

= Toronto Raptors =

The Toronto Raptors are a Canadian professional basketball team based in Toronto , Ontario . The Raptors compete in the National Basketball Association (NBA) , as a member of the league 's Eastern Conference Atlantic Division . The team was established in 1995 , along with the Vancouver Grizzlies , as part of the NBA 's expansion into Canada . When the Grizzlies relocated to Memphis , Tennessee to become the Memphis Grizzlies in 2001 , the Raptors became the only Canadian @-@ based team in the NBA . They originally played their home games at the SkyDome (since renamed Rogers Centre in 2005) , before moving eastward along Bremner Boulevard to the Air Canada Centre in 1999 .

Like most expansion teams , the Raptors struggled in their early years , but after the acquisition of Vince Carter through a draft day trade in 1998 , the team set league @-@ attendance records and made the NBA playoffs in 2000 , 2001 , and 2002 . Carter was instrumental in leading the team to a then @-@ franchise high 47 wins and their first playoff series win in 2001 , where they advanced to the Eastern Conference semifinals . During the 2002 ? 03 and 2003 ? 04 seasons , they failed to make significant progress and he was traded in 2004 to the New Jersey Nets .

After Carter left , Chris Bosh emerged as the team leader . In 2006 ? 07 , Bryan Colangelo 's first full season as President and General Manager , a combination of Bosh , 2006 first overall NBA draft pick Andrea Bargnani and a revamp of the roster helped the Raptors qualify for their first playoff berth in five years , capturing the Atlantic Division title with 47 wins . In the 2007 ? 08 season , they advanced to the playoffs again , but failed to make the playoffs in each of the next five seasons . In a bid to persuade Bosh to stay , Colangelo overhauled the team roster for the 2009 ? 10 season , but Bosh signed with the Miami Heat in July 2010 , ushering in yet another era of rebuilding for the Raptors .

After Masai Ujiri was brought in as the new General Manager in 2013 , he traded Bargnani to the New York Knicks . With a backcourt led by Kyle Lowry and DeMar DeRozan , the Raptors returned to the playoffs , won their second Atlantic Division title , and won a then @-@ franchise record 48 games in the 2013 ? 14 season . However , they failed for a fourth consecutive time to advance beyond the first round of the playoffs . In the 2014 ? 15 season , they won a then @-@ franchise record 49 games , but failed for a second consecutive year to advance past the first round of the playoffs , getting swept by the Washington Wizards , 4 ? 0 . In the 2015 ? 16 season , they won a franchise record 56 games , finishing in second place in the conference for the first time in franchise history . In the playoffs , they won their first playoff series since 2001 by defeating both the Indiana Pacers and Miami Heat , advancing to the Conference Finals for the first time against the Cleveland Cavaliers , only for the Raptors to lose to the eventual NBA champions in six games .

= = Franchise history = =

= = = Creation = = =

The Toronto Raptors were established on November 4 , 1993 , when the NBA , as part of its expansion into Canada , awarded its 28th franchise to a group headed by Toronto businessman John Bitove for a then @-@ record expansion fee of \$ 125 million US . Bitove and Allan Slaight of Slaight Communications each owned 44 % , with the Bank of Nova Scotia (10 %) , David Peterson (1 %) , and Phil Granovsky (1 %) being minority partners . Wagering on NBA games in Ontario nearly cost Toronto the expansion franchise , due to strict league rules at the time that prohibited gambling . However , an agreement was reached whereby the provincial lottery corporation agreed to stop offering wagering on all NBA games in exchange for a donation by the Raptors of \$ 5 million in its first three years and \$ 1 million annually afterwards to its charitable foundation to compensate the provincial lottery corporation for its loss of revenue . The Raptors , along with the Vancouver Grizzlies , played their first game in 1995 , and were the first NBA teams based in Canada since the 1946 ? 47 Toronto Huskies , though the Buffalo Braves had played a total of 16 regular season

games at Maple Leaf Gardens in Toronto from 1971 to 1975 .

Initial sentiment was in favour of reviving the Huskies nickname , but team management realized it would be nearly impossible to design a logo that did not substantially resemble that of the Minnesota Timberwolves . As a result , a nationwide contest was held to help name the team and develop their colours and logo . Over 2 @, @ 000 entries were narrowed down to ten prospects : Beavers , Bobcats , Dragons , Grizzlies , Hogs , Raptors , Scorpions , T @- @ Rex , Tarantulas , and Terriers . The final selection ? Toronto Raptors ? was unveiled on Canadian national television on May 15 , 1994 : the choice was influenced by the popularity of the 1993 film adaption of the 1990 science fiction novel Jurassic Park by Michael Crichton . The name " Raptor " is a common informal name for the velociraptor , a swift medium @- @ sized dromaeosaurid theropod dinosaur . On May 24 , 1994 , the team 's logo and first General Manager , Isiah Thomas were revealed at a press conference . As part of the deal , Thomas received an option to purchase part of the team , reportedly for under market value . He would purchase 4 @. @ 5 % in May 1995 and a further 4 @. @ 5 % in December 1995 , half each from Bitove and Slaight , decreasing their share to 39 @. @ 5 % . The team 's colours of bright red , purple , black , and silver were also revealed ; " Naismith " silver was chosen as an ode to Canadian James Naismith , the inventor of basketball . The team originally competed in the Central Division , and before the inaugural season began , sales of Raptors merchandise ranked seventh in the league , marking a successful return of professional basketball to Canada .

As General Manager , Isiah Thomas quickly staffed the management positions with his own personnel , naming long @- @ time Detroit Pistons assistant Brendan Malone as the Raptors ' head coach . The team 's roster was then filled as a result of an expansion draft in 1995 . Following a coin flip , Toronto was given first choice and selected Chicago Bulls point guard and three @- @ point specialist B. J. Armstrong . Armstrong refused to report for training and Thomas promptly traded him to the Golden State Warriors for power forwards Carlos Rogers and Victor Alexander . Thomas then selected a wide range of players in the expansion draft , including veterans Jerome Kersey , Willie Anderson and his former Pistons teammate John Salley .

Subsequent to the expansion draft , the Raptors landed the seventh pick in the NBA draft lottery , behind their fellow 1995 expansion club , the Vancouver Grizzlies . Thomas selected Damon Stoudamire , a point guard out of Arizona , around whom the franchise would seek to construct its near future . Yet , the selection of Stoudamire was met with boos from fans at the 1995 NBA draft at SkyDome in Toronto , many of whom wanted Ed O 'Bannon of UCLA , an NCAA Final Four Most Valuable Player .

= = = 1995 ? 99 : Struggles of a new franchise = = =

In the team 's first official NBA game , Alvin Robertson scored the first NBA points in Raptors history , while Stoudamire recorded 10 points and 10 assists in a 94 ? 79 victory over the New Jersey Nets . The Raptors concluded their inaugural season with a 21 ? 61 win ? loss record , although they were one of the few teams to defeat the Chicago Bulls , who set a then all @- @ time NBA best 72 ? 10 win ? loss regular season record . With averages of 19 @. @ 0 points and 9 @. @ 3 assists per game , Stoudamire also won the 1995 ? 96 Rookie of the Year Award .

In November of the 1996 ? 97 season , Bitove sold his ownership interest in the team to Slaight for \$ 65 million after Slaight had activated a shotgun clause in their partnership agreement , giving Slaight 79 % control of the team , and remaining minority partner of the Bank of Nova Scotia (10 %) , Thomas (9 %) Peterson (1 %) and Granovsky (1 %) . Slaight subsequently acquired the 1 % which had been owned by both Peterson and Granovsky , who had died a year earlier . The team improved on its win record by nine games . They selected centre Marcus Camby with the second overall pick in the 1996 NBA draft . By the end of the season , Camby earned a berth on the NBA 's All @- @ Rookie Team while Stoudamire continued to play well , averaging 20 @. @ 2 points and 8 @. @ 8 assists per game . As in the previous season , the Raptors were one of only 11 teams to topple the eventual 1997 Champions , the Chicago Bulls . The Raptors also defeated the Houston Rockets , Utah Jazz and Miami Heat , all of whom were eventual Conference finalists . However ,

the Raptors struggled against teams who were not of championship calibre , including three losses to the 15 ? 67 Boston Celtics .

In the 1997 ? 98 season , the team suffered numerous injuries and slid into a 17 @-@ game losing streak . After Thomas ' attempts to execute a letter of intent with Slaight to purchase the team failed , he resigned his position with the team in November and sold his 9 % stake in the team to Slaight . This left Slaight with 90 % and the Bank of Nova Scotia with 10 % . Thomas was replaced by Glen Grunwald as GM . With Thomas gone , Stoudamire immediately sought a trade . On February 13 , 1998 , he was shipped to the Portland Trail Blazers along with Walt Williams and Carlos Rogers for Kenny Anderson , Alvin Williams , Gary Trent , two first @-@ round draft choices , a second @-@ round draft choice and cash . Anderson refused to report to Toronto and was traded to the Celtics with ?an Tabak and Popeye Jones for Chauncey Billups , Dee Brown , Roy Rogers and John Thomas . When the trading deadline was over , the Raptors became the youngest team in the league with an average age of 24 @.@ 6 . They had five rookies on their roster , including the 18 @-@ year @-@ old Tracy McGrady , who at the time was the youngest player in the NBA . The inexperienced Raptors struggled throughout the season and their regular season record regressed to 16 ? 66 .

On February 12 , 1998 , Maple Leaf Gardens Ltd . , the owners of the Toronto Maple Leafs , purchased 100 % of the Raptors and the arena the team was building , Air Canada Centre , from Slaight and the Bank of Nova Scotia . MLSE paid a reported \$ 467 million , made up of \$ 179 million for the team and \$ 288 million for the arena . During the 1998 NBA draft , in what became a defining move for the franchise , Grunwald traded the team 's 4th overall pick Antawn Jamison to the Golden State Warriors for Vince Carter , who was selected 5th overall . To bring further credibility to the Raptors , Grunwald traded Marcus Camby to the New York Knicks for Charles Oakley , a veteran with playoff experience . Kevin Willis , another veteran acquired from the trade , solidified the centre position , while the coaching staff temporarily rotated Brown , Williams and Doug Christie to play point guard . Both Christie and Williams became talented players in their own right ; Christie developed into one of the elite defenders in the NBA , while Williams improved his play on the offensive end . New coach Butch Carter was also credited with much of the team 's turnaround during the lockout shortened 1998 ? 99 season . Although the team did not make the playoffs , many were optimistic with the impressive performances of Rookie of the Year Carter and a much improved McGrady .

= = = 1999 ? 2002 : The Vince Carter era = = =

During the 1999 NBA draft , believing that the Raptors still lacked a strong frontcourt presence , Grunwald traded first @-@ round draft pick Jonathan Bender for power forward Antonio Davis of the Indiana Pacers . Davis quickly entered the Raptors starting lineup and he would develop into an All @-@ Star in the coming years . Conversely , Bender would only play 9 seasons and would be out of the league by age 29 . In the backcourt , Carter , Christie and Dell Curry played at the shooting guard position and Alvin Williams and Muggsy Bogues at point guard . The rotation of Davis , Oakley and Willis in the frontcourt and Carter 's and McGrady 's improvement helped the team make its first ever playoff appearance , fulfilling a promise Carter had made to fans in the previous season . Lacking significant post @-@ season experience , Toronto was defeated 3 ? 0 by the New York Knicks in the first round . Nonetheless , team improvements and the rise of Carter ? who emphatically won the 2000 NBA Slam Dunk Contest ? attracted many fans around Toronto , many of whom were previously not basketball fans . The season was also the first full year played at the Air Canada Centre , after having played four years at the cavernous SkyDome , which was better suited to baseball and Canadian football . Overall , the Raptors concluded the season with a 45 ? 37 record .

Still , playoff failures and Butch Carter 's media altercations surrounding Camby led Grunwald to replace Carter prior to the 2000 ? 01 season with Lenny Wilkens , a Hall of Fame coach and player with more than 30 years of coaching experience . The team roster was also largely revamped , including the signing of veteran playmaker Mark Jackson on a four @-@ year contract . When Alvin

Williams later emerged as a clutch performer , Jackson was traded to allow Williams more playing time . In the 2000 off @-@ season , free agent McGrady opted to leave the Raptors in a sign @-@ and @-@ trade deal worth \$ 67 @.@ 5 million over six years , while giving a conditional draft pick as part of the agreement to the Orlando Magic , for a first @-@ round draft pick .

As predicted by analysts , the team easily secured a berth in the 2001 NBA playoffs with a franchise high 47 wins . The Raptors won their first ever playoff series as they defeated New York 3 ? 2 , advancing to the Eastern Conference Semifinals for the first time in franchise history . Wilkens was praised for having Williams defend shooting guard Allan Houston and Carter defend small forward Latrell Sprewell , the two major Knicks offensive threats . The series with Philadelphia 76ers was a landmark for the Raptors in terms of performance and entertainment value . The Sixers relied on Allen Iverson and Dikembe Mutombo for their respective offensive and defensive abilities , along with steady help from Aaron McKie . Toronto was the more balanced team with Carter , Alvin Williams and Davis providing much of the offensive game and Chris Childs and Jerome Williams on defence . The series came down to the last few seconds of Game 7 , when Carter 's potential series @-@ winning shot rolled off the rim . Carter was later widely criticized for attending his graduation ceremony at the University of North Carolina on the morning of Game 7 , as he scored only 20 points on 6 @-@ for @-@ 18 shooting , after a 39 @-@ point performance in Game 6 . Despite the loss , the season is generally considered a watermark for the franchise , given the Raptors ' franchise high of 47 wins and advancing beyond the first round of the playoffs .

The relocation of the Vancouver Grizzlies to Memphis , Tennessee in 2001 , as the Memphis Grizzlies , left Toronto as the NBA 's only Canadian team . In the summer of 2001 , long @-@ term contracts were given to Alvin Williams , Jerome Williams and Davis , while former NBA MVP centre Hakeem Olajuwon was signed to provide Carter with good support . The Raptors appeared to be on their way to another competitive season , with a 29 ? 21 record going into the All @-@ Star break and with Carter the top vote @-@ getter for the All @-@ Star game for the third consecutive year . Carter then suffered a bout of patellar tendinitis (also known as " jumper 's knee ") forcing him to miss the All @-@ Star game and the rest of the season , and without their franchise player , Toronto lost 13 consecutive games . However , they were able to win 12 of their last 14 games , clinching a playoff spot on the last day of the regular season . The comeback featured some of the Raptors ' best defence of the season , along with inspired performances by Davis and Keon Clark .

Despite Toronto 's improved defensive performances , Carter 's offence was sorely missed in the first @-@ round series against the second @-@ seeded Detroit Pistons . In the first game , Detroit overwhelmed Toronto 83 ? 65 , largely due to Ben Wallace 's strong performance of 19 points , 20 rebounds , 3 blocks and 3 steals . Detroit also won Game 2 , but Toronto won the next two games at home to force a deciding and tightly contested Game 5 in Detroit . With 10 @.@ 7 seconds left in the game , and the Raptors down 85 ? 82 with possession of the ball , Childs raced down the court and shot a three @-@ pointer that missed badly , apparently trying to draw a foul on the play , instead of passing to a wide @-@ open Curry . In a post @-@ game locker room interview , Childs repeatedly insisted that the Raptors had been down four points , not three . The Raptors ' late @-@ season surge was thus marred by a disappointing playoff exit ; the Olajuwon experiment was also a bust , with the 39 @-@ year @-@ old averaging career lows in minutes , points and rebounds . Furthermore , Childs , Clark , and Curry left the team , ensuring a new @-@ look team for the next season .

== = 2002 ? 06 : Another period of struggle == =

The 2002 ? 03 season began with the same optimism that the Raptors exhibited in three consecutive playoff seasons , although it faded early . Carter , while voted as a starter in the 2003 All @-@ Star Game , suffered a knee injury , while Davis expressed disinterest in Toronto , and Wilkens ' laissez @-@ faire attitude created a team that lacked the motivation and spirit of the previous years ' teams . The team was ravaged with injuries , losing an NBA record number of player games due to injury . Furthermore , the Raptors recorded the dubious honour of being the only team in NBA history to not dress 12 players for a single game in a season . Wilkens was

criticized heavily by the Toronto media for his inability to clamp down on his players when necessary , especially given this was the year that Wilkens overtook Bill Fitch for the most losses by an NBA coach , with his loss total getting dangerously close to his win total . The Raptors ended the season with a 24 ? 58 record and Wilkens was fired . This turned out to be a blessing in disguise , when the Raptors were given the 4th overall pick in the 2003 NBA draft and brought another star to Toronto in Chris Bosh .

Canadian country singer Shania Twain helped launch the new red Raptors alternate road uniform at the start of the 2003 ? 04 season , and the jerseys made their debut in a 90 ? 87 season @-@ opening victory on October 29 , 2003 against the defending Conference Champion New Jersey Nets . Davis and Jerome Williams were traded early in the season for Jalen Rose and Donyell Marshall . After 50 games , Toronto was 25 ? 25 and in a position to make the playoffs , but injuries to key players sent the Raptors plummeting down the standings . Rose , Carter , and Alvin Williams all suffered injuries as the Raptors struggled to a record of 8 ? 24 in their remaining games . The notable individual season performances were Carter 's 22 @.@ 5 ppg , Marshall 's 10 @.@ 7 rpg and rookie Bosh , a 6 ? 10 forward @-@ centre who averaged 11 @.@ 5 ppg and 7 @.@ 4 rpg and was named to the NBA All @-@ Rookie Team . Williams ' knee injury turned out to be career @-@ ending .

For the 2004 ? 05 season , the team moved into the Atlantic Division and the Raptors decided to revamp the team . Raptors President and CEO of Maple Leaf Sports & Entertainment Richard Peddie fired Grunwald on April 1 , 2004 , after the team ended the season three games short of the eighth and final playoff spot in the previous season . Head coach Kevin O 'Neill and his four assistant coaches were also dismissed immediately after Grunwald 's termination . Toronto interim manager Jack McCloskey said : " While the blame for that certainly does not rest on O 'Neill and his staff alone , we need a change . " Rob Babcock was named General Manager on June 7 , 2004 , alongside the appointments of Wayne Embry as senior advisor and Alex English as director of player development . Sam Mitchell , a former NBA forward and assistant coach of the Milwaukee Bucks was hired as new head coach of the Raptors .

Babcock 's first move as GM was drafting centre Rafael Araújo ? selected eighth overall ? in the 2004 NBA draft , in a move that was criticized by fans and analysts , considering highly touted swingman Andre Iguodala was drafted with the next pick . Babcock signed point guard Rafer Alston to a five @-@ year deal . After Vince Carter 's annual charity game , Babcock implicitly revealed to the media that Carter 's agent had asked for a trade confirming Carter was discontent . The Toronto Sun reported that Carter felt he was being misled by the Raptors ' hierarchy during the General Manager search and had concluded that as long as the managerial structure at Maple Leaf Sports and Entertainment Ltd. remained intact , the Raptors would never be an elite team . Carter was finally traded mid @-@ season , ending his six @-@ year tenure . Toronto received Alonzo Mourning , forwards Eric Williams and Aaron Williams and two mid @-@ to @-@ late future first round picks from the New Jersey Nets . Mourning chose not to report to Toronto , forcing Babcock to buy out the remainder of his contract at a reported \$ 10 million , leaving him free to sign with the Miami Heat . Eric and Aaron Williams were supposed to add defensive toughness and rebounding , but were generally under @-@ utilized for the entire season . Analysts had predicted Babcock got the bad end of the deal , and the trade eventually cost him his job .

Carter 's departure heralded a new era for Toronto . Bosh stepped up to the role of franchise player and performed well in his sophomore campaign , ranking tenth in the league in defensive rebounds . In contrast to Bosh 's emergence , Araújo struggled to keep a spot in the line @-@ up , and became unpopular with fans and local media . Although the ACC was often well @-@ attended due to the Raptors ' 22 ? 19 home record , their inability to win on the road (11 ? 30) and poor defensive record made Mitchell 's first year as head coach unimpressive . Additionally , Mitchell had problems dealing with Alston , who openly expressed his unhappiness with Mitchell in a post @-@ game interview . Later in the season , Alston was suspended two games for " conduct detrimental to the team " for reportedly walking out of a scrimmage during practice . Notwithstanding the unrest , in their first season competing in the Atlantic Division , Toronto maintained the same regular season record of 33 ? 49 as the previous season .

The Raptors continued to rebuild during the 2005 NBA draft , selecting Charlie Villanueva , Joey Graham , Roko Ukić and Uroš Slokar , with Villanueva 's selection being very controversial amongst basketball pundits and Raptors fans alike . The Raptors started their training camp by trading Alston to the Houston Rockets for Mike James , and signing free agent José Calderón as a back @-@ up for James . Despite the infusion of new players , Toronto 's overall 2005 ? 06 season was a disappointment ; they set a franchise record by losing their first nine games and 15 out of their first 16 games . With losses mounting and media scrutiny intensifying , the Raptors hired ex @-@ Purdue coach Gene Keady as an assistant off the bench to help develop the young Raptors team , as well as establish a defensive persona for the team . On January 15 , 2006 , the Raptors set a franchise points record in a 129 ? 103 win over the Knicks when Villanueva hit a three @-@ pointer late in the game , but less than a week later , the Raptors gave up an 18 @-@ point lead against the Los Angeles Lakers , and allowed Lakers star Kobe Bryant to score 81 points , the second highest single @-@ game total in NBA history . With media scrutiny intensifying once more and the Raptors entrenched at the bottom of the league in defensive field goal percentage , Toronto fired Babcock .

The 2005 ? 06 season was not a total disaster . Villanueva 's play impressed both fans and former critics as he came in second in NBA Rookie of the Year and recorded 48 points in an overtime loss to Milwaukee Bucks , the most points scored by any rookie in franchise history and the most by a rookie in the NBA since 1997 . Bosh was also named a reserve forward for the Eastern All @-@ Star Team in the 2006 game , becoming the third Raptor after Vince Carter and Antonio Davis to appear in an All @-@ Star Game . On February 27 , 2006 , the team named Bryan Colangelo , the 2004 ? 05 NBA Executive of the Year , the President and General Manager of the Raptors . Known for his success in transforming a lottery Phoenix team into a 62 @-@ win offensive juggernaut , his hiring gave hope to many fans . Still , Toronto ended the season weakly when Bosh suffered a season @-@ ending thumb injury . The Raptors lost ten in a row after Bosh 's injury and finished the season with the fifth worst record (27 ? 55) in the NBA .

= = = 2006 ? 10 : The rise of Chris Bosh = = =

The 2006 ? 07 season represented a watershed year for the Raptors franchise . The roster was overhauled , including the selection of 2006 NBA draft number one pick Andrea Bargnani , the acquisition of point guard T. J. Ford in exchange for Villanueva , and the signing of shooting guard Anthony Parker and small forward Jorge Garbajosa . Bosh was given a three @-@ year contract extension , while Maurizio Gherardini of Benetton Treviso was hired as the club 's vice @-@ president and assistant general manager .

The first half of the season produced mixed results as Toronto struggled towards the .500 mark . After the All @-@ Star break , Bargnani continued to work on his defence and shooting (averaging 14 @.@ 3 points per game (ppg) and 3 @.@ 9 rebounds per game (rpg) in 12 games for the month of February 2007) , and he was selected as the Eastern Conference Rookie of the Month for the second straight time on March 1 , 2007 . Bargnani became the third Raptor ever to win the award twice , joining Vince Carter and Damon Stoudamire . Toronto ended the regular season with a 47 ? 35 record , securing the third seed in the Eastern Conference for the 2007 NBA Playoffs along with the Atlantic Division title , as well as homecourt advantage for the first time in franchise history . Bosh was voted to start in the 2007 NBA All @-@ Star Game . The Raptors were also praised for their improved defence , ball @-@ sharing and tremendous team chemistry . Colangelo , Gherardini and Mitchell were credited with Toronto 's turnaround this season , which was one of the best in NBA history in terms of league standing and defensive ranking . Mitchell was subsequently named the 2006 ? 07 NBA Coach of the Year , the first coach in Raptors history to receive the honour , while Colangelo was named 2006 ? 07 Executive of the Year . On April 24 , 2007 , the Raptors won their first playoff game in five seasons , with an 89 ? 83 victory over the New Jersey Nets , but lost the series 4 ? 2 . The series was notable for pitting ex @-@ Raptor Vince Carter against his former team . The Nets took home court advantage in Game 1 , holding off a late Raptors rally in the fourth quarter . The Raptors pulled away in another tight game to even the series at one game apiece . When the series shifted to New Jersey , the Nets took charge of the series ,

winning games 3 and 4 in routs . New Jersey had a chance to win the series in game 5 in Toronto , but the Raptors took a 20 @-@ point lead after one quarter . Still , New Jersey managed to chip away , and had a chance to win the game , but Bo?tjan Nachbar 's three @-@ pointer missed at the buzzer . Needing to win in New Jersey to force a game 7 , Toronto held a one @-@ point lead with under a minute to play in game 6 , but Richard Jefferson hit a layup with eight seconds left to play . Toronto attempted to try for the game @-@ winning shot , but Jefferson intercepted a pass to seal the series for the Nets .

Several changes to the roster were made before the 2007 ? 08 campaign as Toronto sought to reproduce the same form as the previous campaign . Most notably , the Raptors acquired Carlos Delfino in a trade with Detroit for two second round draft picks , and signed Jamarion Moon and three @-@ point specialist Jason Kaponi as free agents . On the other hand , veteran swingman Morris Peterson joined the New Orleans Hornets . Despite being defending division champions , the Raptors were widely tipped as outside contenders for the division and conference titles . However , Toronto quickly fell behind Boston in the division , as Bargnani 's inability to play well consistently , along with injuries to Garbajosa (75 games) , Bosh (15 games) and Ford (31 games) , derailed the possibility of a smooth campaign as the Raptors finished 41 @-@ 41 , six fewer wins than the previous season , but still good enough for a playoff spot as the 6th seed . They were pitted against Dwight Howard and the resurgent Orlando Magic . In Game 1 , Dwight Howard gave the Magic their first playoff win since 2003 as they practically led the entire game . Howard would put up a 29 ? 20 in Game 2 , as Hedo Türko?lu scored the final four go @-@ ahead points to give the Magic a 2 ? 0 lead . The Raptors would respond with a strong Game 3 victory keyed by great point guard play from Ford and José Calderon . However , Jameer Nelson , Rashard Lewis and Keith Bogans keyed strong three point shooting in Game 4 and overcame Bosh 's 39 points and 15 rebounds to bring the Magic out of Toronto with a 3 ? 1 lead . Howard would finish off the series in Game 5 as impressively as he started ? 21 points , 21 rebounds , 3 blocks . Whereas the preceding season was considered a success , the 2007 ? 08 campaign was considered a disappointment . Weaknesses in Toronto 's game ? rebounding , defence , and a lack of a swingman ? were brought into sharp focus during the playoffs , and changes were expected to be made to the roster .

As it turned out , a blockbuster trade was agreed in principle before the 2008 ? 09 campaign : six @-@ time All @-@ Star Jermaine O 'Neal was acquired from the Indiana Pacers in exchange for Ford (who had become expendable with the emergence of Calderón) , Rasho Nesterovi? , Maceo Baston , and Roy Hibbert , the 17th pick in the 2008 NBA draft , giving the Raptors a potential boost in the frontcourt . Meanwhile , Bargnani , who had spent the summer working on his interior game , was projected to come off the bench . The Raptors also introduced a black alternate road jersey for the season similar to the earlier purple design that was dropped a few seasons ago . It had a maple leaf featured on the back neck of the jersey , symbolizing the Raptors as " Canada 's team " . Despite the introduction of O 'Neal , who brought home the rebounds and the blocks , and a much improved Bargnani , the Raptors were too inconsistent . Following an 8 ? 9 start to the season , Mitchell was fired and replaced by long @-@ time assistant Jay Triano . Triano tweaked with the starting line @-@ up to no avail as the Raptors fell to 21 ? 34 prior to the All @-@ Star break . O 'Neal and Moon were then traded to Miami for Shawn Marion and Marcus Banks , but with the losses mounting , the Raptors soon fell out of the playoffs picture , and were eliminated from contention with seven games of the regular season remaining . The Raptors eventually finished with a 33 ? 49 record and headed into the next season with a potential overhaul of the core : Marion could become a free agent ; Bosh could become one after 2009 ? 10 ; Parker would soon turn 35 ; and Bargnani had his breakthrough season . On May 12 , 2009 , Triano was given a three @-@ year term for the position of head coach .

The inevitable roster shakeup for the 2009 ? 10 season began when Kaponi was traded to the Philadelphia 76ers for the aggressive veteran forward Reggie Evans . Toronto then drafted DeMar DeRozan with the ninth pick , enabling them to fill a spot on the wings . This was followed by the signing of free agent Hedo Türko?lu , which in turn led to a sign @-@ and @-@ trade agreement involving four teams , with Toronto landing wing players Devean George (later traded for Marco Belinelli) and Antoine Wright , while releasing Marion , Kris Humphries and Nathan Jawai . Around

the same time , Parker headed for the Cleveland Cavaliers , while Indiana point guard Jarrett Jack was added and Nesterov brought back to provide cover for the big men . Finally , Delfino and Uki? were moved to the Milwaukee Bucks for Amir Johnson and Sonny Weems . It became increasingly clear that Colangelo , in securing a credible nucleus for the future , was doing this to persuade Bosh to stay beyond 2010 . While the Raptors were off to a sluggish start , they picked up the pace around the All @-@ Star break , reaching a season @-@ high seven games above .500 and standing fifth in the Eastern Conference . Bosh was recording career @-@ highs in ppg and rpg . However , a season @-@ ending injury to Bosh after the break coincided with Toronto 's descent down the standings from the fifth seed to the eighth , and they ultimately relinquished their spot to Chicago a few games before the regular season ended .

= = = 2010 ? 13 : Rebuilding = = =

Before the 2010 ? 11 season began , there was much anticipation around the league over the fates of an elite pack of free agents , featuring the likes of Bosh , Dwyane Wade , LeBron James , and Amar 'e Stoudemire . Bosh and James eventually chose to converge in Miami with Wade , and the sign @-@ and @-@ trade transaction that ensued resulted in the Raptors receiving two first @-@ round draft picks and a trade exception from Miami . Prior to this , Toronto had drafted Ed Davis , also a left @-@ handed power forward like Bosh . After Bosh left , Colangelo sought to trade Calderón , Evans and the disenchanted Türko?lu for Tyson Chandler , Leandro Barbosa , and Boris Diaw , but the trade involving Chandler collapsed at the last minute , as Chandler was traded to the Dallas Mavericks instead . Belinelli was then traded to New Orleans Hornets for Julian Wright , and 13 games into the season , Jack , David Andersen , and Marcus Banks to New Orleans for Peja Stojakovi? and Jerryd Bayless . Bosh 's first return to Toronto was received to a chorus of boos , but not as nearly as harsh as what former Raptors Tracy McGrady and Vince Carter received upon their respective returns . Without Bosh , Toronto as a team regressed and were only able to secure 22 wins in the regular season .

Dwane Casey , an assistant coach with the Mavericks , was hired as the new head coach of Toronto before the 2011 ? 12 season . The Raptors used their number five pick to select Jonas Valan?i?nas , a centre from Lithuania in the 2011 NBA draft . The season was shortened by 16 regular season games due to the 2011 NBA lockout , and the Raptors finished the season with a 23 ? 43 record . During the 2012 off @-@ season , Colangelo tried to lure Canadian free agent and two @-@ time MVP Steve Nash , who had become a free agent after playing for the Phoenix Suns , to play for the Raptors . When Nash joined the Los Angeles Lakers instead , the Raptors acquired point guard Kyle Lowry from the Houston Rockets for a future first round pick . Lowry , combined with Valan?i?nas and the 8th pick in the 2012 draft Terrence Ross , represented the next phase of the re @-@ building process . On January 30 , 2013 , the Raptors acquired Memphis Grizzlies star Rudy Gay and centre Hamed Haddadi as well as Pistons player Austin Daye in a three @-@ way deal that sent Calderón to the Detroit Pistons and Davis , along with Pistons veteran Tayshaun Prince and a 2nd round pick to the Grizzlies . Haddadi was later traded , along with a second round pick , to Phoenix in exchange for guard Sebastian Telfair . The 2012 ? 13 season was the first season since 2009 ? 10 that the Raptors finished the season with a winning home record (21 ? 20) , despite their overall losing record (34 ? 48) .

= = = 2013 ? present : DeRozan and Lowry era = = =

During the 2013 off @-@ season , new General Manager Masai Ujiri traded Bargnani to the New York Knicks for Marcus Camby , Steve Novak , Quentin Richardson , a future first round draft pick , and two future second round picks ; Camby and Richardson were both waived shortly after the trade . The Raptors also added Tyler Hansbrough , D. J. Augustin , Dwight Buycks , and Austin Daye via free agency . On December 9 , 2013 , the Raptors traded Rudy Gay , Quincy Acy , and Aaron Gray to the Sacramento Kings for John Salmons , Greivis Vásquez , Patrick Patterson , and Chuck Hayes , and waived Augustin . During the 2013 ? 14 season , the Raptors were 6 ? 12 before the Rudy

Gay trade ; after the trade , they went on a 10 ? 3 run as they maintained their lead in the division , and rose above the .500 mark for the first time in almost three years .

The Raptors entered the All @-@ Star break with a 28 ? 24 record , and DeRozan was also selected to play in the All @-@ Star game , being only the fourth ever Raptor to do so . On March 28 , 2014 , the Raptors clinched a playoff berth for the first time since 2008 after beating the Boston Celtics 105 ? 103 . On April 11 , 2014 , the Raptors lost to the New York Knicks 108 ? 100 , but since division rival Brooklyn lost to the Atlanta Hawks the same night , the Raptors became Atlantic Division champions for the first time since 2007 . They finished the regular season with a franchise @-@ high 48 wins (.585) , going 42 ? 22 (.656) after the Rudy Gay trade , the third @-@ best record in the Eastern Conference . The Raptors faced the Brooklyn Nets in the first round of the playoffs for the first time since 2007 , when the Nets where located in New Jersey . Toronto nearly advanced to the next round , but Paul Pierce blocked a potential game @-@ winner by Lowry in Game 7 .

During the 2014 ? 15 season , the Raptors were off to their best start in franchise history : a then @-@ Eastern Conference leading 24 ? 8 record by the end of 2014 . On March 27 , 2015 , the Raptors clinched the Atlantic division title with a 94 ? 83 win over the Los Angeles Lakers . This was the second consecutive year that the Raptors clinched the Atlantic Division title . On April 11 , 2015 , the Raptors beat the Miami Heat , Toronto 's first road win over the Heat since November 19 , 2008 , ending a ten @-@ game slide on Miami 's home floor . The win was Toronto 's 48th of the season and 22nd on the road , both tying franchise records . Four days later , the Toronto Raptors broke their franchise record with their 49th win of the season . After the 2014 ? 15 season , Louis Williams won the NBA Sixth Man of the Year Award , becoming the first ever Raptor to do so . The Raptors faced the Washington Wizards in the first round of the 2015 playoffs , and lost four straight games as the Wizards swept the Raptors .

On June 25 , 2015 , the Raptors selected Delon Wright with their first round pick in the 2015 NBA draft , along with Norman Powell in the second round . On June 29 , the Raptors announced their new NBA D @-@ League team , the Mississauga @-@ based Raptors 905 , which began play in the 2015 ? 2016 season . The Raptors added DeMarre Carroll , Cory Joseph , Bismack Biyombo , and Luis Scola via free agency .

The Raptors opened a new practice facility , the BioSteel Centre in Exhibition Place , on February 10 , 2016 . The Raptors hosted the 2016 NBA All @-@ Star Game on February 14 , 2016 and its associated weekend for the first time in its history . With a 105 ? 97 win at home against the Atlanta Hawks on March 30 , 2016 , the Raptors attained their first ever 50 @-@ win season . The following day the Raptors clinched the Atlantic Division title for the third consecutive season as a result of a Boston Celtics loss against the Portland Trail Blazers . The 56 ? 26 record became the best Raptors regular season ever , fourth overall in the league and second only to the Cleveland Cavaliers in the Eastern Conference . Entering the 2016 playoffs as the East 's second seed , the Raptors were pushed to seven games by the Indiana Pacers , but managed to win their first playoff series in 15 years . Another seven @-@ game series against the Miami Heat ensued , which Toronto also won . The Raptors , who were one of the four teams that never reached the NBA Conference Finals in their histories , appeared in the third round for the first time in their twenty @-@ first season , facing the Cleveland Cavaliers , in which they ultimately lost the series 4 ? 2 . The Cavaliers would then advance to the NBA Finals and became champions .

= = Logos and uniforms = =

= = = Logos = = =

On December 19 , 2014 , the Toronto Raptors unveiled a new primary logo , which the team described as " a circular shield with a ball torn by the unmistakable attack of a Raptor " .

= = = Uniforms = = =

Occasionally , the Raptors would wear the Toronto Huskies throwback jersey during retro nights , given that the Huskies are the unofficial predecessor of the Raptors and the Raptors are among the newest NBA teams .

===== 2015 redesign =====

On August 3 , 2015 , the Toronto Raptors unveiled four new uniforms . The uniforms were released in partnership with 2K Sports ' NBA 2K16 video game . The team said in a press release the new uniform designs were intended to pay tribute to the city of Toronto and to Canada as a whole , noting that the Raptors were the sole Canadian club in the NBA . The main colours would remain centred on Canada 's national colours of red and white , whereas black and silver will continue to be used for trim on the home white and red road uniform . The uniforms themselves underwent changes . Most notably , the chevrons on the side panels now point up , which the team said aligns with its current slogan of " We The North " . Since being introduced as a uniform accent in 1999 , the chevrons had pointed downward , the team said . In addition , at the waist @-@ level hem of the jersey is an upside @-@ down tag with the team 's " We The North " slogan . The team said the slogan on the tag will be visible to players when they tuck in their jersey . Additionally , the shorts now feature a maple leaf logo on the front of the waistband , and the letter " T " is now on the sides of the shorts , with the Raptors ' basketball claw logo below it . This is a reference to the city of Toronto 's " T @-@ Dot " nickname .

== Arenas ==

BioSteel Centre (Practice facility : 2016 ? present)

== Personnel ==

=== Current roster ===

=== Retained draft rights ===

The Raptors hold the draft rights to the following unsigned draft picks who have been playing outside the NBA . A drafted player , either an international draftee or a college draftee who is not signed by the team that drafted him , is allowed to sign with any non @-@ NBA team . In this case , the team retains the player 's draft rights in the NBA until one year after the player 's contract with the non @-@ NBA team ends . This list includes draft rights that were acquired from trades with other teams .

=== Management ===

General managers

1995 ? March 1998 : Isiah Thomas

March 1998 ? April 2004 : Glen Grunwald

April 2004 ? June 2004 (Interim) : Jack McCloskey

June 2004 ? January 2006 : Rob Babcock

January 2006 ? February 2006 (Interim) : Wayne Embry

February 2006 ? May 2013 : Bryan Colangelo

May 2013 ? present : Masai Ujiri

Owners

1995 ? 1998 : John Bitove , Allan Slaight , Isiah Thomas

1998 ? present : Maple Leaf Sports & Entertainment

Head coaches

Notes :

a A running total of the number of coaches of the Raptors and thus any coach who has two or more separate terms as head coach is only counted once

b Spent entire coaching career with the Raptors while in the NBA

c Elected into the Basketball Hall of Fame as a coach

= = Basketball Hall of Famers = = =

Notes :

1 In total , Wilkens was inducted into the Hall of Fame three times ? as player , as coach and as a member of the 1992 Olympic team .

= = FIBA Hall of Famers = = =

= = Awards and records = =

Since their inception in 1995 , the Raptors have made the playoffs eight times (2000 , 2001 , 2002 , 2007 , 2008 , 2014 , 2015 and 2016) , advancing past the first round twice (2001 and 2016) . The Raptors have won the Atlantic Division four times (2007 , 2014 , 2015 and 2016) , and the franchise record number of wins in the regular season is 56 (2016) . Five Raptors have been selected to play in the All @-@ Star game : Vince Carter , Antonio Davis , Chris Bosh , DeMar DeRozan and Kyle Lowry .

= = Broadcasters = =

Raptors games are primarily broadcast on television by TSN and Sportsnet . Through MLSE , the Raptors also operate the Canadian version of NBA TV (formerly known as Raptors NBA TV) , which airs reruns of Raptors telecasts along with other news and analysis programs focusing on the team and the rest of the NBA .

= = Fanbase and marketing = =

The Raptors have enjoyed a consistent fanbase throughout their history . The Toronto Raptors set NBA attendance records in their 2000 , 2001 , 2002 seasons when they made the playoffs . Attendance dipped slightly between 2003 and 2006 . This improved during the 2006 ? 07 regular season to an average of 18 @, @ 258 fans (13th in the league) , 92 @. @ 2 % of capacity at the ACC . Following the success of the 2006 ? 07 season , Toronto became one of the league leaders in season ticket sales for the 2007 ? 08 season . Their television ratings , however , are considerably lower than other more established Toronto sports teams and most other sporting events shown on Canadian television .

Another successful run starting in 2013 ? 14 led to a spike in the Raptors ' support . For the 2014 ? 15 season , the team sold out the 12 @, @ 500 season tickets , the first time it occurred since 2011 . Public watchings of the Raptors games , particularly during the playoffs , started being held at Maple Leaf Square , which the fans nicknamed " Jurassic Park " . MLSE decided to endorse this practice by setting up concession stands and branded sponsorships at the square , along with increased security . At times , footage from the square is broadcast to the Raptors locker room . The victorious Game 7 against the Indiana Pacers on the 2016 playoffs was the most watched Raptors broadcast ever , as well as the biggest television audience in Canada that day , averaging 1 @. @ 53 million viewers with a peak of 2 @. @ 63 million .

The value of the Raptors franchise has risen over the years . In 1998 , the franchise was bought for

US \$ 125 million . With the continued popularity of the Raptors , the value of the franchise doubled from US \$ 148 million in 2000 to \$ 297 million in 2004 . The value of the franchise grew again from \$ 315 million in 2006 to \$ 373 million in 2007 , and \$ 400 million in 2008 . By 2016 , Forbes estimated the Raptors were worth \$ 920 million .

On game day , the fans are usually entertained by the Raptor mascot , the Raptors Dance Pak , and the 4 Korner Raptors Soundcrew during pre @-@ game , time @-@ outs , and intervals . During the 2013 ? 14 season , a new " Drake Zone " was created in the lower bowl . Limited edition shirts were given away to fans sitting in the Drake Zone . Giveaways are sometimes bundled with tickets to encourage attendance . Further , whenever Toronto scores more than 100 points in a home game and wins , fans can redeem their ticket for a cheese or pepperoni pizza slice at standalone Pizza Pizza locations throughout Ontario for the business day after the game that was played . This is part of a promotion made by the Raptors ' official pizza sponsor .

= = = " We The North " re @-@ branding = = =

In the lead @-@ up to the team 's 20th anniversary season in 2015 , and its hosting of the 2016 All @-@ Star Game , the Raptors began the process of re @-@ branding itself . On September 30 , 2013 , Toronto @-@ based rapper Drake was announced as the new " global ambassador " for the Toronto Raptors , thereby joining the executive committee of his hometown 's NBA team . In April 2014 , the Raptors unveiled a new imaging campaign developed by the agency Sid Lee , " We The North " , built around a manifesto that was meant to embrace the team 's trait of being an " outsider " from the " north side " , and the accompanying feelings of players and fans .

The " We The North " campaign was originally to be launched during the 2015 ? 16 season ; however , the launch was hastened so it would be ready in time for the 2014 playoffs , taking into account the poor performance of Canada 's other pro sports teams at the time . An introductory commercial was quickly filmed , which featured the manifesto as narration , scenes of local basketball players in various outdoor locations around the city , and ended with a scene displaying a black , waving flag with the motto written on it . The campaign was immediately embraced by fans during the playoffs and following season ; the launch commercial was viewed over 500 @,@ 000 times in the two days following its release , " We The North " -branded shirts and flags became a common sight at games , while Ryerson University sports marketing professor Cheri Bradish compared the campaign to Molson 's former " I Am Canadian " alcohol advertising campaign in how it resonated with the country .

On December 19 , 2014 , the Raptors soft @-@ launched a new logo also designed by Sid Lee , which features a basketball with claw marks . The new logo was officially implemented during the 2015 ? 2016 season . The logo 's introduction was marred by a disorganized launch , which saw a black and white version initially shown before the eventual unveiling of colored versions later in the day , mixed reviews for the design itself , with some (especially on the black and white version) comparing it to that of the Brooklyn Nets , and despite teasing merchandise with the new logo , not releasing any until at least mid @-@ 2015 . There were also alleged tensions between MLSE staff and Drake surrounding the new design ? in particular , the performer had pushed for the team to change its primary colour from red to gold (a colour seen in one of the official variants of the logo unveiled that day) . In a response on Twitter , Drake distanced himself from the " execution " of the new logo .

= = Rivalries = =

= = = New Jersey / Brooklyn Nets = = =

The New Jersey / Brooklyn Nets and the Raptors have been minor rivals since the trade of Vince Carter to the Nets during the 2004 ? 05 season . The rivalry began to heat up as the two teams faced each other in the opening round of the 2007 NBA Playoffs , with the Nets winning the series 4

? 2 after a go @-@ ahead shot by Richard Jefferson with 8 seconds left in Game 6 ensuring 98 ? 97 defeat for the Raptors . The rivalry was rekindled during the 2013 ? 14 season when the Nets and Raptors battled for the Atlantic Division . The Raptors won the division final but then they found themselves facing the Nets in the opening round of the 2014 NBA Playoffs . Prior to Game 1 of the series , Raptors GM Masai Ujiri spoke at a Raptors rally outside Air Canada Centre 's Maple Leaf Square . During the rally , Ujiri yelled " Fuck Brooklyn ! " which found its way quickly onto social media platforms within minutes . Masai was fined \$ 25 @, @ 000 by the NBA for the quote and later apologized for the excessive language . The hard fought series lasted seven games , and was decided in the final seconds when Paul Pierce blocked Kyle Lowry 's shot giving the Nets the 104 ? 103 victory .

= = = New York Knicks = = =

The New York Knicks and the Raptors had a playoff rivalry in 2000 and 2001 . The Raptors made their first @-@ ever playoff appearance during the 1999 ? 2000 season , in which they were swept by the Knicks in the first round 3 ? 0 . The following season , the Raptors redeemed themselves , defeating the Knicks in the first round 3 ? 2 ; this effectively ended the Knicks ' run as perennial NBA championship contenders , which began in the early 1990s .

= = Community service = =

The Raptors Foundation was the charitable arm of the Raptors , dedicated to assisting Ontario 's registered charities that support programs and sports initiatives for at @-@ risk children and youth . The Foundation strove to lift spirits and change lives for young people by supporting local and provincial organizations that provide recreational , educational and other youth @-@ oriented activities . Through its community ties and with the help of its corporate partners , donors , Raptors players and volunteers , the Foundation has successfully raised more than \$ 14 million between 1995 and 2007 , and reached out to thousands of other charities . The Raptors Foundation was one of three parts of the Raptors ' community service program . The other projects are Raptors Community Relations and Raptors Basketball Development , both of which focus on providing basketball development programs . The Toronto Raptors lead the NBA for amount of money donated to the community . In 2009 , the Raptors Foundation merged with the other charitable arms of MLSE 's other sports franchises to form the Team Up Foundation .