

THE OFFICIAL MAGAZINE of the NATIONAL BASKETBALL RETIRED PLAYERS ASSOCIATION

LEGENDS

NBA ALL-STAR
2023

HONORING JAZZ
LEGENDS IN UTAH

MAGAZINE

20/23 Winter

LEGEND AMONG
LEGENDS

THURL
BAILEY

A portrait of Karl Malone, a bald man with a mustache, wearing a light gray button-down shirt over a black t-shirt. He is looking directly at the camera with a slight smile. The background is a dark blue with a subtle pattern of white diagonal lines.

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MALONE

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*A LIFETIME OF PHILANTHROPY AND EFFORTS TO HELP
HIS NATIVE SOUTH SUDAN EARN LUOL DENG*

NATIONAL CIVIL RIGHTS MUSEUM SPORTS LEGACY AWARD

by **MYAH TAYLOR**

Luol Deng didn't remember the country of his birth.

The former Chicago Bull fled with his family to Egypt when he was just five to escape the toils of the Second Sudanese Civil War. So, when Deng finally returned to South Sudan in 2010, he didn't recognize anything he saw.

Deng has called three countries — Egypt, the United Kingdom and the United States — home since his family first escaped the conflict. But South Sudan, a developing nation with 70% of its population under 27, has become the two-time NBA All-Star's focus.

The Memphis Grizzlies organization honored Deng with the National Civil Rights Museum

Sports Legacy Award for his charity work in South Sudan and other African countries as part of its 21st annual Martin Luther King Jr. Day celebration. While simultaneously maintaining a \$125 million-dollar real estate empire, Deng runs the Luol Deng Foundation, which aims to better the lives of Sudanese and South Sudanese people through sports and education.

"For me to receive this award, it makes me happy," Deng said. "I've dedicated my life from Day One."

His other philanthropic efforts include working with the United Nations' World Food Program and Nothing But Nets, an initiative to prevent malaria in Africa.

An Ambassador of the Basketball Africa League, Deng has also shared his love for basketball in the continent, particularly in South Sudan, where he serves as President of the South Sudan Basketball Federation. In these roles, he has refurbished basketball gyms and helped put African basketball on the world stage.

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

Sports helped Deng assimilate into a new culture.

When his family moved to the Brixton district of South London after being granted political asylum, Deng, 10 at the time, did not



Luol Deng of the Chicago Bulls during the SOS Children's Village Ennerdale visit during the Basketball Without Borders program in Johannesburg, South Africa in 2013.

know a word of English (Arabic, also spoken in Egypt, was his first language). Nor had he ever seen so many glass structures — London's architecture significantly differed from Egypt's brick buildings.

But he was good at soccer, his first sport. The 6-foot-9 Arsenal fan said all the kids wanted him on their team because of his skills. Playing "fútbol," as most of the world calls it, helped Deng make friends and assimilate.



Luol Deng #9 of the Minnesota Timberwolves makes a speech during Basketball Without Borders (BWB) Africa training camp on July 29, 2019.

"I was able to learn English quickly because of sports," Deng said.

And then, sports moved him to the United States at 14, when Deng enrolled at Blair Academy in Blairstown, New Jersey. It was a culture shock, as he'd never lived in a city or a predominantly white community before. Despite that and the distance from his family, Deng starred on the court and became the second-ranked recruit in the class of 2003 after LeBron James.

The five-star McDonald's All-American went on to play basketball at Duke under head coach Mike Krzyzewski for one season. He was selected seventh overall by the Phoenix Suns in the 2004 NBA draft before being traded shortly after to the Chicago Bulls, where he spent 10 strong seasons.

"I'm very thankful that I played in such an organization that actually cares about me," Deng said.

Of all the things Deng accomplished over his playing career, he said it was sporting a shirt with a graphic of Africa on it during his entrance at the 2012 NBA All-Star game that he cherishes the most.

Africa is Deng's home and where he first discovered basketball. In Egypt, he was introduced to the game by the late Manute Bol. The former NBA player, who supported Sudanese refugees and human rights initiatives, was from South Sudan and ran a basketball school in Cairo. "He gave everybody hope," Deng said.

And now, that has become Deng's mission. The 37-year-old's passion for philanthropy started young and has roots in how his family related to each other. No one ate alone. Everyone shared.

Institutions outside of the NBA have also recognized Deng's efforts. In July 2022, he



Luol Deng of the Chicago Bulls addresses the crowd while team mascot Benny the Bull during the fifth annual Chicago Bulls Luol Deng Thanksgiving Dinner at the Pacific Garden Mission in Chicago, IL.



*Luol Deng looks on during the 21st Annual
Martin Luther King, Jr. symposium on January
16, 2023 at FedExForum in Memphis, Tennessee.*





Luol Deng #9 of the Chicago Bulls drives to the basket against the Cleveland Cavaliers at The Quicken Loans Arena on November 30, 2013 in Cleveland, Ohio.



Luol Deng, Malcolm Brogdon, and Tacko Fall are seen during a trip to The Palace of the Republic as part of Basketball Without Borders Africa 2019 on July 30, 2019.



Derrick Rose, Luol Deng, Joakim Noah, and Taj Gibson pose for a photo following the game on January 30, 2019 at Target Center in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

was awarded an Order of the British Empire, which meant a lot to the refugee turned British citizen who competed for Britain's national basketball team in the 2012 Olympics.

"What made it so profound for me was not about validation or a title. It was about the transcendent power of sport, which has been my primary tool for giving back to the places that have played a role in my life," Deng wrote on Instagram regarding the honor.

As for his real estate empire? That started around the Olympics in 2012, long before the former NBA All-Star thought about retiring. Once Deng learned about turning a profit on flipped houses and built a strong team around him, he found success investing in properties in the Hamptons, the UK, the Bahamas and Africa.

"I'm more than just an athlete," Deng said glowingly.

That is something the NBA is working to help its players understand.

Deng said the NBA used to have former players visit with current ones to talk about their lives post-retirement. The problem was athletes only heard stories of failure and how people poorly managed their money instead of success stories to make an example of.

The humanitarian told the NBA to change that. The league has adjusted accordingly and does a better job of empowering players to be successful in all areas of life.

If the league ever does invite Deng to meet with current players, his story will count as a successful one.

"I always knew that in order to be the best that I can be, ... it's about helping those in tough situations and giving them an opportunity," Deng expressed. "Because I was given an opportunity."



Luol Deng #9 of the Eastern Conference All-Stars is introduced against the Western Conference All-Stars during the 2012 NBA All-Star Game on February 26, 2012 at the Amway Center in Orlando, Florida.





THE LEGENDS OF BASKETBALL SHOWCASE

SETS THE STAGE FOR AN ANNUAL COLLEGE BASKETBALL QUADRUPLE HEADER AT THE UNITED CENTER

by **ERIN LAW**

Eight teams. Four games. One day.

On August 23, 2022, the NBRPA announced the Legends of Basketball Showcase, an inaugural single-day event featuring eight elite men's college basketball teams while also highlighting the work of the National Basketball Retired Players Association. The first iteration of this annual celebration of college basketball took place on Saturday, December 17, 2022 at the United Center in Chicago.

The Legends of Basketball Showcase brought together men's college hoops fans from around the country and showcased four competitive matchups in the home that Michael Jordan built.

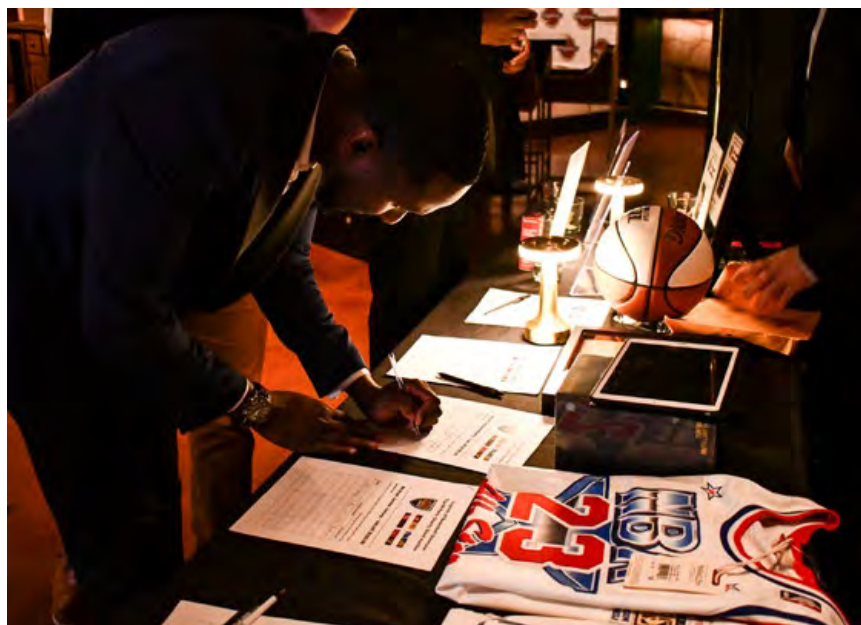
In a competitive day of basketball, Northern Iowa took on Towson, Tulane faced off against George Mason, Dayton battled it out with Wyoming, and NC State went head-to-head with Vanderbilt. From early in the afternoon to late in the evening, basketball fans from all eight schools filled the United Center with boisterous cheers and school colors.

The Dayton Flyers, accompanied by their cheerleaders, pep band, and hardcore fan base, nearly sold out the United Center on their own as they beat Wyoming in a decisive fashion, 66-49.

The Legends of Basketball Showcase provided a unique opportunity to not only highlight current men's college basketball players trending towards promising careers in the NBA, but also shined a spotlight on alums of the participating schools including NBRPA Chairman Johnny Davis and Sedric Toney (Dayton), Theo Ratliff (Wyoming), and members of the 1982-1983 NC State team celebrating the 40th Anniversary of their National Championship. This iconic team was represented by NBRPA's own Thurl Bailey, Cozell McQueen, Ernie Myers, Alvin Battle and Harold Thompson.

These NCAA and NBA Legends got to spend the day re-living their college basketball days, this time as mentors and leaders by encouraging their respective teams through pre-game locker room pep talks, receiving standing ovations during their mid-game on-court recognitions, and celebrating with their teams after the final buzzer.





In addition to showcasing the NBA alums from each college program, the Showcase also highlighted NBA Legends now at the helm of the participating college basketball programs, including Jerry Stackhouse (Vanderbilt head coach), Kim English (George Mason head coach), and Michael Curry (Vanderbilt assistant coach). These coaches and leaders serve as the clear proof that the NBRPA and NBA alums alike continue to passionately give back to the game and inspire the next generation of Legends.

Numerous other NBA and WNBA Legends made the trip to Chicago to show their support for this event and the college hoopers, taking the time to talk with players before and after each game, and cheering on each matchup from courtside seats and the VIP club level suites.

The night before the Showcase, the NBRPA hosted a Players Party at Untitled Supper Club in downtown Chicago and welcomed NBA & WNBA Legends and basketball fans alike to party the Windy City way before a full day of college hoops action. The party included sets from DJ Chitown Shani and DJ Kid Klay as well as food, an open bar, and a raffle for valuable collector's items. Attendees left with priceless memorabilia like a Thurl Bailey-signed Utah Jazz basketball and a Jerry Stackhouse-signed piece of the Vanderbilt basketball court.

With the success of the inaugural Legends of Basketball Showcase — including participating teams and new teams alike fighting for their place in the next quadruple header lineup — the 2023 Legends of Basketball Showcase is set to be even bigger and better than the first. Expect even more competitive teams, more Legends, and another weekend of incredible college basketball action in December





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LEGEND AMONG LEGENDS
THURL BAILEY

by PETE CROATTO

**NBRPA Board Member Thurl Bailey's Passion
and Communication Has Been a Driving Force in
Bringing NBA All-Star Game to Utah**



When the NBA's All-Star Game finally came to Utah in 1993, Thurl Bailey couldn't stay away. For a little over eight seasons, the goggles-sporting, athletic big man contributed to a Utah Jazz franchise that blossomed into a contender. Getting traded to the lowly Timberwolves in November 1991 may have been business, but it hurt. He was close to his teammates; Salt Lake City, an unlikely destination for a Black kid born in Washington, D.C., was home.

In 1999, Bailey returned to the Jazz after a stint playing in Europe. At his first home game, the fans greeted No. 41 with a standing ovation as he emerged from the tunnel. That wonderful last season made Bailey want to stay.

The All-Star Game's return to Salt Lake City in February finds Bailey, the team's longtime analyst, as an unofficial ambassador for the Jazz. He was part of the campaign to bring the game to the city, and his importance to the organization is such that in the wake of George Floyd's death, the franchise sought his advice on how to handle the incident that shone a spotlight on America's systemic racism.

"It's not about having a team full of Black players and thinking you're diverse," he said. "You have to get people of color in the front office and leadership positions they've never been in before. You've got to create programs that invite diversity, that are all-inclusive."

"I think in recent years, the Jazz have done a really good job of doing that. There's always work to do. When you look around at what some of the other organizations were or are doing, are you following that standard?"



G-League players with the NBA, WNBA, Utah Flash and in partnership Habitat for Humanity, work on building a home in Provo, Utah on January 7, 2009. Habitat for Humanity is building a disabled accessible home for Galen and Victoria Sorensen and their two young children.

Bailey recognizes the improvement. After all, it's his driving force.

He was a behemoth at 12 years old, an awkward 6-foot-4. A basketball career was not a certainty, especially when he was cut twice from the Bladensburg Junior High School team.

"When that rejection happens, it can send you a different way," Bailey said. "I could join a gang. I could get into drugs. A lot of my friends were doing that." He pushed past the devastation to find answers. "I went on this search: is this what I really wanted? My parents always taught me to ask the right questions to the right people. They encouraged me to try again."

The third time was a charm, as Bailey bawled when he saw his name on the final roster. Two days later, Coach Cole called Bailey into his office for a life-changing conversation.

"If you want to be a good player, you have a lot of work to do," he recalled the new coach saying. "But if you're willing to commit, I'll come in one hour before we practice as a team to work with you. And after we get done, I'll stay an hour after."

Why would he do that?

"Son," the coach said. "I see potential in you that you don't even see."

That philosophy guides Bailey's interactions to this day.

Salt Lake City was a culture shock, but Bailey, the seventh overall pick of the 1983 NBA Draft, adapted. To start with, the self-described "late bloomer" was happy to be in the league. There were teammates — Darrell Griffith, Mark Eaton, Karl Malone — who would become his second family. And travel allowed opportunities for culture.

"Utah was about the people to me," he stated. "I was welcomed with open arms."

Good people were around. But to truly make an impact where he lived, Bailey had to try harder.

"Every community in some way, shape, or form is about kids, whether it's Black kids, white kids," he said. "Even though Utah didn't really have a Black community per se, there was a need for what I brought with me as far as my experience to add to that community. That's why I had basketball camps and went out to find



Utah Jazz President Randy Rigby, left, along with former Jazz players Thurl Bailey, center, and Ron Boone, right, unveil an additional Jazz logo with new colors of green, yellow and navy blue at EnergySolutions Arena on June 15, 2010 in Salt Lake City, UT.



1989: Thurl Bailey #41 of the Utah Jazz dribbles the ball in the post during an NBA game at The Salt Palace in Salt Lake City, Utah in 1989.



Thurl Bailey former Jazz player and Jazz Bear Mascot of the Utah Jazz poses for a photo with young fans during the Annual Hoops for Troops Week cleaning up the Palmer Court on November 08, 2017.



Thurl Bailey and Andre Iguodala attend the 16th Annual NBA Legends Brunch during 2015 NBA All-Star Weekend on February 15, 2015 in New York, NY.

underprivileged people and people who looked like me and invited them to my camp. You try to put yourself in the best position possible to make a difference.”

It worked. Bailey won the NBA’s J. Walter Kennedy Citizenship Award for community service in the 1988-89 season, one of his many philanthropic accolades.

By his fifth year, after he signed his second contract, Salt Lake City felt like home. But it would be at a spot thousands of miles away that set up Bailey for his life after basketball.

It had become routine. Bailey would drive from Como, Italy, where he was living, to Lugano, Switzerland, on his days off. He’d get to the border, pull up to the checkpoint, roll down his window, and answer three questions: “Where did you come from? What’s your destination? What’s your purpose?”

But one day, deep into his international career and close to the end of his playing career, those questions hit harder.

Bailey loved acting and music, and he loved communicating with people.

“I started to put pencil to paper and start planning my life out if I couldn’t play basketball anymore,” he said. “I knew I didn’t want to coach. What assets did I have, and how can I use them?”

At North Carolina State, Bailey studied television and radio. Broadcasting was a natural fit, but that didn’t make a career change any less daunting coming from the “ideal world” of professional sports. But, he had nothing to fear.

“The journey is amazing,” he said. “You’ve taken everything that you’ve come from and done in your life, and you’re moving forward with it. It’s had its ups and downs, but even the downs are a part of it. What I call the ‘pit moments’ — if you don’t learn from them, you don’t move on.

“It’s been a great, great journey, and it continues for me. I’ve gone through a lot that I’m using now to teach other people.”

Which is why he is starting The New Messenger, where he’ll teach retired athletes and coaches how to tell their stories to audiences.

“Stories are one of the most valuable assets we have,” Bailey, an inspirational speaker, said.

He says there’s a huge need for the voices of former players and coaches, even if people are skeptical. It’ll be up to Thurl Bailey to get them to see their potential, a job for which he has spent a lifetime preparing.

HOW ALANA BEARD IS TURNING DIRT INTO CONCRETE

FOR THE WOMEN AND ATHLETES WHO COME AFTER HER

by A.J. MCCORD



Basketball courts weren't easy to come by seven miles outside of Shreveport.

Instead, a young Alana Beard had a patch of dirt, a makeshift basket and a determination to become as good as the women she'd seen on TV in the new women's basketball league – the WNBA.

Cynthia Cooper, Sheryl Swoopes and Tina Thompson are the women Beard would record onto a VHS and then go out and practice every move.

"Until I got it right," Beard said.

The fact that she was practicing those moves on dirt? Not a problem. Or a deterrent. It was the opposite.

"We bounced the ball enough, we played on it enough, that the dirt became concrete," Beard recalled.

Dirt became concrete. Where there was no way, she still made one.

Fast forward several decades and Alana Beard is now a WNBA alumna who is worthy of her own moves being emulated by little girls with big dreams. After 15 seasons, eight All-Defensive teams, four All-Star appearances, two Defensive Player of the Year awards and one WNBA Championship, Beard retired as one of the most elite defenders the league has ever seen.

Beard accomplished everything on the court she could've dreamed of, but the adversity she

conquered off the court showed her how she could leave a bigger impact on the game and the women who came after her than her stats ever could.

In April 2010, just six years into her professional career, Beard suffered a career-threatening injury during a preseason practice — tearing her posterior tibial tendon, which holds the foot up.

“Doctors literally said, ‘Alana, you have a 10% chance of returning to an elite level because we’ve never seen an injury like this before, especially in your sport,’” Beard remembered.

“Prior to that, my identity was wrapped up in the game of basketball, as I was obsessed with being great,” Beard explained. “I didn’t look left or right, I just had a narrow sort of vision in terms of how I was going to achieve that. And that probably led to my injury because of that obsession of wanting to be great.

“I became hyper-focused in that moment with figuring out who I was outside of the game.”

Being successful off the basketball court is a blueprint few athletes have publicly navigated as well as Magic Johnson. The Lakers’ legend has ownership stakes in everything from Starbucks and Burger Kings to the Los Angeles Dodgers and LA Sparks, the same team Beard won her WNBA title with in 2016.

“Magic Johnson is that North Star,” Beard explained. “Seeing what he was capable of building after the game was something I’ve always admired and sort of used as a blueprint to eventually build out what I wanted.

“Franchising was a business model that resonated with me because it gives you that blueprint and the plan and steps to becoming successful.”

Beard took advantage of her forced time away from the court to dive into the business world headfirst. Her first internship was with James White, the CEO of Jamba Juice. Already living in the Bay Area, Beard got up every day at 4 a.m. to get across the bridge to San Francisco for two hours of rehab. She’d then cross back over for a full 9-to-5 day of her internship. Any Bay Area resident can tell you the commitment that showcases. She did that for months to learn the ins and outs of franchising.

Eventually, Beard opened her own franchise with a good friend.

“That was an amazing experience,” Beard said. “It gave me everything that I wanted and asked for in terms of understanding operations and the development of business.”

She returned to the court the next season and



found herself increasingly balancing basketball and business — determined to set herself up for the reality her injury had forced her to face; basketball would end, then what?

Soon she tiptoed into the venture capital space, challenged to do so by a fellow Duke University alum. A partner at a venture capital firm with Howard Schultz, he accelerated her interest in the tech and startup space. She took on fellowships in her WNBA offseasons. With each decision to jump into something outside the game, the purpose she’d always known she carried crystallized.

“I wanted to get into the nuances and really dig into how to build it because in order for

me to share it, I have to be able to articulate and communicate exactly how to do it,” Beard explained. “I wanted to create a bridge for female athletes into the venture capital space.”

There goes that familiar refrain. All of this was not just for Beard but for the girls of Shreveport and the athletes whose careers would all end and be forced to answer the same question: now what?

Beard expanded on the topic.

“When you think about some of our male counterparts, Kevin Durant, Steph Curry, all of these guys get in so early on these campaigns, for obvious reasons. They have the liquidity, the platform, people want to be associated with

these guys. Why can't women have the same opportunity? Why can't we have the same access?"

"So, in order for me to create that access, I have to know exactly how to do it. So, of course, I jump right in, saying, 'this is going to overwhelm the crap out of me,' as it scares me, I have to be at my most vulnerable point. But that's exactly why I say yes to it."

In those moments of feeling overwhelmed, Beard returns to the first patch of Louisiana dirt she turned into concrete. It's her mother's voice, as much as the beat of the basketball, that fills her head.

Alana's mom, Marie, grew up the only girl among nine boys.

"That should tell you everything you need to know," Beard said with a laugh. "She's the strongest individual, the strongest woman I know."

A good high school basketball player herself, Marie knows exactly what to say to her daughter in her most vulnerable moments that remind Alana of who she is.

"She's like, 'Alana, everything you've told me that you wanted to do or will do, you've done.' And she goes back and lists everything starting from when I was in elementary school," Beard shared fondly.

Marie reminds Alana of her second-grade self, coming home in tears after not making the honor roll.

"I was like, 'Mom, from this point on, I'm going to be on the honor roll every single time,'" Beard remembered.

And she did, graduating with a 4.2 GPA.

In middle school, Beard told her parents they wouldn't have to pay for her to attend college.

She chose a high school whose girls' basketball coach had already established an expectation of excellence that would better set her up for a college scholarship.

She earned a full ride to Duke University, where she had a Hall-of-Fame career, leading her Blue Devils to two Final Fours and was the Atlantic Coast Conference's Player of the Year three times.

"That's what I go back to," Beard explained. "In those moments of being overwhelmed, going vulnerable, having doubts, that's what I go back to."

"It's understanding and knowing that you belong. Just because your path was different, it doesn't mean you're any less deserving of this moment. And when you get to a point of knowing you belong, there's going to come another moment or situation where you're going to feel as if you don't. But as long as you stay true to your core and understand your purpose, you get through those moments."

Whatever she's facing, her mother reminds her, it's not the first time she's turned dirt into concrete, and it won't be the last.

A month after retiring in 2020, Beard took on a role with Silicon Valley Bank. "It's a bank," she said, "that sits in the epicenter of everything tech and innovation."





While she continued cutting her teeth in the business and venture capital space, she began pouring the concrete for the girls and athletes who'd come after her.

She started the 318 Foundation, named for her Shreveport area code, to improve the "college, career, and life outcomes for girls in underserved communities across America."

In the same year, 2021, she also started Transition Play, a 12-month program for college, professional, or recently retired athletes to "make a successful transition to life beyond the game."

"It's all about benefiting and positioning women to be the dynamic leaders they are in our society, despite people always telling us it's impossible," Beard said of her foundations. "If you tell me it's impossible, it's telling me it's possible. That's how I take it. That's how I look at everything I do. And I want to make sure I am capable of instilling that same mindset into young women that look exactly like me."

It's why she's not stopping there.

In July of 2021, the African American Sports and Entertainment Group (AASEG)

won a vote by the Oakland city council, giving it the lease to the Oakland Arena. A Bay Area resident since 2019, Beard connected with Ray Bobbitt, AASEG's founder.

"We hit it off from the very beginning," said Beard.

With her business and venture capital experience in hand, Beard became the force and face in partnering with AASEG for a WNBA expansion team to Oakland.

"We have parallel paths in the sense that what he's building out as AASEG is very similar to how I'm building out the WNBA team," Beard stated.

Beard is leading the Oakland WNBA ownership process.

"I'm pushing toward developing and doing it all right," Beard explained of her process. "I do all the phone calls, I handle all the engagement, I build out all the strategy, I do the financial modeling, but I'm learning through it all. That's how I want to do it differently."

"I don't want to be just a name and a face. That doesn't work for me. People need to be aware of what I'm doing in order for me to

build it the way that I know it should be built into a sustainable model."

With the WNBA's popularity and stock on the rise, WNBA Commissioner Cathy Engelbert has made it no secret the league wants to expand for the first time since 2008. At the end of 2022, she said the league was looking seriously at 10 interested ownership groups.

Beard is not only positioning Oakland to be the one that wins the bid to become the 13th WNBA team, but herself to understand every aspect of the process.

Just as she has every other time, she's turned dirt into concrete. Because she's not just playing for herself but making a way for every other girl and athlete that comes after her.

"The ultimate goal is to build out a portfolio of women's sports franchises, and the WNBA is only the start," Beard explained. "I'm not building this just for me, but I'm building this for others to be able to have the tools, resources and access to this opportunity if they choose to."



THE LEGENDS OF BASKETBALL CLASSIC

CREATES A FIRST-OF-ITS-KIND CHARITY EXHIBITION FORMAT FOR COLLEGE BASKETBALL

by **ERIN LAW**



The NBRPA is taking the college basketball space by storm and changing the game along the way.

On October 28, 2022, the NBRPA hosted the inaugural Legends of Basketball Classic, a charity exhibition men's college basketball game at Comerica Center in Frisco, Texas. The inaugural iteration of this event featured two powerhouse men's basketball programs in Gonzaga and Tennessee.

This first-of-its-kind event was made possible by a partnership between the NBRPA and iNDEMAND as the exclusive streaming home of the preseason matchup. Proceeds from the PPV.com stream of the game benefitted the McLendon

Foundation, an incredibly worthy cause established in 1999 to honor the legacy of Hall of Fame coach John McLendon.

Prior to the game, the NBRPA hosted a celebrity pre-reception tip-off party in the Comerica Center Club Lounge hosted by Dale Ellis, Reggie Johnson, Sam Perkins, Shawn Marion, Jerome Williams, Jeremy Pargo, and Choo Smith.

The pre-reception tip-off party, which was open to local media and fans of both participating teams, served as an introduction for many to the NBRPA, its mission and charitable work as an organization, and its dedication to fostering a college to NBA pipeline for the young athletes involved.

In this exciting inaugural contest, Tennessee prevailed over Gonzaga 99-80 in front of an energized crowd of dedicated fans. After the game, players from both teams had the opportunity to take photos with their fanbase and meet the NBA Legends in attendance, spurring additional mentorship opportunities and showing the NBRPA's commitment to growing the game at the college and professional level.

This inaugural event was a success from every angle — from the players meeting their NBA idols to the substantial donation to the McLendon Foundation made possible by the fans who bought tickets and streamed the game online — setting the stage for future charitable exhibition showdowns hosted by the NBRPA.

Just one month after the inaugural Legends of Basketball Classic, the NBRPA, Intersport, the McLendon Foundation and iNDEMAND jointly announced plans to extend the partnership through 2023 and add additional Legends of Basketball Classic matchups to the slate of men's college hoops action. Stay tuned throughout the year, and in many years to come, for more Legends of Basketball Classic rivalries around the country!





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



LEGENDS CARE:

FULL COURT PRESS: PREP FOR SUCCESS

In 2022, the Full Court Press program flourished in large part due to the passion and commitment of NBRPA Chapters and its members around the country. These one-day youth basketball and mentoring clinics bring together Legends of basketball with local athletes and are a clear testament to the NBRPA's dedication to growing the game.

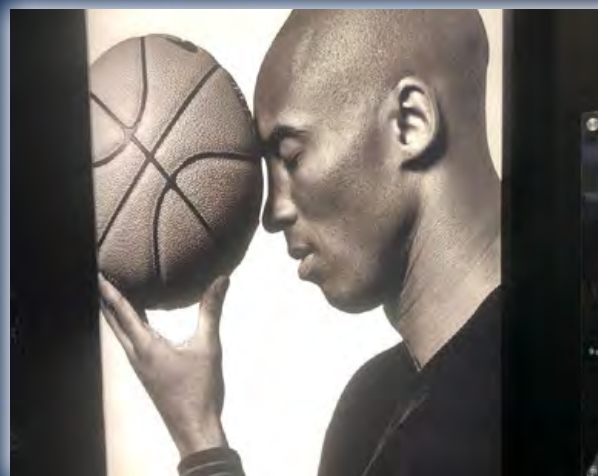
Last year, hundreds of future Legends had the opportunity to play basketball and receive words of wisdom from NBA, WNBA, ABA and Globetrotter Legends in Los Angeles, Atlanta, and Springfield, MA through the Full Court Press program. We look forward to expanding the number of Full Court Press cities and clinics in 2023!





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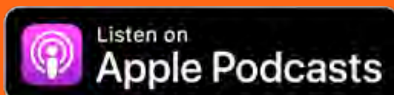


Legends Studios, presented by the NBRPA, is the #1 podcast destination for basketball fans who want to hear from NBA and WNBA Legends.

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, Stitcher or wherever you listen to podcasts to stay up-to-date with Legends content.





TRILL'S TAKE:

TOP 10 UTAH JAZZ MOMENTS IN FRANCHISE HISTORY

by **TRILL WITHERS**

The 2023 All-Star game is here and this year's festivities are in Salt Lake City. With that, let's take a look back at the top 10 moments in Jazz franchise history.



TOP 10

TOP 10 UTAH JAZZ MOMENTS IN FRANCHISE HISTORY

1. **THE MOVE FROM NEW ORLEANS TO SALT LAKE CITY. 1979-80 WAS THE TEAM'S FIRST YEAR IN UTAH AFTER FIVE SEASONS IN THE BIG EASY.**
2. **JOHN STOCKTON HITS A THREE-POINTER AS TIME EXPIRES IN GAME 6 OF THE 1997 WESTERN CONFERENCE FINALS TO SEND THEM ON TO THEIR FIRST NBA FINALS.**
3. **NEW ORLEANS JAZZ DRAFTED LUSIA HARRIS IN 1977, THE ONLY WOMAN OFFICIALLY DRAFTED INTO THE NBA.**
4. **STOCKTON (9 POINTS, 15 ASSISTS) AND KARL MALONE (28 POINTS, 10 REBOUNDS) SHARE CO-MVP HONORS AT THE 1993 ALL-STAR GAME**
5. **TRADING FOR ADRIAN DANTLEY PRIOR TO THEIR FIRST SEASON IN UTAH. HE'D GO ON TO MAKE SIX ALL-STAR GAMES AND AVERAGE 29.6 PPG FOR THE JAZZ.**





6



7



8



9

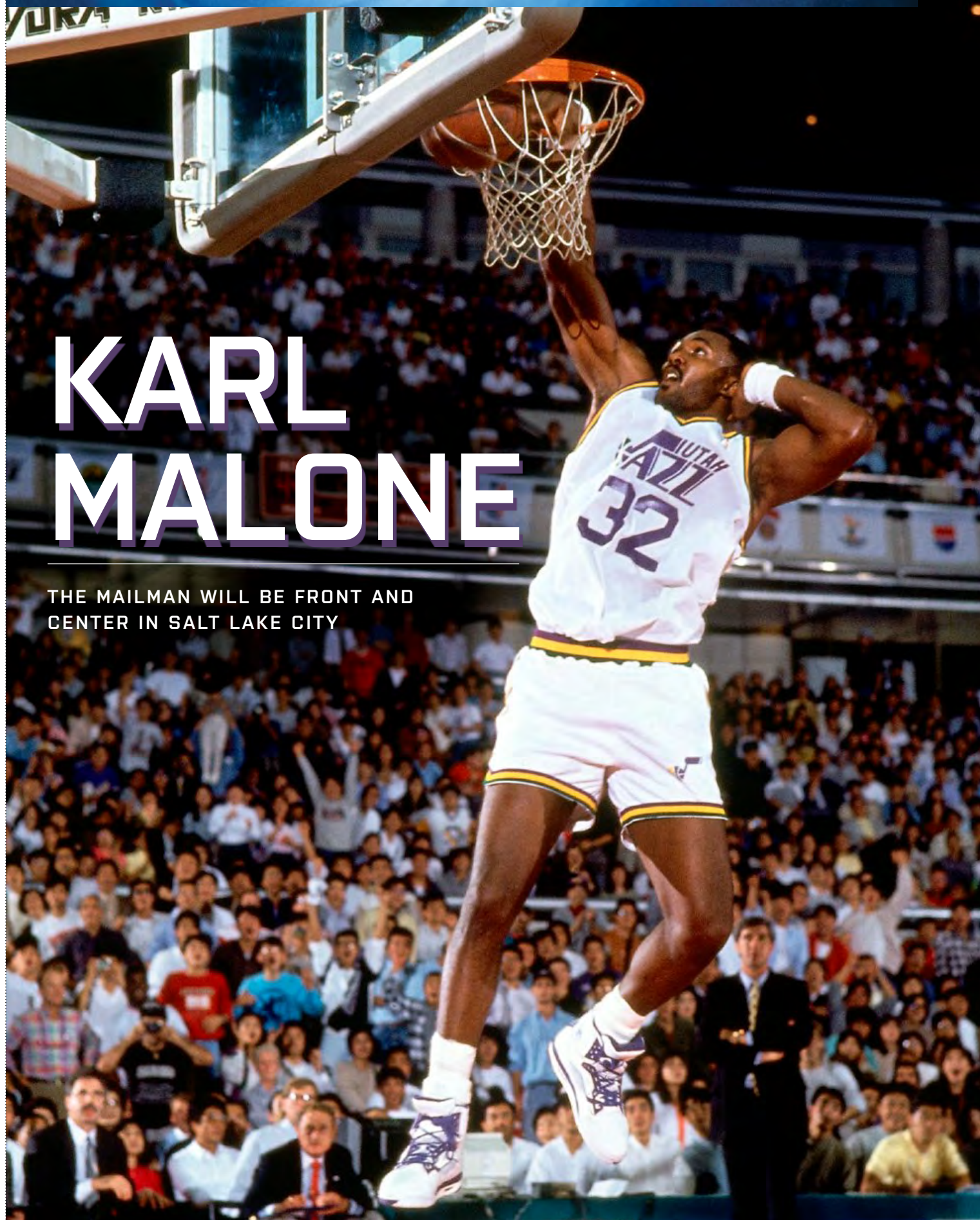


10

TOP 10

TOP 10 UTAH JAZZ MOMENTS IN FRANCHISE HISTORY

6. **HIRING JERRY SLOAN IN 1985 AS AN ASSISTANT. HE BECAME HEAD COACH DURING THE 1988 SEASON AND WON OVER 1100 GAMES CALLING THE SHOTS FOR UTAH.**
7. **IN 1985, MARK EATON WON THE FIRST OF TWO DEFENSIVE PLAYER OF THE YEAR AWARDS ON HIS WAY TO AVERAGING 5.6 BLOCKS PER GAME, A NBA RECORD THAT STILL STANDS. HE WON HIS SECOND IN THE 1988-89 SEASON.**
8. **2016 JAZZ BREAK A FOUR-YEAR POSTSEASON DROUGHT BY BEATING THE CLIPPERS ON THE ROAD IN GAME 7.**
9. **RUDY GOBERT WINS DPOY AWARD NUMBER THREE IN 2022, BREAKING A FRANCHISE TIE WITH EATON.**
10. **THE 1984 TEAM BEAT DENVER IN THE FIRST ROUND OF PLAYOFFS. THIS WAS THE FIRST POSTSEASON BERTH SINCE MOVING TO SLC AND THIS MARKED THE FIRST OF 20 CONSECUTIVE POSTSEASON APPEARANCES.**



KARL MALONE

THE MAILMAN WILL BE FRONT AND
CENTER IN SALT LAKE CITY



KARL MALONE WILL NOT BE OFF THE GRID AT NBA ALL-STAR WEEKEND IN UTAH

by CHRIS SHERIDAN

On a cold Friday night in mid-January, Karl Malone tucked into a comfy corner chair at his Legends 32 cigar lounge, chilling out with a group of buddies. His son-in-law, a catching prospect in the Milwaukee Brewers system, stopped in to say hello. Smoke filled the air, and a visitor was immediately offered a stogie. A worker came over, and he and Malone worked together to unwrap, cut, and get it lit properly.

The storytelling commenced and lasted long into the night. “Make sure you ask Karl about the Mardi Gras mascot on the vodka label. That is a good story,” one friend suggested.

Yes, it is, and it is below. They are all good stories, and Malone is just one of the guys in his comfort zone, in the place where he conducts business not far from his home in the woods. He is importing his cigar - Barrel Aged by Karl Malone from the Dominican Republic, distributing across the U.S. his E. Leon Jimenes Rum and distilling his Louisiana themed Trinity vodka in New Orleans, selling Toyotas, Fords, Chevrolets, Chrysler-Dodge-Jeeps and a wide assortment of powersports vehicles at 17 dealerships across Utah, Idaho, Colorado, Arkansas and Louisiana, managing large properties in Louisiana, thinking about his next great endeavor – all while planning his February trip back to Salt Lake City for NBA All-Star 2023.

He is pushing 60 but looks as trim and cut as ever. He sounds in disbelief as he notes that it

has been 19 years since he played his final NBA game for the Los Angeles Lakers.

The Legends 32 cigar lounge is cozy and chill, sitting across the street from Malone’s 5.11 by Karl Malone apparel store, Black Rifle coffee shop and resort style apartment complex on East Kentucky Avenue. Over the next two-and-a-half hours, he opened up to Legends of Basketball Magazine about several topics, becoming most animated while discussing how there is no excuse for any former NBA player to be economically distressed. He plans to speak up about it at All-Star Weekend emphatically.



But he also plans to be one of the prominent faces of the league’s showcase event. If everything goes right, he may even break out the custom-made spooky Mardi Gras-inspired costume that resembles the Trinity Vodka bottle mascot. He does that from time to time.

First, though, he will be vocal. As everyone in the NBA family knows, Malone is off the grid by design. That’s just Karl. He’s a private guy who is never a spotlight-seeker. He doesn’t want attention in retirement but knows he will get it back in Salt Lake City.

“I am on a mission to take care of my retired brothers,” Malone expressed. “If someone has financial hardship, what can we do about it? I can’t execute the plan. That’s on the NBA, NBPA, and the Retired Players Association. But I am going to put it in play, and I am not going to take ‘no’ for an answer.”

When Karl Malone goes on a mission, that is just a little different. His business partner, Andy Madsen, noted that Malone employs over 700 people in his various business endeavors, and “they all call him Disneyland Dad. He’s still all about helping out the underdog.”

Much of Malone’s evidence is anecdotal, as many of his brethren know. These guys often call and text each other like one big retired NBA family. They often know things that the public, and even headquarters, are unaware of. Malone has heard too many stories about ex-players passing away without their families



being able to cover funeral costs, and that is part of the genesis of this mission. He wants to be heard in his old home.

"I need substance in my life, but I do not want to be the guy running the narrative," Malone said. "In life, we are so trained and manipulated, but every now and then, you have to take a different road. What replaces your game and practice time when you retire? What are your goals and dreams? Things you want to do? I have had those since I was a kid playing on a basket made out of a bicycle tire. You want to fall back on the dreams you had then."

Sitting with *Legends of Basketball Magazine* for this article represents a leap for Malone, whose business success has not been publicly chronicled. Like every former NBA player, he needed something to fill the time when his playing career ended. Despite having a hunting ranch on his Louisiana property and a summer home on the vast Kenai River in Alaska, where salmon are running by the thousands, it is clear that Malone has his hands on a ton of things. He still works out for at least one to two hours, five days a week, partly out of habit and mainly for the endorphin rush.

"It is good for my mind. We all get caught up in physical appearance, but we cannot forget about the brain," Malone said.

When his mother, Shirley Jackson, died suddenly in his final season with the Lakers, he tempered the emotional crush by writing a journal titled *Through My Eyes*. He envisions doing a podcast with that same title sometime later this year.

"My stories aren't smear and aren't about ratings. It's through my eyes and what I see, and it's something near and dear," Malone said.

He remains complex but is still as down-to-earth and genuine as he was when he was a





Karl Malone cheers during the game between the LA Clippers and the Utah Jazz during the 2021 NBA Playoffs on June 8, 2021 at Vivint Arena in Salt Lake City Utah.



Karl Malone at home in January of 2023.

player, and it does not take a human behavior specialist to discern that age 60 is a number that will bring a strong degree of self-reflection.

He is a fan of the game but is not a regular viewer. However, he pays close enough attention to bring up the subject of the Sacramento Kings having made a brilliant trade by acquiring Domantas Sabonis from Indiana last season.

"Why would you ever trade a player like that?" he asked.

He keeps up, and he knows history. Can you name the five Hall of Fame centers that grew up within an hour's drive of here? He asked before naming them: Willis Reed, Bob Pettit, Robert Parish, Bill Russell and Elvin Hayes. All three Holiday brothers, Aaron, Jrue and Justin, are from Ruston too.

The degree to which the upcoming All-Star Weekend puts him back in the public spotlight remains to be seen. Still revered in Salt Lake City and throughout the state of Utah, he has an opportunity to build his brand, reconnect with old colleagues and seize the spotlight.

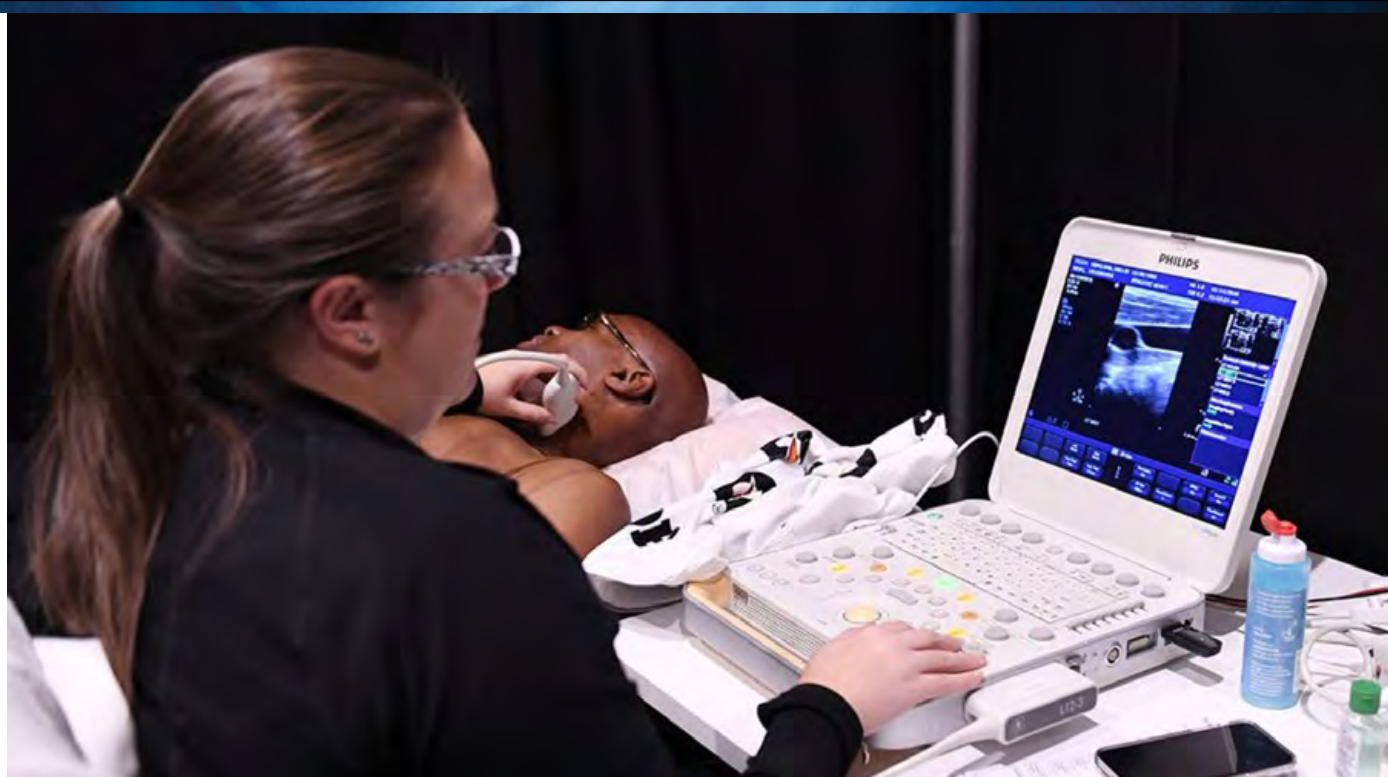
What TNT's narrative is outside of the All-Star Saturday events and the Sunday night

game is still up in the air. Furthermore, what the retired players will experience may be the polar opposite of what the viewing public is watching. And that is sort of the beauty/quantum of these NBA events.

The unknown level of exposure that will be given to Malone's former equally private running mate, John Stockton, is also an open question. Like Malone, Stockton is private. But he, too, could win a mayoral election in Salt Lake City if he announced a write-in campaign.

So what will people be talking about Monday? Nobody can predict that. But Malone has an opportunity to shape the public narrative if he so chooses. The guy is the perfect mixture of content and discontent. When you are pushing 60, you can think about push-ups or pushing daisies, and Malone is more of the former than the latter.

No matter which direction this one goes, the off-the-grid existence that Malone has had nationally since his final game in 2004 is about to change. And the guys who will know it first will be "The Mailman's" fellow retirees.



NBRPA-OWNED HEALTH SCREENINGS

PROGRAM EXPANDING TO PROVIDE MORE FOR LEGENDS

by JULIO MANTEIGA

For so many Legends, there is one event during NBA All-Star Weekend their bodies thank them for — the Health Screenings program. The initiative has been a staple of the National Basketball Retired Players Association's events and is one of the most impactful programs available to all Legends of basketball.

Launched in 2016 by the NBPA in partnership with the NBRPA, the acclaimed Health Screenings program has impacted hundreds of former players. This free initiative, which aims to deliver valuable, preventive, long-term healthcare check-ups to former professional players, is perhaps the program this organization is most proud of. The screening provides preventative testing — including blood work, electrocardiograms and echocardiograms along with orthopedic and cardiology consultations — and has actually saved lives on more than one occasion.

This past year, the NBRPA announced that they would oversee the program and brought along a familiar face, Dr. Joe Rogowski, to head the operation. Rogowski, who served as the NBPA's Chief Medical Officer for the past decade, was named the NBRPA's Chief Medical Director in November of 2022.

In addition to addressing many of the medical issues experienced by the Legends, the NBRPA has also introduced its Medical





Innovation Program to educate members on proactive measures that promote a healthy lifestyle. In this expanded format, the health screening program will include the creation of strategic medical partnerships with first-class leaders in the medical field.

NBRPA President & CEO Scott Rochelle discussed the impact of having Dr. Rogowski continue to oversee the program.

"Joe is a true leader in his field, and we are thrilled to have him and his network of medical specialists developing and expanding sound health programs and best practices for our more than 1,800 members," Rochelle said. "His work is paramount to our members living healthy lives."

Rogowski's nearly 20 years of experience working with NBA players is not lost on him. He considers himself fortunate to assist players navigating their transition into retirement.

"I am honored that the NBRPA has entrusted me to continue this mission to elevate both the physical and mental care of the men and women that have helped lay the foundation for our current players' success," he said glowingly.

With the best pension and health benefit programs in professional sports and the addition of the Health Screenings program under one umbrella, the NBRPA is looking to not only make every All-Star Weekend and event memorable but also to ensure that we are all around for more of them.







ADRIAN DANTLEY WILL HAPPILY RETURN TO UTAH

WHERE THEY ADORED HIM

by CHRIS SHERIDAN

When retired NBA players attend All-Star Weekend in Salt Lake City and swap stories about their time in the league, there will undoubtedly be tales about the rookie hazing they dished out and endured.

But Adrian Dantley will not have stories that align with that piece of NBA culture.

From the time he entered the NBA in 1976, he refused to participate in the initiation ritual, even when it came to John Stockton and Karl Malone.

"When I was a rookie in Buffalo, somebody told me to carry the bags from the bus to the hotel," Dantley recalled. "I told him: 'I'll tell you what: We play a game of one-on-one, and the loser carries the winner's bags,' and that put an end to that."

Dantley, who spent 17 seasons in the NBA before finishing his pro career with one season in Italy, was a six-time All-Star who averaged at least 30 points in four of his seven seasons with the Jazz. Like the dynamic the Thunder have in Oklahoma City, the Grizzlies in Memphis and the Kings in Sacramento, when your team is the only professional sports show in town, the fan base is loyal and rabid.

That is how Dantley, who will turn 68 on the final day of February, remembers Salt Lake City.

"Of all the cities where I played, that was my favorite," he told *Legends Magazine* in a telephone interview in mid-January from his home in Maryland. "Other players would come into town and ask what there was to do, and I said I really didn't care because I was too

busy working out and playing ball. I didn't need anywhere to go. I just wanted to get minutes."

Dantley played for seven NBA teams over the course of his career and was with the Jazz from 1979-80 to 1985-86 before a contractual dispute with coach Frank Layden led to his trade to the "Bad Boy" Detroit Pistons. He then spent three seasons alongside Isiah Thomas, Joe Dumars and a young Dennis Rodman, playing a reduced role on offense but going to the NBA Finals in 1988 when the Pistons lost an epic seven-game series against the Los Angeles Lakers.

He was a career 54 percent shooter and never shot worse than .531 while he was with the Jazz, numbers that are not seen all that often in today's NBA because of the popularity of the 3-point shot and the decline of the midrange game.

"That was just a shot selection thing," Dantley said. "I was very comfortable from 18 to 19 feet out, and I always took good shots. If I had been a volume shooter like some of these guys today, there's no telling what I might have averaged."

As it was, Dantley averaged 30.7, 30.3, 30.7 and 30.6 points per game in four consecutive seasons from 1980-81 to 1983-84. And in four other seasons with Indiana and Utah, he never averaged lower than 26. He had to accept a reduced offensive role in his later years with Detroit, Dallas and a short stint with Milwaukee before he retired. Still, Dantley certainly made his mark in NBA history with two scoring titles, a Rookie of the Year award, an Olympic gold medal (1976 Montreal)



and a Comeback Player of the Year award.

Listed as a small forward because of his height (6-foot-5) but a guy who played more like a traditional power forward, Dantley was with the Jazz when Stockton and Malone came into the NBA as rookies.

"Karl, like me, was a weightlifter, and that made him unstoppable. He was very country,

very likable and very competitive, and when he was young, I remember him coming in with a big old truck."

Malone, of course, became a part of the Jazz teams that went to the NBA Finals in consecutive years against Michael Jordan and the Chicago Bulls. The "Mailman" was a beloved figure in Salt Lake City and the state of Utah,

which he would leave from time to time by crossing the Salt Flats late at night to enter Nevada and play cards in West Wendover.

(Side note: Any and all retired NBA players who are in Salt Lake City for this year's All-Star game are hereby advised to make that same trip and gaze out the car windows at Utah's famous Salt Flats. Unless you have seen that vast expanse of barren white land with your own eyes, you will never be able to appreciate one of the most wondrous expanses of America).

With Stockton, Dantley immediately noticed a competitiveness that anybody who came to know point guard could appreciate. Stockton began his career as a backup to Rickey Green, an All-Star in 1984, and eventually took over the starting job.

"When he came in and played with Rickey, we had two great point guards," Dantley said. "But the thing with John, you could tell in practice how good he was going to be because of the way he competed. He always wanted to do well and play well.

"I liked him because he was quiet, but you couldn't let that fool you. He was wide-eyed at first, but he was very competitive," Dantley said. "He ran the show, and I later learned that he became very vocal as a veteran."

Stockton and Malone both keep relatively low profiles these days after being a national story in the mid-90s when facing Jordan & Co. Remember, an entire generation was enthralled by the competitiveness of the Jazz and the Bulls during those epic NBA Finals.

Younger NBA fans have no recollection of those years and can only try to get up to speed by listening to their elders and watching YouTube. The NBA has its hands full in rekindling an appreciation for the game's history. In the days before social media and the pandemic, it was customary for people to gather together, watch games and debate the merits of the all-time great players and teams.

But because we live in the social media age, that is happening less than it once did. Ask anyone with teenage children or grandchildren what causes them the most anxiety, and the "staring at the smartphone" dynamic will be atop everyone's list. Commissioner Adam Silver's infatuation with the NBA App shows how the league is trying to appeal to a younger demographic, often at the expense of older NBA fans who are perfectly content watching games from the sofa on a big screen. Dinosaurs? Maybe, but some might say a 64-inch screen is superior to a 6-inch screen to anyone with their head on straight.





But this generational difference is one of the peculiar things older Americans are being forced to become accustomed to, along with watching the decline of the low-post and the midrange game in an NBA where the 3-point shot has become king. When Spurs coach Gregg Popovich commented that it is time for a 4-point shot and a 5-point shot “so we can make it a real circus. Then it will be a different sport, it won’t even be basketball, it will be a bunch of crap,” a large segment of the NBA’s older demographic smiled in appreciation.

When Dantley came into the league, there was no 3-point shot. And in the first year it was introduced, 1979-80, the Atlanta Hawks attempted a total of 75 3-pointers over the entire season. (Dantley was 0-for-2 for the Jazz).

Today’s NBA players are political and outspoken, just like many of their predecessors, and their massive social media followings give them an extraordinary amount of influence in dictating the national dialogue. The national media often seizes upon this low-hanging fruit

and foments racial disharmony, which will be a topic at All-Star Weekend in a city where the population is 72.5 percent white, 19.9 percent Hispanic and 2.7 percent Black or African-American.

But racial disparity does not equate to a racist dynamic, as some Black players have had a more difficult time adjusting to Salt Lake City than others, as we learned most recently from Donovan Mitchell, who was cheered Jan. 10 when he made his return to Utah with his new team, the Cleveland Cavaliers.

For Dantley, who went to a primarily white Catholic university at Notre Dame in South Bend, Indiana, the learning curve was not steep because he had grown accustomed to being around people who did not look like him.

“Of all the cities where I played, guys would ask me, ‘How can you play here?’ But it was the best place that I played. People were great to me,” Dantley said. “Those were the most supportive fans I have ever been around, and to this day, I remain close friends with (Jazz

broadcaster) Ron Boone, who came up with me on the Lakers, and during the summers when I ran summer camps there.”

Dantley also recalled how the Jazz team doctor helped him alleviate a chronic back problem by having him wear orthotics to compensate for a slight difference in the size of his legs. “Haven’t had a back problem since.”

Let’s hope the retired players who gather in Utah this February keep Dantley’s stories of his fond memories of Salt Lake City in mind. Perhaps they may even play a role in altering the national dialogue surrounding the intersection of race, sports and politics. If everyone can fly out of Utah having made that part of the national dialogue, All-Star Weekend will have been a success on a level that may matter more than anything.



LEGENDS CHAPTER SPOTLIGHT: MIAMI

The Miami Chapter of the National Basketball Retired Players Association, led by Chapter President Toccara Williams, has been actively involved in their local community through numerous events and initiatives. These Legends of Basketball have inspired and engaged meaningfully with youth in the South Florida area through events like the Back 2 School Bash hosted by WMBM 1490 Gospel Radio, a holiday toy drive at the African American Research Library and Cultural Center, and speaking with students as part of Martin Luther King Jr. Day programming in Fort Lauderdale.



A NETFLIX DOCUMENTARY

HE CHANGED MORE THAN THE GAME

BILL RUSSELL

LEGEND



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LEGEND SIGHTINGS

MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. DAY 2023

On Monday, January 16 the Memphis Grizzlies and National Civil Rights Museum hosted the 21st Annual Martin Luther King Jr. Celebration Game between the Grizzlies and the Phoenix Suns. As part of the celebration, Nancy Lieberman, Gary Payton and Luol Deng were honored for their dedication and contributions to civil and human rights and the social justice movement.





LEGEND SIGHTINGS

NBA PARIS GAME 2023

The NBA returned to Paris, France for the NBA Paris Game on January 19 between the Chicago Bulls and the Detroit Pistons. Fans, celebrities and Legends from around the world gathered at Accor Arena to celebrate the growth of the game of basketball. Joakim Noah, Tony Parker, Rip Hamilton, Ben Wallace and Magic Johnson were among the NBA Legends in attendance to represent the league and watch the Bulls defeat the Pistons 126-108.





LEGEND SIGHTINGS

WNBA FINALS 2022

The 2022 WNBA Finals featured a highly anticipated best-of-five series between the Las Vegas Aces and the Connecticut Sun. WNBA Legend Becky Hammon, in her first year as head coach of the team, led the Aces to a 3-1 series win to earn Las Vegas their first professional women's basketball title. Hammon's championship win added an exclamation point to her season after earning the title of 2022 WNBA Coach of the Year, making her the first former player to earn the honor in her debut season as a WNBA head coach and the only one to win the award while coaching the franchise for which she had previously played.





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