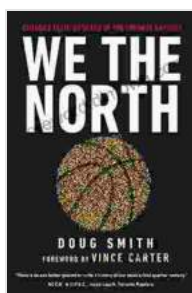


# 25 Years of the Toronto Raptors: The King of the Triple-Double, a Championship, and a City United

The Toronto Raptors have been a beacon for Canadian basketball for the past 25 years. From humble beginnings to their historic championship in 2019, the Raptors have left an indelible mark on the sport and the city of Toronto. This comprehensive article will delve into their history, their triumphs, and their impact on the Toronto community.



## We the North: Canada's Team: 25 Years of the Toronto Raptors by Doug Smith

★★★★☆ 4.6 out of 5

Language	: English
File size	: 33297 KB
Text-to-Speech	: Enabled
Screen Reader	: Supported
Enhanced typesetting	: Enabled
X-Ray	: Enabled
Word Wise	: Enabled
Print length	: 238 pages



## The Early Years: From Expansion to Respectability

The Raptors were founded in 1995 as part of the NBA's expansion into Canada. In their early years, the team struggled to find success, posting a losing record in each of their first four seasons. However, the arrival of Vince Carter in 1998 marked a turning point for the franchise. Carter, a

dynamic and charismatic player, quickly became a fan favorite and helped lead the Raptors to their first playoff appearance in 2000.

Over the next few years, the Raptors continued to improve, posting winning records and making regular appearances in the playoffs. They also developed a reputation for their exciting style of play, led by Carter's high-flying dunks and Tracy McGrady's explosive scoring.

### **The Rise of DeMar DeRozan and Kyle Lowry**

In 2010, the Raptors traded for DeMar DeRozan, a rising star who would become one of the most beloved players in franchise history. DeRozan, known for his relentless scoring and leadership, quickly formed a dynamic duo with Kyle Lowry, a skilled point guard who joined the team in 2012.

Together, DeRozan and Lowry led the Raptors to their first Eastern Conference Finals appearance in 2016. They also helped establish the team as a perennial playoff contender, consistently finishing in the top half of the league standings.

### **The King of the Triple-Double: Russell Westbrook**

In 2019, the Raptors traded for Russell Westbrook, a nine-time All-Star and former MVP. Westbrook immediately made his mark on the team, averaging a triple-double (points, rebounds, and assists) in his first season with the Raptors.

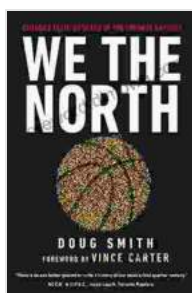
Westbrook's triple-doubles helped propel the Raptors to their first NBA championship in 2019. In the Finals, they defeated the Golden State Warriors in six games, becoming the first Canadian team to win the NBA title.

## Impact on Toronto and Canada

The Toronto Raptors have had a profound impact on the city of Toronto and Canada as a whole. They have helped to unite the city and bring Canadians together, regardless of their background or nationality. The team's success has also inspired a new generation of Canadian basketball players and coaches.

Beyond their on-court achievements, the Raptors have also been active in the community. The team has supported numerous charities and initiatives, including youth basketball programs and anti-bullying campaigns.

The Toronto Raptors have come a long way in their 25 years of existence. From their humble beginnings to their historic championship in 2019, the Raptors have established themselves as a powerhouse in the NBA and a symbol of Canadian basketball. Their legacy will continue to inspire generations to come.



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