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## Michael Jordan

\nIn this paper , it will be proven that Michael Jordan is the best basketball player that ever played the game .\n

### The Road to Greatness

\nMichael Jeffrey Jordan was born on February 17 , 1963. He was born in Brooklyn , New York . He was the fourth of five children , the most active but also laziest . “ Michael was probably the laziest kid I had” said his father (“ 100% JORDAN” ,. 20). At the age of 5 he moved to Wilmington , North Carolina , where he spent the rest of his scholastic career .\n\nAs a teenager , he became very athletic . Maybe the best learning experiences for young Michael were the backyard games against his brother, Larry . On the court that his father built , Michael suffered some of the worst beatings in basketball that he ever received . The way Michael remembers , ” It was like we were opponents . We never thought of brotherhood at all . Sometimes it would end in fighting.” (Krugel , 11). When Michael speaks of Larry now , it is with all respect that an older brother should receive . ” Hes got the dunks and some 360s and most all the same stuff I got . And hes 5-foot-7 . Larry is my inspiration .”(11) . All the games against his brother gave him the better sense of competitiveness , persistence , and responsibility that he has today.\n\nHe attended Laney High School where he first started playing organized basketball . As a freshmen , he started on Junior Varsity , where he averaged 25 points per game . He did not make the Varsity team as a sophomore , even though he averaged 28 points per game on Junior Varsity. When junior year came , he grew up to 6-foot-3 inches and made people notice him . He made varsity that season and averaged 20 points a game . That summer he attended the well known Five-Star Basketball Camp where he started to attract the attention of college coaches . ” His is one of the strange , great stories” says Sonny Vaccaro (“ 100% JORDAN, . 22). “ He was a nobody , he wasnt all that highly-touted”(22).\n\nBy the time his senior year began , he didnt have to worry , for he was already being scouted by the North Carolina Tar-Heels . He had a strong senior season , averaging 23 points a game and helping Laney to 19 victories . But they lost in the conference tournament to a New Hanover team that included future NBA player, Kenny Gattison and future NFL defensive end, Clyde Simmons . Even though Patrick Ewing was rated number one high school player, North Carolina still picked Michael . “ What set him apart from the rest was his burning desire for the game” Gibbons, coach of North Carolina, said . “ Ive watched many, many players that rise above the pack because of some special characteristic that others dont have-the heart of a champion. If anybody has that , its Michael Jordan” (. 22). Jordan took part in the McDonalds All-star Game , and scored 30 points ; that made people realize how good he really was .\n\nThe next year he started to play at North Carolina . In North Carolina , he played for coach Smith , who is known for his great tactics in the game of basketball , and for his winning career . He became the eighth freshman player to start on a Smith-coached team and proved to be a fine outside weapon, balancing the inside play of veterans Sam Perkins and James Worthy . He really started to make heads turn by showing up some of the best college players . Like Hakeem Olajuwan , and Patrick Ewing .\n\nHis first day of practice , we noticed he was trying to do what we said, even though maybe it wasnt natural from a defensive standpoint,” Smith said . ” But within three or four days , he would have it down pat . He has good savvy about the game , learning it.(“ 100% JORDAN”, . 24).\n\nJordan finished third on the team in points (13. 5) and rebounds (4. 4) in a fine freshman season , although he definitely deferred to Worthy and Perkins . Against Georgetown in the 82 NCAA title game , he really took over the court . With 31 seconds seconds to play and the Georgetown Hoyas holding a 62-61 lead , Smith designed a play that would get the ball inside to Perkins or Worthy . But as the huddle broke , Smith went in another direction . He told Jordan, ” Do it , Michael . Just knock it in .” (. 24). Fourteen seconds later , there was Jordan , wide open on the left wing , launching the 16-foot jumper that gave Smith his first-ever national championship . It was the first of so many clutch shots for Jordan , and it shot him onto the road to stardom .\n\nJordan was a first-team all-American as a sophomore , averaging 20 points a game and showing the first signs of defensive greatness that would later make him the NBAs suffocating stopper. He then led the U. S. to victory in the Pan-American Games . His great accomplishments in his junior put a cap on his collegiate career , starting him on the road to greatness . Even though UNC crumbled in the NCAA tournament , he was named national player of the year , and it earned him a spot on the 84 Olympic team , which won the gold against Spain .\n\nJordan left college in 1984 to play with the Bulls. He finished his first season (1984-85) as one of the top scorers in the league , with an average of 28. 2 points per game . He also was named rookie of the year and made the first of his ten All-Star game appearances (1985 , 1987-1993 , 1996 , 1997).\n\nJordan finished the 1986-87 season as the second player , after Wilt Chamberlain , to score more than 3, 000 points in a single season . He led the NBA in scoring for seven consecutive seasons (1987-1993 ) , trying Chamberlains record , and averaged more than 30 points per game in each season. He also became the Bulls all-time leading scorer and set numerous scoring records , including the most points in a playoff game (63 points against the Boston Celtics in 1986 ); and highest scoring average for an NBA championship series ( 41 points per game in the 1993 NBA finals).\n\nHe led the Chicago Bulls to their first NBA championship title in 1991 ; with Jordan , the Bulls won again in 1992 , 1993 , 1996 , and 1997 . In addition to his four league Most Valuable Player (MVP) awards (1988 , 1991 , 1992 , 1996 ), he won the All-Star game MVP award twice (1988 , 1996) and has won the NBA championship series MVP in every Finals in which he has played .\n\nMichael was also a member of the United States Olympic basketball team , known as the dream team , that captured the gold medal at the 1992 Olympics in Barcelona , Spain , and the 1996 Olympics in Atlanta , Georgia .\n\nBefore the 1993-1994 season a tragedy occurred in Jordans life , his father was killed . Stating that he had lost his desire to play professional basketball , Michael announced his retirement prior to the 1993-94 season . Initially noted for his scoring , his tenacious defensive play made him one of the best all-around basketball in NBA history . He had also become a world wide celebrity due to his success in the NBA and in the Olympics , and in his numerous commercial endorsements .\n\nEarly in 1994 Jordan returned to professional sports , this time as a professional baseball player . He signed a minor league contract with the Chicago White Sox of the American League (AL) , reported to spring training , and was assigned to the teams minor league system . That summer he batted . 202 with the Birmingham Barons , a class AA affiliate of the White Sox . Later in the year he batted . 252 with the Scottsdale Scorpions of the Arizona Fall League .\n\nJordan decided to end his retirement from professional basketball by rejoining the Bulls near the end of the 1994-95 NBA regular season . In the 1995-96 season he enjoyed another great year , leading , leading the NBA in scoring with 30. 4 points per game and being named league MVP . The Bulls also became the first NBA team to win 70 games in a single season , finishing with 72 victories , and they went on to win the NBA championship title . He was named MVP of the NBA finals , becoming the first player to earn the honor four times .\n\nFinally, he again led the league in scoring during the 1996-97 season with 29. 6 points per game . Chicago beat the Utah Jazz , 4 games to 2 , in the 1997 NBA Finals and Jordan received his fifth NBA finals MVP award .