



DAVID WOHL

Spending 43 years in the NBA will teach you many things and shape who you are. For Dave Wohl it was the early realization that he was a teacher at heart and that led him, after a seven year playing career, into coaching in the NBA for his next 26 years before moving into the executive side of the business. His passion was finding ways to pass on all the information he was continually absorbing to help players, coaching staffs and teams improve individually and collectively.

Along the way he learned lessons about communication, listening, the power of words, the impact of strong leadership, the construction of championship teams, the internal glue of the right culture and how trust is the foundation upon which all great teams and relationships are built. Wohl developed a growth mindset from an early age fueled by a continuing desire to improve himself as he played against better and better competition every year and a continuing curiosity of how the nuances of the game of basketball could be taught and what was the best method to teach them.

Born in Flushing Meadows, Queens, NY, it all started when Wohl moved to East Brunswick, NJ when he was 10 years old. The concept of not giving up was evident early on when Wohl had to face adversity playing Little League baseball. He was stuck in the outfield, a lefty handicapped by a right hander's glove. His limitation was that he had to transfer any ball he caught from his glove to his free right hand and then shake off his lefty glove and take the ball back into his left hand to throw it back to the infield. No matter how quick he got at this he knew he was going to be chained to the outfield and never able to become a shortstop, his dream position. His family couldn't afford another glove so he knew he had to find another solution. Wohl decided to meet the problem head on. He taught himself to throw with his right hand in a month and became ambidextrous. Over the course of his little league seasons he not only played shortstop but 2nd base, 3rd base and even pitched, including one game where he pitched using both his left and right hands.

At East Brunswick High School Wohl played three sports and found himself in rebuilding situations much of the time. He was an All-State quarterback in football and his team was ranked 7th in the state by his senior year. He was a point guard in basketball and his team went from 2-22 his sophomore year to three rounds deep into the NJ state tournament his senior year. He went out for track on a dare from a friend. He was told by the coach that the pole vault was the only opening they had on the team. By his senior year Wohl finished 3rd in the county meet with a personal best.

During his senior summer Wohl taught brain injured children how to swim and spent his junior summer working at a factory that made dynamite.

Wohl entered the University of Pennsylvania and graduated in 1971 with a degree in history. He was recruited for football but decided to walk on and try out for the basketball team instead. Once again, he found himself part of a rebuilding situation as the previous year the Penn team won only nine games. Wohl and his teammates changed that losing reputation quickly going a combined 53-3 in his junior and senior years leading his team to a 28-1 record in his senior year and a #3 ranking in the country, their only defeat coming in the Elite Eight NCAA tournament.

Wohl was drafted by the Philadelphia 76'ers with the 46th pick in the NBA draft of 1971. That began a seven year playing career with five teams. Each stop a learning experience. At the conclusion of his playing career Wohl opened an art gallery in Houston, Texas. However, within months he received an offer to join his previous coach, Kevin Loughery, as an assistant coach with the New Jersey Nets. He grabbed the offer and never looked back. That began his NBA coaching career which included a 3 year stint as the Head Coach of the Nets.

Wohl's years as an Assistant Coach found him working alongside some of the elite coaches in the NBA. Wohl worked with Don Nelson for three years as his assistant coach with the Milwaukee Bucks winning three Division titles. Nelson, now retired, currently is the all-time leader in games won by an NBA coach and recognized as one of the most innovative



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coaches during his years in the league. Wohl spent 3 years as Pat Riley's Assistant Coach during the "Showtime" Magic Johnson years with the LA Lakers and again as his GM with the Miami Heat. The Lakers appeared in 3 straight NBA finals and won the NBA Championship in 1985 which gave Wohl his first Championship ring. Wohl also worked with Doc Rivers as his Assistant coach with the Orlando Magic and the Boston Celtics, both rebuilding teams when Rivers arrived. After 4 years as Rivers assistant coach in Boston, Wohl moved into the front office to work under Danny Ainge as his Assistant Gm for the next two years culminating in a second championship for Wohl in 2008 when the Celtics defeated the Lakers in the NBA finals.

Following Rivers to help rebuild the LA Clippers, Wohl spent 2 years as the Clippers GM and then became the Special Advisor to Lawrence Frank when he became President of Basketball Operations.

During his time in the NBA Wohl played, coached or coached against almost all the top 50 players in NBA history and has had a front row seat for almost a half century of the innovation and growth of NBA basketball.

Away from the court, Wohl spent one season as the color analyst for the Miami Heat. He also was the color analyst for the 2013 NBA Finals on ESPN3. He has written stories for Sports Illustrated and Op-Eds for the National Sports Daily. In 2019 he hosted 7 podcasts on Building a Champion with guests, Jerry West, Daryl Morey, David Griffith and Doc Rivers.