as I'm still a part of the basketball community, I think it's going to be perfect. I'm always around."

She will, indeed, be around, with the Atlanta Dream hiring Vaughn as their first hire in a newly-created Retired Player Transition Program. Her first role with the organization is as a basketball operations associate.

"Larry Gottesdiener, Suzanne Abair and Renee Montgomery made it clear to me and Tanisha from the beginning that they wanted to help players prepare for life after basketball," Atlanta Dream General Manager Dan Padover said. "This gives former players a chance to spend a year developing skills that will help them transition into the next phases of their career in an effort to create the new wave of leaders in the WNBA."

But that doesn't fully capture the ways she can impact the Dream's day-to-day life. Her former teammate with the Liberty, now-Dream coach Tanisha Wright, absolutely gushed when asked about what it means to have Vaughn contributing.

"I mean, we say it all the time in our organization, we want the right people around," Wright beamed. "And Kia epitomizes that... She talks to [the players] a lot about communication and about positioning."

"So she just is somebody who is the right person to have in an organization. And when you have good people, and you have the right people around, it's contagious, it's infectious. And it really helps elevate your organization. Kia has definitely been that for us. And it's why we like to have her around."

The way Vaughn sees it, she never received the opportunity to show she could be a primary scorer in the WNBA. She wasn't a star. But the way in which she impacted her teammates is how she left her mark on the game.



Kia Vaughn #7 of the New York Liberty helps host a WNBA FIT Clinic on August 15, 2017 at the Madison Square Garden Training Facility in Tarrytown, NY.



Kia celebrates with teammates against the LSU Lady Tigers during the National Semifinal game of the 2007 NCAA Women's Final Four.



Kia Vaughn #7 of the Atlanta Dream prepares to shoot a free throw during the game against the New York Liberty on August 14, 2022 at the Barclays Center in Brooklyn, NY.



Kia Vaughn #1 of the Phoenix Mercury talks to the media at practice and media availability during the 2021 WNBA Finals on October 16, 2021, at Wintrust Arena in Chicago.

"I wasn't one of those players who got the accolades night in and night out," Vaughn said. "The consistent number that I would have loved and show up every day. But the impact that I had on the players around me and the staff around me and you know, being a part of some of the great teams that I was on. Liberty, Mystics, Phoenix, Atlanta and they all feel the same way about me. It really makes me proud."

Vaughn credits her mentor and college coach at Rutgers, C. Vivian Stringer, with showing her the way to both lead and live in the world. Not that playing for the demanding Stringer was easy, of course.

"But at this age, I look back and actually appreciate it," Vaughn said. "Because she taught me how to be a woman. I can see where her thought process was, and what she was expecting to get out of us."

"And it was just the simple things, how you eat, how you carry yourself, how you walk, when you enter a room, just taking up space, allowing people to see you for who you are. Always demanding what you deserve, and wanting more and never taking less than you deserve. And just moving gracefully. That's just how she moves, she moves real gracefully. And I think that that part of her is what I possess."

The decision to retire, ultimately, came despite continued interest in Vaughn around the league. But in her mind, it was many years in the making.

"Honestly, I thought I was going to retire five years sooner," Vaughn said. "I thought, I think I've had enough like, what more do I get from this besides the WNBA championship, right? Do I want to chase this? Like what do I need to feel to be fulfilled?"

For Vaughn, it was being around the game, around the people she played with that gave her that fulfillment. But the body does not always cooperate. Vaughn had to undergo a difficult surgery during her time in Phoenix — it is still hard for her to talk about the details of it publicly — and noticed, during her final season in Atlanta, how much more easily the young players could recover.

Even more: she wanted "these younger girls to come take what's theirs", to allow the next generation to experience what she had for over a decade.

There are some ancillary benefits to retirement, of course.

"If I'm there for them vocally, emotionally and supportively, why do I have to run these drills and get up and down with Tanisha's program of sprints and stuff," Vaughn said, laughing. "I don't have young legs anymore!"

One of those young players, Naz Hillmon, said she's been a sponge for every bit of wisdom Vaughn can provide.

"Kia is awesome," Hillmon exclaimed. "She does a little bit of everything for us. On the court,



Kia Vaughn #7 handles the ball during the game against the New York Liberty on June 30, 2022 at the Barclays Center in Brooklyn, NY.

Kia Vaughn of the Atlanta Dream is honored during halftime of the game between the Indiana Fever and the Atlanta Dream on May 28, 2023 at Gateway Center Arena at College Park in Atlanta, GA.

definitely that communication piece. I mean, even if you're not in the action, and being able to talk, especially as a player, being in that backline, and being able to direct your teammates. I remember when she was on the court with me, I always knew what was going on. And I really want to be that person for my team."

But just as Stringer did for Vaughn, the same lessons have been imparted from Vaughn to Hillmon.

"And then off the court, Kia helped me learn how to be a pro. Each and every day last year, me and [fellow 2022 Atlanta Dream rookie] Rhyne [Howard] got to where we needed to be, got ourselves into a routine, got ourselves into a schedule. And that was really important. Sometimes we're just going into a new environment, and it's hard to kind of figure it out, but

she definitely guided us in the right direction."

It's fulfilling her in a different way — one that allows her to give her body a break, she says, for the first time since she was 13. An opportunity to "end it around some great people", and she said, after talking it through with her husband.

Does she have things she wishes she'd done differently? She says yes, that she does wish she'd been less deferential at times and looked for her own shot more. Ultimately, though? That wouldn't have been Kia Vaughn.

"I just felt, I found it easier to always want my team to do it and be victorious," Vaughn said.

"And I always found it easier to want to naturally pass the ball so my team can do it together."

Sounds like the kind of person you want around your team, doesn't it? Don't worry, you're not the only one who thinks so.



LEGENDS CARE

Legends Care is the initiative of the NBRPA that positively impacts communities and youth through basketball. NBRPA Legends give back through clinics, mentoring, charitable outreach and other grassroots initiatives in the United States and abroad with the goal of educating, inspiring and keeping youth active, healthy, and safe.

Ongoing Legends Care initiatives include the Legends HBCU Scholarship, Full Court Press, and Legends Home Courts. Past initiatives have included international goodwill missions, Thanksgiving Community Assist turkey donation drives, BACK2BACK school backpack drives, and Legends Girl Chats between WNBA Legends and middle school & high school girls.

To learn more about Legends Care or donate to support these initiatives, visit legendsofbasketball.com/LegendsCare



MIAMI HEAT



LEGENDS CARE:

NBA FINALS



During the 2023 NBA Finals players and front office personnel from both teams — including Calvin Booth of the Denver Nuggets and Alonzo Mourning & Ruth Riley of the Miami Heat — took part in the NBA Cares NBA Finals Legacy Event in their respective cities.

The Miami Heat partnered with the Miami Rescue Mission and CARE Elementary for a program that builds on Miami's Re-Heat program and provides unserved food from all the HEAT home games and arena events to local homeless shelters.

The Denver Nuggets collaborated with the Arthur E. Johnson Boys and Girls Club, unveiling a revamped STEM Lab in which the Nuggets provided brand new computers and a more modernized room for students.



DENVER NUGGETS



LEGENDS CARE

FULL COURT PRESS: PREP FOR SUCCESS

CHICAGO

On Saturday, May 20, the NBRPA National Office and the Chicago Chapter of the NBRPA hosted a Full Court Press clinic at the CSO Multiplex in Hyde Park, Chicago. NBA Legends Kenny Battle, Bobby Simmons, and NBRPA Board Member Shawn Marion led an afternoon of basketball skills challenges and inspirational life conversations with local youth from Chicago-based nonprofits ABC Pilsen and Rainbow PUSH Coalition. The latter organization was founded by Rev. Jesse L. Jackson, Sr., who stopped by during the clinic to cheer on the coaches and young players connecting over their love of community ties and competitive hoops.





LEGENDS CARE
**FULL COURT PRESS:
 PREP FOR SUCCESS**

DALLAS

On Saturday, June 10, the Dallas Chapter of the NBRPA hosted a Full Court Press clinic at LG Pinkston High School. With the assistance of outreach from the Dallas Police Department, local youth were invited to participate in an afternoon of basketball drills and community engagement led by Jimmy King, Morlon Willie, and Dallas Chapter President Willie Davis. LG Pinkston High School served as an inspirational venue for this clinic as one of its graduates, Dink Pate, recently became the youngest player to play in the NBA G League, signing with the G League Ignite at 17 years old.





LegendsTM STUDIOS

Legends Studios, presented by the NBRPA, is the #1 podcast destination for basketball fans who want to hear from NBA and WNBA Legends.

Episodes of the All-Access Legends Podcast, On Deck with Scott Rochelle, Legends Live, Hoop du Jour with Peter Vecsey, and Legends Lounge with Trill Withers can all be found in one place at Legends Studios.



Subscribe to Legends Studios on Apple Podcasts, Spotify, or wherever you listen to podcasts to stay up-to-date with all exclusive Legends content.





LEGENDS MEDIA & ENTERTAINMENT

During NBA All-Star Weekend 2023 in Salt Lake City, Utah, Hall of Fame sports writer and the NBRPA's own Peter Vecsey sat down with three notorious basketball Legends to record new episodes of the Hoop du Jour podcast. His guests included Hall of Famers Nancy Lieberman, Spencer Haywood, and Charlie Scott, each of whom took a lengthy

trip down memory lane with Peter Vecsey and provided educational and entertaining insights into their lives and basketball careers. Search "Legends Studios" wherever you get your podcasts, or search "NBA Alumni" on YouTube, to listen to these exclusive and intimate interviews on "Hoop du Jour with Peter Vecsey".





X

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TRILL'S TAKE:

TOP 10 WNBA ALL-STAR MOMENTS

by TRILL WITHERS

It's summertime and though the NBA Finals have just wrapped, there is still plenty going on for hoopheads with the Draft, Summer League and the WNBA All-Star game on the horizon.

Though the WNBA's first season was in 1997, the first W All-Star game wasn't held until 1999. The festivities make their way out to Las Vegas for the third time in the last four contests. With that, let's take a look back at some of the best moments in WNBA All-Star Game history:

TOP 10

TOP 10 WNBA ALL-STAR MOMENTS

10. WHITNEY HOUSTON SINGS THE NATIONAL ANTHEM AT THE INAUGURAL WNBA ASG (1999)
9. FIVE CONNECTICUT SUN MAKE THE ASG AND HELP LEAD THE EAST TO A WIN AT MADISON SQUARE GARDEN (2006)
8. NIKKI TEASLEY COMES OFF THE BENCH TO WIN MVP AFTER LISA LESLIE'S INJURY TO HELP LEAD THE WEST TO A WIN. (2003)
7. ERICA WHEELER BECOMES THE FIRST WOMAN TO WIN ASG MVP AS AN UNDRAFTED PLAYER (2019)
6. CANDACE PARKER MAKES HER ALL-STAR GAME DEBUT WITH A THEN-RECORD 23 POINTS (2013)
5. MAYA MOORE DROPS 30 POINTS, STILL THE RECORD, TO WIN HER FIRST OF THREE ASG MVPs (2015)
4. SHONI SCHIMMEL BECOMES THE FIRST ROOKIE TO WIN GAME MVP HONORS AFTER 29 POINTS AND 8 ASSISTS (2014)
3. SYLVIA FOWLES THROWING DOWN A DUNK IN HER LAST ALL-STAR GAME BEFORE RETIRING (2022)
2. LISA LESLIE WINS ALL-STAR GAME MVP IN JUST 23 MINUTES OFF THE BENCH (2001)
1. EVERY PLAYER SHOWING SUPPORT FOR BRITTNEY GRINER BY WEARING HER #42 JERSEY IN THE SECOND HALF (2022)



10



9



8



7



6



5





WOMEN'S HOOPS AND HEALTH

FRONT AND CENTER, TEXAS STYLE

by JULIO MANTEIGA

Early April typically brings rising temperatures and thoughts of the arrival of long, lazy summer days, but this year in Dallas, Texas, spring also put a spotlight on the world of women's basketball.

Not only was the NCAA's Women's Final Four considered one of the best ever, but that weekend saw a cross section of what makes women's hoops so great. We saw record television ratings, and a coming-out party for future superstars Angel Reese and Caitlin Clark, all while some of the greatest names to ever grace the hardwood in Nancy Lieberman, Sue Bird and Diana Taurasi were in attendance.

In addition to great basketball, one of the

most important events of the weekend took place off the court — the debut of the NBRPA's women-focused health screenings. While fans were still drooling over an Iowa-LSU Finals matchup, the NBRPA staff were getting ready to host over 20 women to participate in the inaugural Health Screening Program. The initiative was launched in conjunction with the NBPA in 2016 to deliver valuable, preventive, long-term health care checkups to former professional players across the United States.

The Health Screening Program has impacted hundreds of former players by providing testing, including blood work, electrocardiograms, echocardiograms and cardiology consultations,





but never has there been an event to cater solely to the women that make up our membership, until now. One by one, Legends and members attending the annual Women's Basketball Coaches Association conference made their way over to the NBRPA's setup and participated in the screening program under the watchful eye of the Chief Medical Director, Joe Rogowski and his attentive staff.

In addition to the customary, wide-ranging screening procedures, Legends also underwent innovative breast cancer examinations utilizing the latest technology from Bexa. Breast exams using Bexa technology are aimed at providing a highly convenient, early detection option for all women. By providing expanded choices, the NBRPA is committed to ensuring that all members have an opportunity to choose an early detection option that's right for them.

WNBA Legend Rushia Brown told us about the importance of women getting the care that they need, as so many women don't have access. NBRPA Director and Hall of Famer Nancy Lieberman called the initiative a "game changer" and recalled how so many of her past teammates and colleagues from the 1976 USA Basketball team are no longer with us and explained how important it is to speak about the screening experience. WNBA Legends Muriel Page and Bri Kiesel touted the exam's ease and implored fellow members to take advantage of the program.

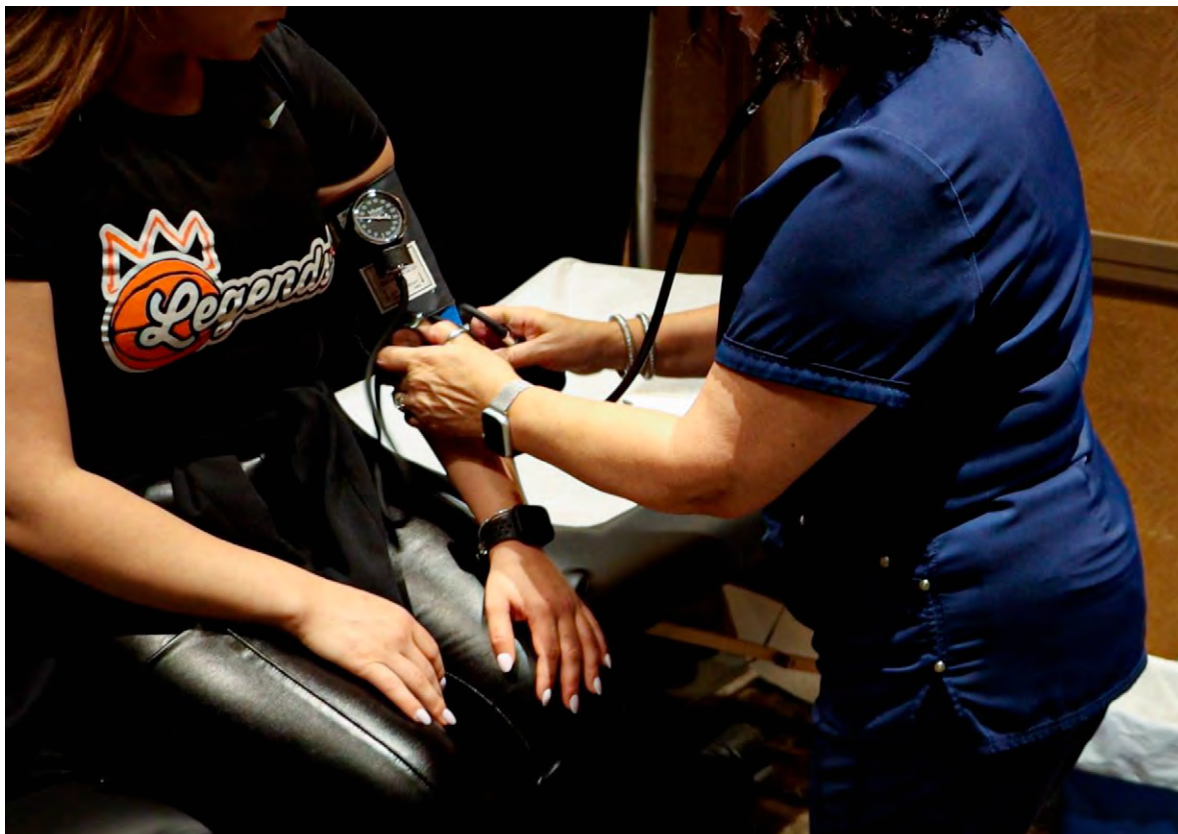


For the NBRPA, bringing this program to the NCAA Women's Final Four was a no-brainer. NBRPA President & CEO Scott Rochelle was fired up about the initiative.

"We are thrilled at the opportunity to grow our Health Screening Program and to be able to increase our focus on health issues affecting women," Rochelle said. "With the world of women's basketball front and center in Dallas, this presents an incredible occasion to bring this impactful program to where so many of our members will be."

The weekend wasn't just about on-the-court action and health initiatives, as there was quite a bit of fun to be had. The WNBA's Dallas Wings hosted an incredible reception at the top of the W Hotel in Downtown Dallas for current and former WNBA players, media and celebrities. And like everything else in Texas, the party was just bigger and better. Everyone from Hall of Famer Sheryl Swoops to the Dallas Wings' Arike Ogunbowale rubbed elbows, showed off their fashionable outfits and mingled with guests as they celebrated the eventful weekend. It was truly an epic party in the heart of Texas.

The weekend spotlighted the women that make up this game and displayed that the past, present and future of women's basketball are alive and well poised for even greater things around the corner.





FOR THE WAGNERS, HOOPS IS A FAMILY AFFAIR

MILT AND DAJUAN WAGNER SETTING LEGENDARY EXAMPLE FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS OF WAGNERS

by **A.J. MCCORD**

The cycle in the Wagner family goes something like this: the older generation is playing, next generation is watching, love for the game is cultivated.

It's a cycle now three generations strong and on the verge of doing something no family has ever done in the sport.

For three generations to play in the National Basketball Association.

Milt "Ice" Wagner vividly remembers bringing his son Dajuan to Los Angeles Lakers' practices during the 1987-1988 season.

"He sat in the stands at five years old," Wagner recalled. "I played with Magic Johnson, Kareem [Abdul-Jabbar], James Worthy, so I was with all the greats. He ran on the court, he wanted to participate in practice and at five years old, I had to go to him and say, 'You're



going to get your time to work out after our practice is over. So just sit here and just wait for a couple hours, and I'll get you on the court. So that right there, I'd say it was destined."

Destined to be one of the few father-son duos to make it into the NBA.

Milt Wagner is sharing these memories from his office at the University of Louisville, where he was recently named the Director of Player Development and Alumni Relations. It's fitting that Milt shares stories of his son falling in love with the game here, surrounded by memories of his Cardinals' history. Like the 1986 Championship team, when Milt was a starter, or the list of all-time scorers, where Milt's name still sits at number six, with 1,834 career points during his four seasons at Louisville, three times making it to the Final Four.

However, Louisville isn't just the place where Milt played some of his most memorable basketball, it's where he celebrated the birth of his son as a sophomore with the Cardinals.

From Louisville, Milt went on to the NBA for several seasons, selected by the Dallas Mavericks in the second round of the 1986 NBA Draft with the 35th overall pick. He won an NBA Championship with that same Lakers team that his son Dajuan wanted so badly to join the practice at five years old.

Milt remembers the team shooting with Dajuan after practice, Magic Johnson and other teammates engaging with the son who already wanted to be just like his daddy.

Milt ended up playing 13 years of professional basketball, including for pro teams in Israel, Paris, France, Belgium and Germany.

While he chased his dreams, he encouraged his son every chance he could.

Every summer, Milt would come home to Camden, New Jersey, and he and Dajuan would hit the court. These were the summers in the late 90s when Allen Iverson's game was the one to mimic, and Dajuan's game was already being compared to the Hall of Famer's.

"Everyone called him a stronger Allen Iverson, as far as his game went," Wagner remembered. "That was when guys liked to dribble like 10 to 20 times to cross you over and all that stuff, we weren't going to do that. In the NBA, you got to be able to make your move with fewer dribbles."

So Milt developed a game called two dribbles.

"You've got two dribbles to make a move from the foul line."

They would play 'two dribbles,' best out of five, and Milt showed no mercy on his growing son.

"I used to beat him all the time," Wagner remembered with a smile. "I was 6'5," and he wasn't at the height that he became, about 6'2", so I was able to block his shot here and there. We're a competitive family, so I wasn't going to let him beat me when he was young."

But every summer, Dajuan got closer and closer to beating his dad at the game he'd created. The summer of Dajuan's junior year at Camden High School, Milt had just retired from overseas basketball, and he returned home for their usual summer of two dribbles only to find that there would be nothing usual about this summer.

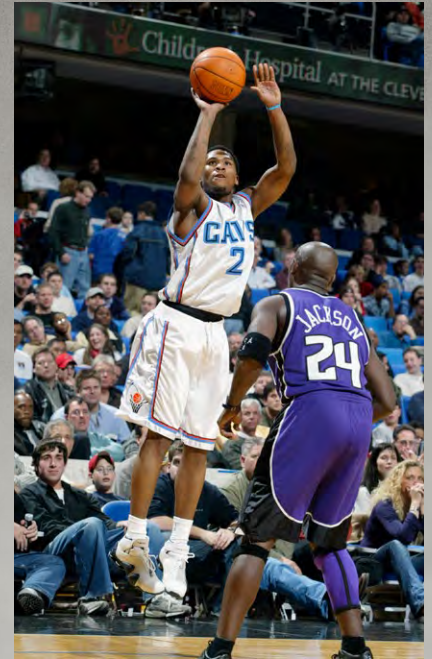
"We played our usual one-on-one, two dribbles and he beat me three times in a row. He was talking trash to me, I was so heated," Milt's tone still holding the joking shock of a dad realizing it was the next generation's turn. "But after that, I knew he was ready. That's all he wanted to do was to be able to beat me."

"I never played with him again after that. Normally we'd play pickup. We made sure we were on opposite teams, but once he beat me, I said, 'ok, now we're on the same team. And I'm not playing you one-on-one anymore. You're good to go.'"

And Dajuan was. He went from Camden to the University of Memphis, where in 2001, a coach named John Calipari was making a name for himself in the college ranks. In just his second year with the Tigers, Calipari led Dajuan and his team to a 27-9 season and a regular-season championship for Conference USA. Wagner started 35 games, averaging 31.8 minutes, 41% from the field and 31% from three. His game immediately caught the attention of NBA scouts, starting a trend that remains one of the reasons so many high school basketball players seek Calipari's coaching; he was Calipari's first one and done. Leaving Memphis after his freshman year as the sixth overall pick to the Cleveland Cavaliers in the 2002 NBA Draft.

It's a trend Dajuan's son could very well follow in less than a year's time.

Dajuan Wagner Jr., or DJ, has been surrounded by the accomplishments of his father and grandfather for as long as he can remember. Growing up in the same city of Camden, New Jersey, the impact of Milt and Dajuan is impossible to ignore. With 12 boys



Dajuan Wagner #2 of the Cleveland Cavaliers shoots a jump shot over Bobby Jackson #24 of the Sacramento Kings during the game at Gund Arena on November 26, 2002 in Cleveland, OH.



Milt Wagner #20 of the Los Angeles Lakers handles the ball during a game played circa 1986 at the Great Western Forum in Inglewood, CA.

basketball state championships to their name, 'The High' as locals call the school, has won more state championships in boys basketball than any other public school in the state, not to mention they've been runners-up 16 times.

Antoine Miller, a former teammate of Dajuan's, now in charge of the Camden Elite AAU program, told ESPN in November, "There is no Camden High basketball without the Wagners."

It's a legacy DJ has been honored to carry on.

"It's just an honor to be able to step on that court and lace my two sneakers after two greats like that," said DJ.

An honor, but never a pressure.

"Growing up, [Dajuan] always told me to do what I love and have fun," DJ fondly stated. "So, he never tried to pressure me, but once he saw that I was taking it seriously and I loved it, that's when he really started to put his work into it and work me out."

The conversation is reminiscent of one Milt remembers having with Dajuan when he first started playing. The words are passed down from generation to generation.

"He knew I wanted to be great, so he wanted to help me with that."

At 17, DJ could already be considered great. ESPN's top-ranked player of the 2023 class will be playing college basketball for Calipari, now with Kentucky, next season, just like his dad. It wasn't a decision easily reached, with Milt at Louisville and offers from both schools, but again, Dajuan and Milt let DJ choose his own path.



Dajuan Wagner of the Cleveland Cavaliers and his father Milt Wagner pose for a portrait during the 2002 NBA Draft at The Theater At Madison Square Garden on June 26, 2002 in NYC.

"It was difficult for me," DJ said. "But I wouldn't say it was hard because I had family, regardless, wherever I would've gone."

Since Dajuan became Calipari's first one-and-done, Cal has coached more than 30 one-and-done draft picks, including the Lakers' Anthony Davis, Denver's Jamal Murray, and Sacramento's impressive duo of Malik Monk and De'Aaron Fox.

With history knocking at his door, DJ keeps his feet planted firmly in the present, just like Milt and Dajuan have always encouraged him to do.

"I'm just a kid who loves to play basketball," DJ explained. "So I'm not ever really looking into the future of things, I'm just enjoying the moment. My family helps me with that as well, just by supporting me and reminding me to just enjoy everything and keep having fun, not to think about it too much, just to play basketball."

Just. Play. Basketball.

It's what the Wagners do.

From pick-up games in Camden, New Jersey, to professional courts around the world. And wherever DJ's game takes him, he'll feel the greatness and support of the generations before him in every dribble.



Dajuan Wagner Jr. #12 of Team USA looks on during the 2023 Nike Hoop Summit on April 8, 2023 at the Moda Center Arena in Portland, OR.



LEGENDS CHAPTER SPOTLIGHT DALLAS

The Dallas Chapter of the NBRPA, led by Chapter President Willie Davis, hosted their 3rd annual NBRPA Invitational Golf Tournament on Monday, June 5 at Brookhaven Country Club in Dallas. Another successful year of this event included an afternoon of competitive golf, prizes, celebrity appearances and autographs, bringing the community together and benefitting a great cause. The 2023 beneficiary was the Scott Murray Scholarship Fund, which awards grants to highly motivated students who are pursuing undergraduate, technical, or vocational schooling.





LEGENDS CHAPTER SPOTLIGHT
LOS ANGELES

Members of the Los Angeles Chapter of the NBRPA, including Kareem Abdul-Jabbar, Norm Nixon, Sam Williams, and Harold “Lefty” Williams, attended the LA premiere of “Sweetwater” on April 11. The film spotlights the inspiring story of Nat “Sweetwater” Clifton, the first African American basketball player to sign an NBA contract.



LEGENDS CHAPTER
SPOTLIGHT
HOUSTON

The Houston Chapter of the NBRPA, led by Chapter President Maurice Evans, recently formed an experiential partnership to raise awareness for the fight against Lupus disease with GSK, an innovative global health care company. Local Houston Legends supported the cause by attending a specially dedicated game between the Houston Rockets and the Los Angeles Lakers on Sunday, April 2.



LEGENDS CHAPTER SPOTLIGHT PHOENIX

The Phoenix Chapter of the NBRPA, led by Chapter President Fat Lever, have been very active in their community in recent months, including hosting a bowling tournament and facing off against NFL alumni in pickleball. Most recently, the Phoenix Chapter hosted a summer camp with local youth that included hoops, arts & crafts, a discussion about mental health, and a nutritious lunch at George Gervin Preparatory Academy.





LEGEND SIGHTINGS

LEGENDS OVERSEAS

NBA Legends Jerome “JYD” Williams, Muggsy Bogues, Mario Chalmers, and Michael Cooper joined this year’s Armed Forces Entertainment (AFE) Heat Wave campaign, travelling to seven different military bases across the Middle East to meet up with active members of the military. Since 1951, AFE has been providing entertainment for U.S. troops and their families stationed overseas, and our Legends were proud to boost the morale and well-being of service members throughout this tour.





LEGEND SIGHTINGS

NBRPA PRE-DRAFT COMBINE PLAYERS PARTY

On May 17th, 2023, the NBRPA hosted our annual NBA Pre-Draft Combine Party at VU Rooftop in downtown Chicago. This annual gathering event during the NBA Draft Combine brought together NBRPA members from the Chicago area and beyond reminisce about their own Draft Night memories and connect with other Legends in NBA and NBPA leadership roles. We wish the next class of NBA draftees good luck and look forward to hosting one of our favorite events of the year again next year!







Denver Nuggets Legend Dan Issel waves to crowd as part of his homecoming with the team during Game 1.



Shaquille O'Neal takes a selfie with Nuggets fans during Game 1.

LEGEND SIGHTINGS

NBA FINALS: DENVER & MIAMI



Denver Nuggets assistant coaches, including former NBA players Ryan Bowen and Popeye Jones, look on during Game 5.



Miami Heat Assistant Coach and NBRPA Director Caron Butler assists with warm-ups for Game 4.



Former NBA player and CBS Sports Analyst Avery Johnson poses with ESPN senior NBA writer Marc Spears prior to Game 3.



Dennis Scott, Magic Johnson and Dwayne Wade catch up on-court during halftime of Game 3.



Former NBA player and Denver Nuggets General Manager Calvin Booth celebrates with his team during the championship parade on Thursday, June 15.



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