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# Michael Jordan: The good, the bad and the ugly

## Michaela Moore, Staff Reporter

In a time where hardly any sports are going on, many sports aficionados are taking walks down memory lane as sports networks show old game highlights, interviews and iconic sport moments in comforting reruns. Yet, the world was reunited by sport once again through “The Last Dance,” a docuseries on Michael Jordan and the Chicago Bulls, building up to his last season with the team in 1997.

“The Last Dance” is a 10-part series that began airing on ESPN back in April, wrapping up on May 17. The show’s first episode takes a look at the tensions that were clear among the Bulls organization, from the players to the higher-ups. The general manager, the late Jerry Krause, was set on rebuilding the team despite their winning five titles since 1991. As the series unfolded, viewers could see how these tensions affected the team dynamics. “The Last Dance” has it all: the tears, the friendship, the successes, the lows—and of course, the infamous feuds.

There is no doubt MJ is one of the best athletes of all time. The man played, and won, a game in which he had food poisoning all while scoring 38 points, grabbing seven rebounds, dishing out five assists as well as three steals and one block. But despite being one of the best of all time, Jordan is still a human. Humans make good choices and they make bad choices, and they have ups and downs. Jordan’s father was murdered, which contributed to his first retirement. During his time away from basketball, he played baseball for a minor league team in the Chicago White Sox organization. However, he didn’t stay away from basketball for long. He returned to the court, but with a comparably poor season. This didn’t fly for Jordan, because he simply wanted to be the best. He returned to being #23, and being a better #23 than ever.

The show mainly focuses on Jordan and how he achieved his legend status. It was undeniable that Jordan had an incredible drive to win and to be known as the best player of all time. His uncanny ability to prove his detractors wrong and rise to the occasion after a negative poor performance shows his dedication and commitment towards his craft. He took the negatives and proved people wrong the next time he stepped onto the court. With such determination to succeed, however, Jordan influenced others around him—and not always in the best ways.

Jordan, simply put, bullied his teammates. There are several accounts of how Jordan reacted towards his team after a bad performance on the court. Steve Kerr, Jordan’s former teammate and current head coach of the Golden State Warriors, was punched by Jordan after standing up to him in a dispute. To Jordan, his behavior towards his team was acceptable because, as he said in episode seven, “winning has a price.”

Episode five was a particularly notable piece of the series. Jordan talked about the late Kobe Bryant, and vice versa. Bryant spoke to how Jordan was like an older brother to him and said that without Jordan, he would not be the player he was because of all of the advice he had been given throughout his career. It was a touching moment to see, even for non-basketball fans. There is nothing like seeing two people talk about their mutual respect for each other.

The series was well-received from fans, but Jordan’s former teammates have their own thoughts about the show. Many of his teammates cite him as being far meaner than it was detailed in the show, and that Pippen was genuinely upset at how he was depicted in the show, like being selfish and how upset he was during his career.

“The Last Dance” might be somewhat controversial in the basketball community because it leaves viewers wondering who the real MJ is, considering everything now coming out about him from former league members. However, the series is full of never before seen footage of MJ and the Bulls that give a glimpse into the life that MJ lived while being revered as the greatest of all time, and how he got that title, through the good, the bad and the ugly.



Photo via Chicago Sun-Times