



Webber, Steve Smith, Steve Kerr, Reggie Miller and host Ernie Johnson as the former players discuss their views and stories of the NBA during their careers.



Kerr spoke with SLAMonline last week about his career and why he believes *Open Court* works so well.

**SLAM:** *Open Court* seems like a free forum with a lot of guys you know pretty well.

**Steve Kerr:** [Laughs] Well, it's always a free forum when Charles is involved.

**SLAM:** Well, you know these guys, anyway. You were teammates with Steve and with Shaq for a season.

**SK:** Yep, and I've gotten to know Charles and Kenny pretty well over the years just working with Turner, and Ernie. So that's, I think, the strength of the show. That everybody is really comfortable with each other. We enjoy each other's company and there is some great storytelling. Of course, Ernie Johnson is just the best. He just knows how to make it all work even though it's so free-flowing.

**SLAM:** The clip I watched was when CWebb was talking about the charge rule and how he wants to change it. You guys won't waste time in badgering someone like for what he said, but it's in good fun.

**SK:** [Laughs] Yeah, that's what makes it fun. It's almost like when you're in the locker room or on the bus. There's a real sense of comradery. Sometimes you just go after guys in fun and other times it's serious, but it's never anything personal. But, in general, when guys are together on a team, there's really nothing that's sacred. That's what makes it so much fun. And I think we have that same dynamic when we're on our set doing that show.

**SLAM:** Can that sense of team on television ever replace what you had when you played?

**SK:** Well, it comes close. Nothing can ever match that connection that you have with your teammates. You have the emotions of winning and losing. You're trying to accomplish something that's really, really important for everybody. Whereas in television you're just kind of having fun and entertaining, but you're not competing. I think the competition of the team when you're actually playing creates a stronger bond than anything. So, that's the one piece that's lacking. But on the other hand, we're also not competing with each other. I think one of the great things about retirement is that you really let your guard down.

Supporting Emerging Talent: DeAndre Jordan	5
Jason Terry Seeking Contract Extension from Dallas Mavericks	0
NBA Players to Vote on New Collective Bargaining Agreement	0
<a href="#">View All »</a>	



**COUNTERKICKS**

Exclusive: Nike Zoom Soldier VI, LeBron's New 2012 Team Shoe

**BALL IS LIFE**

NCAA Daily Links

I noticed that with Shaq right away when we did the show. Shaq and I have always gotten along well. I was his GM in Phoenix [from 2007-09]. But when your an opponent, you always try to keep your guard up against the other guy, but as soon as you retire you kind of let go of that edge and guard. I sensed that Shaq was much more comfortable with everybody now that he's retired and done.

**SLAM: Is there anything since you became a broadcaster—even on this show—that you revealed?**

**SK:** There were definitely stories when we were taping that I had never told anyone before. I think that was part of the genius of the show—the questions and the format. As you said, it was an open format. But there were, sort of, questions that led to some really good memories and some really good stories for all of us. When you're broadcasting a game, or even doing studio work, you don't always have that kind of time to relay a full story like that. So, I think the format was great and I think everybody really enjoyed it. I think we all probably told a few stories that we hadn't told anyone before.

**SLAM: What's a story from your playing days that makes you laugh when you think about it?**

**SK:** Well, one story that I actually didn't tell on *Open Court* which I probably should have...we did a segment on trash talking. And I had forgotten until after the show that when Michael [Jordan] was playing with the [Washington] Wizards and I was with the [San Antonio] Spurs. It was the last year of my career and his. We ended up matched up with each other in transition in a cross-match. I got the ball isolated with him. I yelled out to my teammates, 'I got a little one, clear out!' And Michael started laughing because it was so preposterous. I started laughing and there was a picture in the paper the next day of him guarding me and both of us just cracking up laughing. [Laughs] And that was a really fun moment that the average fan doesn't hear much about. I actually kicked myself the next day for not recounting the story on the show.

**SLAM: Who was the best trash talker you ever encountered, teammate or opponent?**

**SK:** Well, Michael was legendary for telling guys what he was going to do beforehand and then doing it, knowing there was nothing anybody could do to stop it anyway. Larry Bird used to do the same thing. Reggie Miller was a real talker. He was more demonstrative than anything else. It wasn't so much what he said; it was his antics, his body language. But there were a lot of guys who loved to chirp. It's all kind of part of the game.

**SLAM: When you were a younger player in the League, did you ever say something to a veteran that ticked him off?**

**SK:** You know, one the things I said on the show was that I wasn't a good enough player to talk trash, and that's the truth. In order to really talk trash, besides the occasional run-in with somebody where you talk to each other because you're pissed and get a double-technical or something, but to really run your mouth, you gotta be a great player. And I was just a role player my whole career. I pretty much kept my mouth shut and let them know I was just having fun with somebody.

**SLAM: At what point in your career did you have to accept that role in the NBA, that you were a valued shooter but when you said 'This is my role and I'm just going to play this.'**

**SK:** Umm, I think it took me a couple years to figure out where I could find my niche. My rookie year in Phoenix I hardly ever played and I was just trying to hang onto my job. My second year in the League I played with Cleveland and I got some playing time. I played with a really good Cavaliers team: Mark Price, Larry Nance, Brad Daugherty. I think I probably played 18, 19 minutes a game and kind of found a niche as a spot-up shooter and as a combo guard. I kind of played both the point and the two. I wasn't good enough to start at either sport but I was good enough to kind of be a role guy. So, I figured it out that second year and from then on it was all a matter of finding that right team to play for. Some teams needed what I had and others didn't. I kind of went back-and-forth for most my career, from either playing a pretty important role off the bench or being the 12th guy. And I was smart enough to realize that if I was the 12th guy, it's still a pretty damn good job. [Laughs] So I didn't open my mouth. I just worked and stayed ready.

Pages: 1 2

[Add a Comment](#) [Invite a friend](#) [Share](#)

[RSS](#)

#### You might be interested in

[Shaquille O'Neal Threatened to Punch Glen 'Big Baby' Davis in the Face](#)

[Shaq: LeBron James Not a 'Scientific Dawg' Like Kobe Bryant](#)

[Video: Allen Iverson Crosses Up Jeff Teague](#)

[Derrick Rose Took Kobe Bryant's Advice to Develop a Post Game](#)

[Blake Griffin Supports Mo Williams' Playoff Guarantee](#)

[Mark Price is the Orlando Magic's New Shooting Coach](#)

5 Responses to "Q+A: Steve Kerr"

**NBADRAFT**  
Houston Rockets Ready for 45th Anniversary Season | Top 10 Rockets Moments

**NBADRAFT**  
Art of Shooting: A Tribute to Ray Allen's Jumpshot

**BALL IS LIFE**  
Big East Blog

**HOOPMIXTAPE**  
Brandon Jennings OFFICIAL Lockout Hoopmixtape! Exciting Guard Puts On A 1 Man SHOW!!!

