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L.A. Lakers: Was Steve Nash the Biggest Failure of the Team's Failed Season?



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May 21, 2013

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Dubbed a "season from hell" or a "cursed year" by many in Lakerland, the painful 2012-2013 season for the [Los Angeles Lakers](#) was mercifully put to rest in late-April. Finally.

From the fans to players, and from the coach to the owner, the collective basketball world would unequivocally agree that the Lakers' season was nothing short of an abysmal failure.

Arguably the biggest failure of the Lakers nightmar e-li ke season was Steve Nash, the team's starting point guard acquired via trade from the [Phoenix Suns](#) on Independence Day last year.

Oddly enough, Nash avoided much of the criticism directed towards the team throughout the season. Most of the blame for the Lakers' underachieving season centered on his fellow star teammates Kobe Bryant, Pau Gasol, and Dwight Howard.

Indeed, while the rest of the Lakers organization was publicly ripped to shreds by fans and the media alike, Nash remaine d largely i nvisible, eluding the collective fingers of a basketball world desperately seeking a s capegoat for the Lakers' dramatic shortcomings.

Yet no one is more deserving of blame after the Lakers' disastrous season, one that Lake rland hoped would end up with the raising of a seventeenth championship banner in Staples Center, than the veteran point guard.

No disrespect to Steve Nash, one of the most skilled point guards in [NBA](#) history and quite possibly the best shooter the sport has ever seen. Nash lays claim to impressive coup of achievements that includes two MVP titles and eight All-Star appearances.

There is no denying his body of work over the past decade, particularly his commitment to winning, keeping his body in shape, and improving the play of his teammates. The beneficiaries of his stellar play have ranged from Dirk Nowitzki to Joe Johnson to Amare' Stoudemire, all of who saw their game elevated to near-stratospheric levels while receiving passes from Nash.

Yet the version of Nash who occasionally plays point guard for the Lakers is far from the All-Star or MVP whom NBA fans have witnessed for years. In his seventeenth season, Nash put up a mere [12.7 points and 6.7 assists](#) for L.A . It was downright painful seeing such an legenda r y passer struggle to approach double-digit assists , an achievement came so easy for him as a member of the Suns.

At 3 9 years old, it is unrealistic to hope that Nash can revert to the MVP version of himself. After the Lakers' front office buil t virtu ally the entire team around him-adding a pick-and-roll big man in Howard, signing three-point shooters such as Jodie Meeks, and bringing in Nash's former coach Mike D'Antoni-the wily ve teran flat - out floundered during his first year in purple and gold.

When they acquired Nash, the Lakers ' brass envisioned him running the point as no one has done since Magic Johnson and harkening back to the team's glorious Showtime era that won multiple championships. A two-time MVP finally playing for a contender, they figured, would help Bryant, Gasol, and Howard put it together en route to a title.

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Yet Nash never really got healthy, never found a place on the team, and never really came close to resembling 'two-time MVP Steve Nash.' Now he looks more like a future expiring contract than anything else.

Following elimination at the hands of the [Oklahoma City Thunder](#) in 2012, the Lakers desperately needed a defensive-minded point guard who could control the likes of Ty Lawson and Russell Westbrook in the Western Conference.

Nash's play only worsened this weakness for the Lakers, opening the floodgates for opposing guards. There is a reason the best teams he led in [Dallas](#) and [Phoenix](#) came up short year after year in the postseason. His teams were prolific scoring teams, but they were even better at letting the other team score. Nash, simply put, has been a liability at the defensive end of the floor for his entire career.

With a hobbled Dwight Howard anchoring the Lakers interior defense, Nash has exposed the Lakers to a seemingly endless stream of penetration. Regularly embarrassed by younger, more athletic guards, Nash failed to do virtually anything to prevent opposing dribble drives from resulting in point-blank layups and dunks .

Nash arrived in L.A. as a future Hall - of - Fame point guard but , in his first year, ended up serving a little more than a spot-up shooter. Although he proved successful in that role for the Lakers by shooting over 40 percent beyond the arc , Nash as a spot-up shooter is not exactly what the franchise envisioned when they parted with four draft picks to pry him from the desert.

At this stage of his career, Nash is closer to a scrub than he is a superstar. His days being anything but an average NBA point guard are behind him. Unfortunately for the Lakers, his contract ensures that the team will be in safe hands with a suddenly injury-prone 42-year-old guard running the point in 2015.

1. "[Steve Nash - Los Angeles Lakers - NBA - Yahoo! Sports.](#)" Yahoo! Sports.

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