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Michael Jordan - The Heir to the Throne

Michael Jordan, born on February 17, 1963 broke new ground during his illustrious 15-year NBA career by showcasing breath-taking movements and draw-dropping athleticism. The game of basketball throughout the years has seen its share of great players. The list includes marquee names such as Jerry West, Bill Russell, Julius Erving, Oscar Robertson, Magic Johnson, and Larry Bird. But none of these names compare to Michael Jordan. In fact, Jordan’s career accolades, commitment to winning, and clutch performances especially in playoff games have secured his spot on top as the greatest basketball player in history.

6-time NBA Champion,Two-time olympic gold medal winner, and is a part of a 72-win Chicago Bulls team, the most wins in a regular season in NBA history. These are just some of the numbers that equate to the legacy that is Michael Jordan. He is also a 5-time NBA most valuable player.Many people will tell you that there is no doubt that Jordan is the greatest winner. Granted, there is evidence to back that statement up. Look at all the obstacles that he had to maneuver through in order to reach the top. The late 1980s includes two teams that come to mind. Larry Bird’s Boston Celtics and the Bad Boy Detroit Pistons led by Isiah Thomas. Despite having his ways with the Celtics including an unbelievable performance in Game 2 of the 1986 Playoffs it simply was not enough to down the champs.

Despite being short-handed and overmatched (Carmelo last night anybody?), Michael carried the Bulls on his back to give the eventual NBA Champion Celtics all they could handle in a double-overtime thriller. Unfortunately, and also like Melo, Michael's 63 weren't enough on that night. The Bulls fell 135-131.(Richard)

Jordan would then fall to the Pistons in three straight playoff series before finally breaking through in 1991 en route to winning 6 NBA championships in the decade. Even though he encounters struggles in his career, Michael always finds a way to grind it out and see the finish line with his competitive edge and commitment to winning.

One of the things that separates Michael Jordan from the rest is his competitive nature and desire to win. Many people will say that the one thing they remember about Michael Jordan is his desire to win and be better than the competition. In the 1992 NBA Finals Jordan was compared to his opposition, Portland Trail Blazer guard Clyde Drexler. In Tim Doherty’s words, Jordan decided it was time to take action. “Jordan took notice and used the finals as an opportunity to prove Drexler wasn’t in his class.” (Doherty). The Bulls would later go on to win the series 4 games to 2. In 1997 despite earning 200 more votes, Michael Jordan did not win the NBA Most Valuable Player Award, instead the award questionably went to Karl Malone of the Utah Jazz. According to an excerpt from the same Tim Doherty article on Bleacher Report “It is widely believed that Karl Malone unjustly won the 1997 MVP over Jordan because writers believed Jordan had won enough”(Doherty). Michael knows that he should have won the award. This fuels him to perform at a higher level than usual. And in the 1997 NBA Finals Jordan and the Bulls dominate Malone’s Jazz as Jordan wins his sixth NBA championship. From the individual accolades to his incomparable competitive nature, Michael Jordan as the basketball world knows, is known for hitting the clutch shot and coming up big in key games especially in the playoffs.

It all started at the University of North Carolina, where Michael attended college when his Tar Heels faced the Georgetown Hoyas for the 1982 NCAA Men’s Basketball National Championship. There he hit the game-winning shot to propel the Tar Heels to a National Championship victory. Heading to his NBA career first the 1986 NBA Playoffs against the Boston Celtics where he scored 63 points in his 2nd career playoff game. Who can forget the miraculous buzzer beater over Craig Ehlo in the 1989 playoffs. Or how about Game 1 of the 1992 NBA Finals or the “Shrug Game” where Jordan makes six three-pointers and scores 35 points in the FIRST half. Then there is the game that many basketball fans say defined the legacy of Michael Jordan, The Flu Game, Game 5 1997 NBA Finals. As Jordan battled the flu he scores 35 points including a 3-pointer that sealed the victory for the Bulls giving them a 3-2 series advantage heading back to Chicago. And last but not least the shot in the 1998 NBA Finals against the same Utah Jazz team that secured Michael Jordan’s sixth and final NBA Championship.

Michael Jordan has secured his spot on top of the list of all-time greats. Through his many milestone achievements such as his 6 championships, 5 MVP awards, and 2 Gold-Medals he sets the standard for future upcoming players. With his competitiveness and desire to be the best he inspires our world to strive for greatness everyday. And when the spotlight is on him and the stage is as big as it can ever be, he delivers his greatest performance. This is the story of Michael Jordan and the legacy he leaves behind.

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