

Terry Porter (1963–)

By Michael Megelsh

A staple of Oregon's collegiate and professional basketball history, Terry Porter played for the Portland Trail Blazers from 1985 to 1995. He holds the all-time record for assists in Trail Blazer history, and his thirty-year career as a player and coach in the National Basketball Association culminated in awards and honors that included two all-star nominations. He also is among the top ten players in franchise points, field goals, steals, and minutes played. The Trail Blazers retired Porter's Number 30 in 2009.

Born in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, on April 8, 1963, Porter played basketball at South Division High School before attending University of Wisconsin–Stevens Point, a member of the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics. He averaged 13.5 points a game for the university and shot nearly 60 percent from the floor. An NAIA All-American, he was invited to the U.S. Olympic Team trials, the only NAIA player among invitees that included Patrick Ewing, Chris Mullen, and Michael Jordan. Wisconsin–Stevens Point became an NCAA school in 1981.

Porter was the first-round pick, twenty-fourth overall, for the Portland Trailblazers in the 1985 National Basketball Association Draft. He started in three games during his rookie season and played and started in eighty games during his second season. For seven straight years as a point guard with the Blazers, he started in over eighty games and played over thirty-two minutes a game. Playing with Blazers star Clyde Drexler and coached by Rick Adelman, Porter never missed the playoffs during those seven seasons.

During the 1989–1990 NBA season, Porter averaged 17.6 points per game and 9.5 assists, helping the Trail Blazers make it to the NBA Finals that year. On the way to the championship, the team defeated the Dallas Mavericks, the San Antonio Spurs, and the Phoenix Suns. Facing the Detroit Pistons in the finals, Porter led all players in assists in the first game of the series—Detroit won 105–99. In game two, Portland won 106–105 in overtime, with Porter scoring 21 points and with ten assists. He only made three shots from the field but went 15–15 from the free-throw line. Detroit won the next three games, defeating Portland 4–1. Porter finished the series with an average of 19 points, 8.4. assists, and two steals a game. Porter played with the Trail Blazers until 1995 before signing with the Minnesota Timberwolves (1995–1998) and, later, the Miami Heat (1999). He retired after the 2001–2002 season while he was a player with the San Antonio Spurs (1999–2002).

After his playing career ended, Porter was an assistant coach with the Sacramento Kings and later head coach for his hometown Milwaukee Bucks. He also coached for the Detroit Pistons, Phoenix Suns, and Minnesota Timberwolves. In 2016, he was named the coach for the men's basketball team at the University of Portland. He led the Pilots for five seasons.

Porter married Susan Kadrich on July 7, 1990, and they had three children. Porter was inducted into the Oregon Sports Hall of Fame in 2010, and he was an alumni ambassador for the Portland Trail Blazers and part of the Trail Blazers' television broadcast team during the 2010–2011 NBA season. He supported the Boys & Girls Club of America and in 1994 created the Milwaukee's Scholar's Fund. Porter won the Maurice Lucas Enforcer Award in 2023.

Sources

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