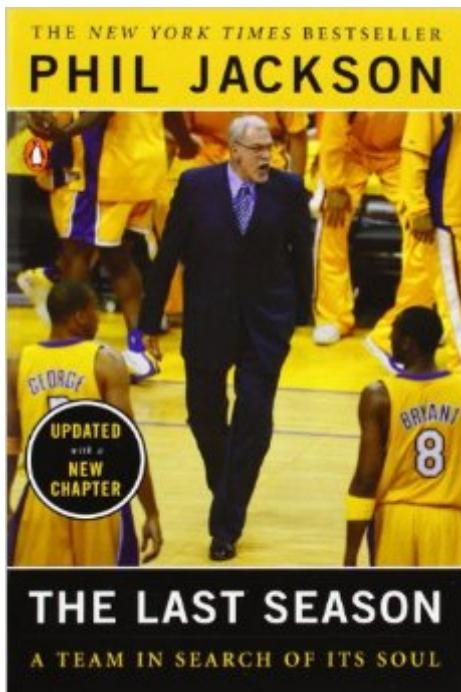


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# The Last Season: A Team In Search Of Its Soul



## **Synopsis**

For the countless basketball fans who were spellbound by the Los Angeles Lakers™ 2003–2004 high-wire act, this book is a rare and phenomenal treat. In *The Last Season*, Lakers coach Phil Jackson draws on his trademark honesty and insight to tell the whole story of the season that proved to be the final ride of a truly great dynasty. From the signing of future Hall-of-Famers Karl Malone and Gary Payton to the Kobe Bryant rape case/media circus, this is a riveting tale of clashing egos, public feuds, contract disputes, and team meltdowns that only a coach, and a writer, of Jackson™s candor, experience, and ability could tell. Full of tremendous human drama and offering lessons on coaching and on life, this is a book that no sports fan can possibly pass up.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

If you were one of the many who believed that when the Lakers put 4 future Hall of Fame players on the court they would certainly win a championship, then this book goes a long way to describing why a team of basketball players with less talent beat them decisively. Phil opens up on the behind the scenes squabbles, pettiness and egos so large they simply defy explanation. In one example, Kobe Bryant is offered the use of a plane by the Lakers to make his trips back to a Colorado courtroom for his alleged rape trial, and instead of being grateful for the support his team is giving him financially, is mad because he thought he deserved a bigger plane. The book is full of the insights into the battles between Kobe and Shaq. Imagine two first graders with 100 million dollars each and you start to get close to the level of professionalism and emotional maturity. It is often funny, often sad, and usually just shocking. The book is written very well, a breeze to read through, and a fascinating tale of psychological narcissism gone wild. I recommend highly for fans of the NBA, or just anyone

who is interested in team dynamics. It will also explain why the Lakers got beat so easily by a team with far less talent. A lesson to leaders in organizations everywhere.

I agree with previous reviewers in that truly insightful books on the NBA (or other sports) tend to be few and far between. The reason, one can suspect, is that everyone wants to cover their behinds, protect their endorsement dollars and preserve any chance of being hired again. This is what makes Phil's book so interesting and entertaining to read. His account of what transpired behind the scenes of the Lakers' fabled season is at times shocking (the immaturity of certain players/coaches/agents is staggering), at times funny, and always honest. Phil has a disarmingly serene style, and his words feel measured yet honest and never manipulative. He is mature enough to put the blame on himself at times, and his candor is in contrast with the 'he said/she said' going on with the Lakers. I know that for many people the Lakers were the Evil Empire, the Yankees of basketball, but I would recommend this work to anyone with a love for basketball, and also anybody who thinks they know how things are behind the scenes. Good stuff.

On one hand, after reading this book one can only marvel at the fact that the Lakers even made it to the NBA finals this past year. On the other hand, it's also quite evident why the Lakers failed and ultimately were broken up. Former Coach Phil Jackson let's loose both barrels squarely aimed at troubled star Kobe Bryant. He details the pettiness involved in the constant battles with Shaq and Kobe. About how Kobe complained about the quality of the jet which flew Kobe from his courtroom appearances in Colorado back to LA. Phil documents how he had wanted to trade Kobe as long ago as the 2000 season but was denied by Lakers Owner Jerry Buss, in whose eyes Kobe can do no wrong. Phil documents how he complained to GM Mitch Kupchack that he could no longer coach Kobe but his hands were tied and it was at that point that Phil knew he would not return for the 2004-2005 season. Ultimately the house of cards came crumbling down in the NBA finals against the Detroit Pistons. Another person argued that the Pistons were not as talented...a fact that I whole-heartedly disagree with. The Lakers certainly had the two best players...but the best TEAM was the Pistons. A team that worked harder, and a team with underrated but up and coming stars that was too quick, too resilient for the aging Lakers to deal with. Quite a read!

OHHHHHH Man!!!! This was unbelievable! Having been a die hard Laker fan for most of my life and having followed the last season of the "Dream Team" every second, it was great to get an inside perspective on what was really going on this year. I have wanted for such a long time, i

figured it would only be when he retired, to be able to get into Phil's head. How the mind of the most brilliant basketball coach on the planet works. I never understood his lack of emotion. I understand things so much better and my respect for Phil Jackson has risen to new levels. Phil was a coach of character. He did not coach in a way that was compromising to what's popular or what everyone else is doing but what he believed to be best for his team. He tried to bring out the best in all of his players and was often disappointed if a player was not playing up to his potential. I've also come to another major conclusion. There doesn't seem to be any sense of Integrity in the Lakers management. I have new opinions of Kobe Bryant as well. It is just sad to see that what could have been maybe anywhere from 6 to 10 championships...even before the other two hall of famers came, if they would have just put there pride aside and play as a unit. Detroit spanked them with a lesson I hope we all never forget. The best "Team" wins. This was soo awesome to be able to read behind the scenes of the games talked about in the book. I watched everyone including the pre-season games and it was just sweet to read more of the story. I bet Phil will be back coaching someday.

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