

## David Stern, commissioner who built NBA into global sports phenomenon, dies at 77

David Stern, who served as commissioner of the National Basketball Association for three decades, transforming a struggling league plagued with image problems into a billion-dollar business whose games are viewed by fans in more than 200 countries, died Wednesday in New York.

He had a brain **hemorrhage** while dining in New York on Dec. 12 and was taken to a hospital but did not recover. The NBA announced his death Wednesday afternoon. He was 77.

hemorrhage 出血

onetime 从前的；一度的

In a league of tall, **sleek** athletes capable of performing seemingly superhuman feats on the basketball court, the unathletic, 5-foot-9 Stern was unquestionably the most dominant figure in the NBA. A lawyer and league official before he was named commissioner in 1984, he stabilized a league that was **tottering** with its fan base shrinking and many of its teams losing money.

sleek 光滑的；时髦的

totter 蹒跚；踉跄

He led the NBA's expansion to 30 teams, pushed out **incompetent** owners and encouraged struggling **franchises** to move to other cities. He negotiated broadcast contracts worth hundreds of millions of dollars, and brought a fresh approach to marketing that took advantage of the sport's youth, diversity and international appeal. In perhaps his most significant innovation, Stern encouraged the NBA to present its players almost as if they were movie stars or superheroes.

incompetent 不称职的；不合适的

franchise 特权

When he took over the NBA's top job, the league had 24 employees. When he retired in 2014, it had 1,200 employees, with offices all over the world, including three in China.

"I think he's going to go down as probably the greatest commissioner ever in sports," Steve Kerr, a **onetime** player and the current Golden State head coach, said in 2014. "It just felt like the NBA was always sort of two steps ahead of everybody, and I think David Stern has everything to do with that."