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Smush Parker

William Henry "Smush" Parker (born June 1, 1981) is an American former professional basketball player. He played in the National Basketball Association (NBA), the NBA D-League and several leagues overseas. Parker played shooting guard in college but moved to point guard in the NBA.
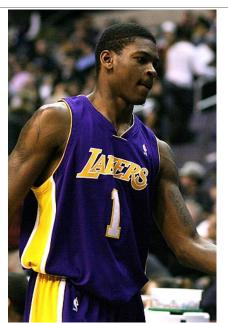
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Early years

Parker was born in Brooklyn to parents William "Bill" Henry Parker II and Robin Royal Parker.[1] He attended Newtown High School in Elmhurst, Queens, where he was a star guard on their varsity basketball team.[2] He then enrolled in the College of Southern Idaho as a freshman in the 1999–2000 season and transferred to play college basketball at Fordham University.[3] Following his sophomore season at Fordham University, he entered the NBA in 2002 but went undrafted.[4] During his sophomore season, he was Second Team All A-10 and Second Team NABC All-Region.[5]

Professional career

Early career

Smush Parker	

Parker with the Los Angeles Lakers in 2007

Personal information	
Born	June 1, 1981 Brooklyn, New York
Nationality	American
Listed height	6 ft 4 in (1.93 m)
Listed weight	190 lb (86 kg)
Career information	
High school	Newtown (Queens, New York)
College	College of Southern Idaho (1999–2000) Fordham (2001–2002)
NBA draft	2002 / Undrafted
Playing career	2002–2018
Position	Point guard / Shooting guard
Number	17, 7, 1, 21
Career history	
2002–2003	Cleveland Cavaliers

While Parker was not drafted out of college, the Cleveland Cavaliers signed him for the 2002–03 season.[6]

In 2003, Parker signed with Aris Thessaloniki of the Greek League (FIBA Europe) and helped the team win the 2004 Greek Basketball Cup in the final against Olympiacos. He returned to the NBA in 2004 and played for the Detroit Pistons and the Phoenix Suns.

Los Angeles Lakers (2005-2007)

He then signed a contract with the Los Angeles Lakers during the summer of 2005.

Not well-known entering the 2005 season, Parker gained recognition as the starting point guard for the Lakers under coach Phil Jackson. While many experts thought that either newly-signed veteran Aaron McKie or Sasha Vujačić would start at point guard, Parker became the surprise starter in the Lakers' season opener against the Denver Nuggets[7] and went on to score at least 20 points in four of his first five games.[8][9] This impressed Jackson, and Parker found himself in the starting line-up for the Lakers. From 2005 until 2007, Parker started 162 straight games, averaging 11.5 points. During the last two games of the regular season and the playoffs (2006–2007), Parker lost his starting spot to rookie Jordan Farmar.

While with the Lakers, Parker clashed with coaches and players, including All-star Kobe Bryant. He admitted to intentionally ignoring Bryant and not passing him the ball. Bryant singled out Parker as a bad teammate, saying in 2012 that Parker "shouldn't have been in the NBA, but [the Lakers] were too cheap to pay for a point guard."[10] Parker would later detail how Kobe was a bad teammate, and after Bryant's tragic death in 2020 confirmed that the two men had never reconciled their differences.

Later Years in NBA and Overseas

2003–2004	Aris
2004	Idaho Stampede
2004–2005	Detroit Pistons
2005	Florida Flame
2005	Phoenix Suns
2005	Florida Flame
2005–2007	Los Angeles Lakers
2007–2008	Miami Heat
2008	Los Angeles Clippers
2008	Rio Grande Valley Vipers
2009–2010	Guangdong Southern Tigers
2010–2011	Spartak Saint Petersburg
2011	Iraklis
2012	Petrochimi Bandar Imam
2012	Guaros de Lara
2012	Indios SFM
2012–2013	Cibona
2013	Peristeri
2014	Guaros de Lara
2015	Mon-Altius Madimos Falcons
2015	Étoile Sportive de Radès
2016	Maghreb de Fes
2017–2018	Albany Patroons

Career highlights and awards

- Greek Cup winner (2004)
- Greek Cup Finals Top Scorer (2004)

Stats (https://www.nba.com/player/2470) at NBA.com

Stats (https://www.basketball-reference.com/players/p/parkesm01.html) at Basketball-Reference.com

On July 26, 2007, Parker signed with the Miami Heat.[11] For the Heat, Parker wore jersey number 21.[12] His production dropped off dramatically while with the Heat, with averages of 4.8 points, 1.7 assists and 2.1 rebounds, compared to his 11.1 in 164 games with the Los Angeles Lakers.[4] After a physical altercation that Parker had with a parking attendant in November 2007, the Miami Heat put him on paid leave to investigate the matter.[13] On March 10, 2008, the Miami Heat officially waived Parker.[14] The Los Angeles Clippers then signed him for the rest of the season on March 12, 2008.[4]

On July 10, 2008, the Los Angeles Clippers officially renounced their rights to Parker.[15] In the 2008 offseason, Parker was signed by the Denver Nuggets but was released on October 23, 2008, as the Nuggets trimmed their roster to the league-allowed 15. He then played with the Rio Grande Valley Vipers of the NBA

Development League.

On January 9, 2009, Parker officially signed with Guangdong Southern Tigers of the Chinese Basketball Association.

In September 2010, he signed a one-year contract with the Russian club Spartak Saint Petersburg.[16]

In January 2011, he returned to Greece and signed a contract with Iraklis Thessaloniki.[17]

In January 2012, Parker signed with Petrochimi Bandar Imam of the Iranian Basketball Super League.[18] He later played in Venezuela,[19] then signed with the Indios de San Francisco de Macorís of the Dominican Republic.[20] In December 2012, Parker signed with Cibona Zagreb of the Adriatic Basketball Association.[21] After only 5 games in Adriatic League, Parker was released.[22]

In March 2013, he returned to Greece and signed a contract with Peristeri of the Greek League.

In January 2014, he signed with his former team Guaros de Lara.[23] He left the team that March.[24] In June, Parker played in The Basketball Tournament.[25] His team reached the semi-finals,[26] and Parker's averages for the tournament were 16.2 points, 7.8 rebounds, 7.0 assists and 1.8 steals per game.[27]

In February 2015, Parker signed with Mon-Altius Madimos Falcons of the Mongolian National Basketball Association (MNBA). He averaged 24 points, 7.0 rebounds, 6.5 assists and 4.1 steals per game.

On November 30, 2017, Parker signed with the Albany Patroons of the North American Premier Basketball.[28]

NBA career statistics

Legend

GP	Games played		GS	Games started		MPG	Minutes per game
FG%	Field goal percentage		3P%	3-point field goal percentage		FT%	Free throw percentage
RPG	Rebounds per game		APG	Assists per game		SPG	Steals per game
BPG	Blocks per game		PPG	Points per game		**Bold**	Career high

Regular season

Year	Team	GP	GS	MPG	FG%	3P%	FT%	RPG	APG	SPG	BPG	PPG
2002–03	Cleveland	66	18	16.7	.402	.322	**.831**	1.8	2.5	.7	.2	6.2
2004–05	Detroit	11	1	10.0	.393	.222	.692	.8	1.0	.3	.0	3.0
2004–05	Phoenix	5	0	6.8	**.467**	.250	.000	.6	.8	.4	.0	3.0
2005–06	L.A. Lakers	**82**	**82**	**33.8**	.447	**.366**	.694	**3.3**	**3.7**	**1.7**	.2	**11.5**
2006–07	L.A. Lakers	**82**	80	30.0	.436	.365	.646	2.5	2.8	1.5	.1	11.1
2007–08	Miami	9	0	20.3	.315	.250	.750	2.1	1.7	.6	**.3**	4.8
2007–08	L.A. Clippers	19	2	21.5	.362	.222	.667	1.7	3.6	1.0	.2	6.4
Career		274	183	25.8	.426	.345	.708	2.4	2.9	1.2	.2	9.0

Playoffs

Year	Team	GP	GS	MPG	FG%	3P%	FT%	RPG	APG	SPG	BPG	PPG
2006	L.A. Lakers	**7**	**7**	**36.9**	**.333**	.154	**1.000**	**3.0**	**1.6**	**2.1**	.1	**8.9**
2007	L.A. Lakers	5	0	11.8	.154	**.167**	**1.000**	1.4	.6	.6	**.2**	1.8
Career		12	7	26.4	.306	.156	1.000	2.3	1.2	1.5	.2	5.9

Personal life

Parker earned his nickname "Smush" at the age of 13. According to childhood friends, he often fouled out during pickup games by "smushing" opponents' faces as retribution for stealing the ball away from him. Parker has one daughter from a previous relationship.[1]

References

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