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## Shaq: I killed off the center position in the NBA

By Baxter Holmes

LOS ANGELES -- Former [Los Angeles Lakers](#) center Shaquille O'Neal made an appearance at the team's annual "All Access" event held Monday at Staples Center, and in a nearly-30 minutes session, the dominant center entertained the audience with many colorful remarks, some of which are listed below.



Shaquille O'Neal jokingly took credit for killing off the center position in the NBA.

### On his time at LSU:

"Yes, they paid very well. Statue is limitations is up. I can talk about it. They paid very well. That's right, baby, LSU...Snitches get stitches...what can I say?" [Note: On Tuesday, O'Neal told [The Advocate newspaper in Louisiana that he was only joking.](#)]

### On his favorite performance as a Laker, which he said was his career-high 61-point game on March 6, 2000 -- his birthday -- in a 123-101 win over the [Los Angeles Clippers](#):

"The birthday game was a special game. A lot of people don't know -- that game, Kareem [Abdul-Jabbar] was on the bench. So when I was coming down, he wouldn't look at me. So I put in my head, 'Okay, Kareem is not respecting me.' So I just turned it up a whole other notch."

### On dealing with getting the physical pounding from opponents beneath the basket:

"I tried to deliver the pain first. I tried to deliver it first. Being a former football player, I'm used to it. Football was my first love. When you expect it, you know how to prepare for it. It never really bothered me."

### On the true center position in today's NBA:

“Yeah. I think I killed them off. The game is just different now ... The center position is dead.”

### **On Charles Barkley:**

“Fat as hell (laughter). I’ve seen him with his shirt off before. I was like, ‘Man you got some nice boobies.’ ... He’s actually a good guy. We go at it a lot, but we’re actually really good friends. A lot of people don’t know that his mom and my mom were best friends. His mom just recently passed away. So it’s a respect thing there ... We just like to go at it.”

### **On being on television after his NBA career:**

“...I was actually caught by surprise when [TNT] called me ... The first three months [after retiring from the NBA], I won’t use the word ‘depression,’ because I know depression is real. But when you do something the same for 20 years and it all stops, like I would wake up and just do stuff that I had never done before -- like go outside and get the paper, look at the birds, go to the store and buy bread. It was killing me that I didn’t have anything to do. So once I got that call, it was actually a relief. Because I had left [the NBA] year early. I had a two-year deal in Boston and then I blew my Achilles out. So when I was at home every day by myself, it was awful.”

### **On this Lakers season:**

“It’s a special year. Nobody, including myself, ever thought we’d be sitting here and watching Kobe Bryant’s last year. Even last year, he looked like he had two or three years left in him. When he made his [retirement] announcement, I was shocked, everybody was shocked. So this year is pretty much dedicated to him. It’s a young team. The problem with living in [Los Angeles] is [Lakers fans] are spoiled. You guys are used to Magic [Johnson]. Then after Magic, Kobe and myself. Then I leave and Kobe takes over. You guys are used to winning all the time. So when you’re not winning, everybody gets a little antsy. But it’s definitely going to take time. You probably have to discount this year because this year is the celebration of Kobe ... then next year, we’ll start to see what we got.”

### **On his son:**

“He’s a [high school] sophomore. It’s actually surprising -- I wanted to kind of bring him along slow, but the AAU thing, he’s been doing that all summer...He’s 15 ... He’s like 6’11. I asked him where he wanted to go to school and he didn’t give me the right answer yet...LSU. I already told him that, [in] 2016, you can probably get a house, you can probably get two cars. I’ll set it up for you. I know some people down there. Just playing. These are just jokes, people!”

### **On his movie career and if he’ll still be in movies in the future:**

“I get calls, but a lot of times, there’s a schedule conflict. The last three movies I did were Adam Sandler movies. I can remember when I was playing, and I would always ask him, ‘Hey, let me be in a movie’ and he’d say, ‘You’ve got to win a championship.’ So I called him one day and said, ‘You know that I got you three championships.’ So he gave me three movies.”

### **On when he’ll drop another rap album:**

“Nineteen-ninety-never. I’m 45 years old. I don’t think anybody wants to see a 45-year-old rapper.”

**O’Neal spoke to a woman in the crowd:**

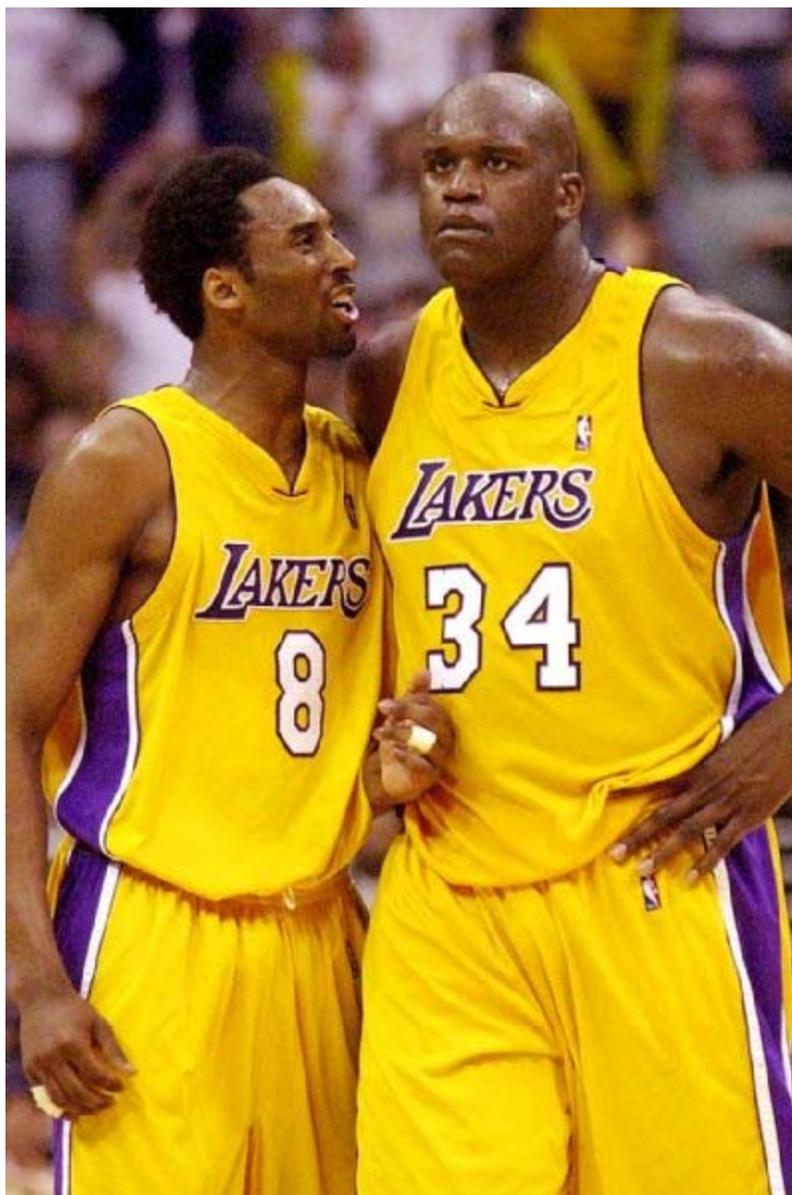
“Is that your husband? I was going to say, ‘Once you go Shaq, you never go back.’ I’m just playing. I don’t want any problems outside. [O’Neal then acts as though he’s reading fake television news on a teleprompter.] ‘*Shaq was stabbed in the back today by a fan.*’ Just playing. Just want to make you laugh.”

**On what’s next for his career:**

“I’m thinking about going to law school. I got my doctorate a couple of years ago. I’m thinking about going to law school. I want to own a law firm. But I don’t want to be a lawyer. But you have to be a lawyer to own a law firm.

**On the Lakers organization and what it means to him:**

"I love Jeanie [Buss]. I love this organization. I love this city. I love this building. We had some great times here. I wish it could’ve played out where I played here forever, but, you know, business is business."



Shaquille O'Neal thinks that Lakers fans should relax and use this season to send off future Hall of Famer Kobe Bryant.