SteveFrancis~ pledges lifelong loyalty to the Rocket~s

by

 became a fan favorite during his early days with the , as he had a skillset that made him entertaining to watch. Francis~ had one of the best crossovers in the league and had the athleticism that made him a human highlight reel.

Following a controversial trade that sent Francis~ from the VancouverGrizzlies~ to Houston~, Francis~ finished the 199900season~ in a dead tie with EltonBrand~ for the Rookie of the Yearaward~, as he turned in averages of 18~ points, 66~ assists, 53~ rebounds, and 15~ steals. By Francis~’ third year in the league he became an AllStar~ and would be named to three consecutive AllStar~ teams.

Francis~ didn’t exactly have the best experience in the SpaceCity~, as the Rocket~s went 195~-215 during his first five years in the league and only made the postseason once, which resulted in the Rocket~s getting dismantled within five games of the opening round of the 2004 playoffs by the LosAngelesLakers~. Afterwards, Francis~ was traded to the Orlando Magic, in a deal that brought  to Houston~ and put an end to the tumultuous relationship Francis~ had with first-year Rocket~s coach JeffVanGundy~.

After three combined seasons with the Orlando Magic and the NewYorkKnicks~, Francis~ made a brief return to the Rocket~s in 200708~ but played sparingly in ten games, as he was a shell of himself. Francis~ was later traded by the Rocket~s for a second time in 2008~, although this time to the MemphisGrizzlies~, in a deal that was believed to prove that he could still play.

In spite of the rocky relationship Francis~ had with the franchise, he his thoughts on the JamesHarden~ melodrama that saw the second-best player in franchise history get dealt to the BrooklynNets~.

In the same interview with NBC~ Houston~’s Sports Sunday, Francis~ later added, “I’maRocket~ man. Once a Rocket~, always one.”

Off the court, Francis~ has become a philanthropist in the Houston~ community, as he’s founded a scholarship after his late mother, named the BrendaWilson~ scholarship, which is geared towards high school seniors in the greater Houston~ area and has granted $500000~ to morethan50~ students.

Francis~ also offered a helping hand during Houston~’s most devastating natural disaster of late, HurricaneHarvey~, where he provided food and water, while also providing clothing to an abundance of impacted Houston~ians. Francis~ recently founded the Houston~ Push, which is a minor league basketball team in Houston~ that is in TheBasketballLeague~.

Considering Francis~’ lifelong appreciation for the Houston~ Rocket~s and his contributions to the city of Houston~, it’s safe to say that he’ll be around for awhile.