

# Los Angeles Lakers

## L.A. Lakers: LeBron James Supports Mike Brown Hiring; Kobe Remains Silent

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**By**  
**Daniel Lewis**  
**(Contributor) on May 25, 2011**

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Over the past few years, it has been clear that Kobe Bryant has been angling for assistant Brian Shaw to replace Hall of Fame coach Phil Jackson.

“I feel all of the players believe in coach B-Shaw,” Bryant said. “We have such a rapport with him. He’s been with us for such a long time. We all have a bit of a bias towards him.”

“I don’t want to get in the way of management. But we’ve all kind of had our eye on him for a while.”

Kobe has a good relationship with Shaw, as they were both teammates on the Lakers during their first three-peat from 2000 to 2002. Shaw retired in 2003, serving as a scout for the team before joining Jackson’s staff during the 2004-05 season.

Now that the "Zen Master" has finally walked away from the game, the Lakers have reportedly hired former Cleveland Cavaliers coach Mike Brown.

Stemming from the Gregg Popovich tree, Brown has already received an endorsement from a perennial All-Star, but it has not come from Bryant.

Instead, it has come from LeBron James, who played under Brown during his first seven years in the league.

“Mike Brown is a great coach,” James said following the Miami Heat’s practice on Wednesday. “He gave us success that we hadn’t had before in that city. It just started with his defensive concepts. He brought in a defensive mindset that we didn’t have...We were competitive year after year because of him and his coaching staff.



“I respect him and I’m grateful to have him as a coach throughout the years that I had him. He definitely helped me to become who I am today.”

However, while he holds Brown in high regard, he did not necessarily see his former coach on the Lakers' radar. In fact, he was surprised upon hearing that Brown was headed to the bright lights of L.A., where he expected Lakers assistant coach Brian Shaw to be promoted to replace the predecessor from which he learned.

“Brian Shaw’s been with the Lakers, played for the Lakers and been around Phil,” James said. “I was surprised to see Mike Brown’s name. I thought Mike would get an opportunity at Golden State. I was more surprised like, ‘Wow.’ I’m happy for him.”

Unlike LeBron, though, Kobe has remained eerily silent regarding his new coach.

That said, while he may have preferred Shaw, Bryant's recent comments do indicate that he and Brown could be a good fit for each other. Brown’s reputation as a defensive mastermind agrees with Kobe’s statements during his final media availability session of the season.

“If you’re building a championship team, your DNA always has to start with the defensive end of the floor,” Bryant asserted following a deflating Game 4 against the Dallas Mavericks. “Always. I’m a firm believer in that. I don’t believe in building a championship team on offense. It has to be built on defense and rebounding. Period.”

In all, this Lakers team is about always winning, and Kobe’s support for Brown will grow if the team finds success next season and hoists the Larry O’Brien Trophy next June.



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