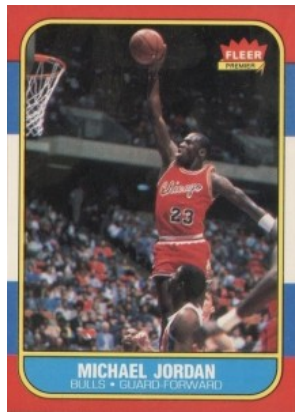


“Air” vs “King”



Michael Jordan



LeBron James

Both Michael Jordan and LeBron James are considered among the greatest professional basketball players to have ever lived, although they never played head-to-head, as Jordan retired just before James played his first game. Both players were incredible scorers, amazing defenders, bloodthirsty competitors, and trend-setting icons of the NBA. Michael Jordan was voted into the professional basketball Hall-of-Fame in 2009 and LeBron James will be voted in as soon he is eligible. At the time this article was written (in 2018), LeBron James was still considered the best player in the NBA. The question is: Who was better – “Air” Jordan or “King” James?

For Jordan – This is an easy argument. Michael Jordan was clearly the better player. First and foremost, he won all six NBA championships he played in. Furthermore, he was named MVP in all six! Even though LeBron has played in seven NBA Finals, he has only been victorious three times. That means LeBron and his team lost four NBA championships. Winning championships is the easiest way to judge a player’s greatness.

Jordan’s accolades are endless. He won the NBA scoring title ten times (compared to just one scoring title for James) and was named the NBA’s most valuable player a mind-blowing five times! Jordan was so good at basketball, that after this third NBA championship, he took a year off to play baseball. When he came back to the NBA, he promptly won three consecutive championships all over again with the Bulls. I know LeBron is great, but no one can compare to Jordan.

Rebuttal For James – Jordan may have won all six championships he played in, but James has already played in seven and has several more years to play. Championships aren’t necessarily the best way to measure how great a player is, although three is nothing to “sneeze” at.

At the age of 34, LeBron James already has more career assists, rebounds, and three-point baskets made than Jordan had in his entire career. If he plays to 40, (like Jordan did) he’ll easily surpass him on the NBA’s all-time points scored list. LeBron is the most versatile player the NBA has ever seen and can play point guard, shooting guard, and both forward positions. Obviously Jordan was a great player, but Jordan couldn’t play four positions.

1. Which of the following makes it difficult to judge who was better?

- A. Michael Jordan played baseball for a year
- B. LeBron James is still playing professional basketball
- C. Jordan and James played in different cities
- D. Both Jordan and James played in a lot of NBA championships

2. The first author believes...

- A. a player's greatness can be judged by how many points he scores.
- B. a player's greatness can be judged by how many championships he participates in.
- C. a player's greatness can be judged by how many championships he wins.
- D. a player's greatness can be judged by how many All-star games he plays in.

3. What does the second author suggest?

- A. If LeBron James plays as long as Michael Jordan, he may win more championships and pass him on the all-time scoring list
- B. If LeBron James plays as long as Michael Jordan, he might become a more versatile player
- C. If LeBron James plays as long as Michael Jordan, he might accumulate more assists and rebounds than Jordan
- D. Being in seven total championships is better than winning six.

4. What does "versatile" mean as used in the following sentence?

LeBron is the most versatile player the NBA has even seen and can play point guard, shooting guard, and both forward positions.

- A. Multitalented
- B. Complicated
- C. Similar
- D. Abundant

5. What do Jordan and James have in common?

- A. They have been in the same number of NBA championships
- B. They were both great defenders
- C. They are both currently in the Professional Basketball Hall-of-Fame
- D. They both played at the same time