

## The best three players on the same NBA team?

The dream was there to be seen.

After ESPN had squandered hours of airtime to make an announcement as to where NBA superstar LeBron James was going to bleed a team, "experts" were delirious with imagination. Along with holdover Dwayne Wade and newcomer Chris Bosh, James would provide Pat Riley's Heat with the three best players ever to play for the same team.

Let's wait until they win some championships before they get sainted.

Many sportswriters and commentators these days have memories shorter than their pens. Most think the first great basketball player was Michael Jordan. The guys who work for the WTE probably think the first great basketball player was Carmelo Anthony.

Are the three who will play for the Heat very good players? Of course. But, among them in 21 combined seasons, they have but a single NBA championship. And combining great players is often a recipe for disaster, not success.

To determine the three greatest ever on the same team, one has to look at the NBA championships each trio has won.

LeBron, Dwayne and Cris. One. Wade.

Going back to the late 40's, early 50's - George Mikan revolutionized basketball by being the first big man who could chew gum and run at the same time. His Minneapolis Lakers won five championships

in six years. That " threesome " was Mikan, Vern Mikkelsen and Jim Pollard.

In a thirteen year period from 1956 through 1969, the Boston Celtics won eleven NBA championships. Of the two seasons they did not win the championship, they played in the championship game in one of the two. The Celtics had an expanded trio - Bill Russell, Bob Cousy, Tom Heinsohn (with Bill Sharman, Sam Jones and K.C. Jones), later John Havlicek.

Later Celtics were Larry Bird, Kevin McHale and Robert Parish. One of the great front lines ever.

From 1990 to 1998, the Chicago Bulls won six championships and Michael Jordan was Finals MVP each of the six years. The Bulls top three were pretty good - Jordan, Scottie Pippen and anyone else. John Paxson, Steve Kerr, etc.

The Los Angeles Lakers 1968-1973 team included future Hall of Famers Jerry West, Elgin Baylor and Wilt Chamberlain. That would have to be the best three players ever on the same team. Still, they won but one championship together.

The early 1970s saw Oscar Robertson and Kareem Abdul-Jabbar together with the Milwaukee Bucks. Not a bad pair.

Before knighting these three characters who will be with the Miami Heat at least temporarily, let's see if they can win. In 21 opportunities, they have played for the NBA championship only once.

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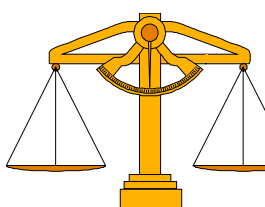
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