

# Dream Team

by Jack McCallum [2012]

1980 Olympic boycott caused financial strain on the IOC & FIBA. Boris Stankovic [former meat inspector] pushed the International Olympic Committee (IOC) to allow professionals into the Olympics. Many argued that some countries paid athletes under other titles that allowed them to train full-time, while some athletes struggled to work & train.

The **dream team** was made up of Charles Barkley, Larry Bird, Clyde Drexler, Pat Ewing, Earvin "Magic" Johnson, Michael Jordan, Christian Laettner [the only non-NBA player], Karl Malone, Chris Mullin, Scottie Pippen, David Robinson & John Stockton. Chick Daly was head coach & his assistants were Lenny Wilkins, Mike Krzyzewski & P.J. Carlesimo.

Some say Jordan did not want Isiah Thomas on the team [even when Stockton got injured] & Shaquille O'Neal should have replaced Laettner. In 1991, Jordan was as popular as Babe Ruth in 1927. Jordan used to wear Converse shoes until his 1984 contract with Nike [Air Jordans produced more than \$153 million]. Reebok had the contract for the podium blazer so Jordan threw a flag over his shoulders to cover their logo.

Magic was the 1<sup>st</sup> onboard & wanted to be team captain, so he shared it Jordan. The world he had AIDS & some players were concerned. NBA was in control of marketing & gave 33% to the players [who gave it back to USA Basketball]. Jordan was not happy about having to sign hundreds of balls [at the time he was making about \$35 million in endorsements]. But there were extra costs to have the Dream at the Olympics [upgraded housing & security].

The first practice scrimmage game they lost 88-80 to some college players, but that was the last time they lost. Olympic game scores were: Angola 116-48; Croatia 103-70; Germany 111-68; Brazil 127-83; Lithuania 127-76; & Croatia 117-85. They shut down Kukoc of Croatia & Marciulionis of Lithuania. All said & done winning by an average of 51 points. Coach Daly never took a time out in the **'92 Olympics**.

Barkley came with baggage, but was good & the locals loved him. Jordan, Pippen & Barkley were the best on the team at that time. Jordan & Pippen were a good pair, so were Malone & Stockton. Jordan & Pippen won 6 championships, Magic 5, Bird 3. Malone had a lifetime free-throw average of .742. Robinson went on to start a private school in San Antonio, TX.

The dream inspired the next generation of great players & NBA international broadcast went from 85 to 215 countries. The US '96 World Championship team had new players & was a disaster. The US Olympic team won gold in '96 & 2000, but only bronze in '04.

Bird had back pain for years & retired after Barcelona. Magic soon followed. Jordan loves golf [Laettner was better] & ping pong. Jordan had gambling issues, but realizes his most valuable asset is his time. His dad was killed in 1993 & Jordan took a year in baseball's minor league.

## Quotes:

"We want to destroy these guys, but not destroy the love they have for us." (Magic Johnson)

Definitions:

7	imprimatur	endorsement
9	shamateurism	illegally paying athletes & call them amateurs
24	chimerical	imaginary
35	gilded	covered with gold leaf or paint
50	beamonesque	remarkable [Bob Beamon's '68 Olympics]
53	scythe	hand tool to cut grass
68	coiffed	neatly arranged
69	Wallenda	?
85	leitmotif	recurrent theme
125	proclivity	tendency
130	dalliance	casual romance
130	soliloquize	?
130	tryst	secret rendezvous
131	incongruity	out of place
156	gentrified	make more refined
161	cadged	obtain
168	raiment	dress
190	alacrity	eagerness
190	succor	assist
193	sybaritic	self-indulgent
206	rhetorician	impressive speaker
214	pell-mell	recklessly
238	postulates	suggest
254	vicissitudes	change
259	elucidate	explain
259	gauche	awkward
261	polestar	something that guides people
285	kerfuffle	commotion
286	apoplectic	angry
288	titular	honorary
289	kvetch	complain
295	comported	behave
296	demurred	object
296	malevolent	hostile
308	larcenously	?
320	compunction	reluctance