

## LeBron James

LeBron James was born December 30, 1984 in Akron, Ohio. Gloria James, LeBron's mom, was only 16 years old and his father Anthony McClelland, was an ex-con. He didn't want anything to do with a baby. This left Gloria to take care of LeBron all by herself. Gloria's mom died when LeBron was just an infant. Gloria had retail and accounting jobs, but was never able to find a steady job. LeBron and his mother moved about 12 times from apartment to apartment. They got to know all of the poor neighborhoods in Akron about an hour south of Cleveland. Gloria was a good loving mother and tried to keep LeBron away from the streets. Gloria's brothers Terry and Curt also helped out. When LeBron was an infant his mother gave him a miniature basketball hoop and he had shown tremendous basketball instincts. LeBron's mom was only 5-5, however he had taller relatives with the genes to grow into a long-limbed basketball star.

LeBron was embarrassed about his home life and didn't make friends easily in elementary school. He thought he wanted to do well in school, but focusing on his studies was difficult. He found a way out for his emotions and intelligence in sports. Basketball and football were his favorite. Now LeBron was a natural athlete, however he could think his way around the court or field. His idol was Michael Jordan, and he imitated his basketball game to be like Mike. LeBron liked driving in and taking jumpers, but he loved giving the ball up to his teammates as well. In pee-wee football LeBron played receiver. In just six games LeBron had 19 touchdowns and his coach was Frankie Walker. After the season had ended he heard that LeBron had dropped out of school. He confronted LeBron's mom about the situation and agreed that LeBron should move in with Frankie Walker and his family. After 18 months of living with the Walkers, LeBron went back to live with his mom. Financial problems forced LeBron to go back to the Walkers. The Walkers helped Gloria pay her rent and wanted to make sure that LeBron could always have a place in Akron to call home. Another one of LeBron's advantages of living with the Walkers was becoming friends with Frankie Jr. They played basketball with four other boys, Sian Cotton, Dru Joyce III, Willie McGee, and Romeo Travis. On Sunday nights they played at the Akron Jewish Community Center. Keith Drambot, the former head coach at Central Michigan University taught them valuable skills. LeBron became very good friends and when LeBron was 12 he spent most of that summer living with his family.

When LeBron was in the eighth grade he was six feet tall and played every position on the court. He competed in the AAU 8<sup>th</sup> grade under tournament in Orlando, Florida and was the person everyone was talking about because of his skills. At that time LeBron, Joyce, Cotton, and McGee like to call themselves the "Fab Four." They had made a very big decision to continue playing basketball together by attending Saint Vincent-Saint Mary in Akron. In LeBron's freshmen he was 6-3 and averaged just less than 20 points a game. LeBron and his

cousin Maverick Carter lead Saint Vincent-Saint Mary to a perfect 27-0 state championship season. The summer after his freshmen season he grew another four inches and he now stood at 6 feet 7 inches. That year he averaged 25.3 points, 7.4 rebounds, and 5.5 assists and was named an All-American with Eddie Curry and Kwame Brown. LeBron was voted Ohio's Mr. Basketball and was the first sophomore ever to do so. That summer LeBron was invited to the USA Basketball Development Final. Being the first underclassmen in the camp LeBron impressed many people with scoring 120 points in just 5 games and was named MVP. Michael Jordan invited LeBron to a private workout where he scrimmaged against Antoine Walker, Penny Hardaway, Michael Finley, and Juwan Howard.

In LeBron's junior year they Saint Vincent-Saint Mary suffered the first two game losing streak since LeBron had been there. They lost to Carmelo Anthony and Oak Hill and then to George Junior Republic of Pennsylvania. That year going for there third straight state championship title they lost in the championship to Roger Bacon of Cincinnati. LeBron was named the National Gatorade Player of the Year. In LeBron's senior year it was apparent to everyone who had become "witnesses" that he was going to be in the NBA. The competition to sign LeBron between Nike and Adidas was crazy. LeBron was asking for \$25 million dollars. LeBron was still in high school though and was focusing on his basketball game as well. They entered the state playoffs with just one loss and LeBron succeeded on leading his team to another state championship finishing 24-1. LeBron played in the McDonald's All-American game for the second year in a row and was eligible to enter the NBA. The first pick went to the Cleveland Cavaliers and they drafted "King James." LeBron didn't need to worry about money, his endorsement deals alone with Nike, Coca-Cola, and Upper Deck earned him \$100 million dollars. LeBron, only 19 in his first year of the NBA was voted rookie of the year.

### Economic Impact

LeBron's economic impact in the world of sports marketing is huge. When LeBron came to the Cavaliers attendance was through the rough. There were nearly 7,000 more fans at every game that season. The Cavaliers did have a 59% seat attendance and when LeBron became a part of the team \$10 seats went for \$50, \$36 seats were sold for \$100 and \$235 seats for the most coveted games reached \$2,000 apiece. Assuming an average ticket of \$38.52 last season and \$40.15 this season, numbers compiled by the publication Team Marketing Report in their "Fan Cost Index," the Cavaliers grossed an additional \$12 million in ticket sales this season alone, up to \$30.1 million from \$18.1 million last season. LeBron's presence this year was worth at least an additional \$18 million more in other revenues by selling apparel or other things. Radio stations more than doubled, local television ratings increased by 300 percent and, thanks to James' best-selling jersey, the Cavaliers ranked fourth overall in the league in apparel

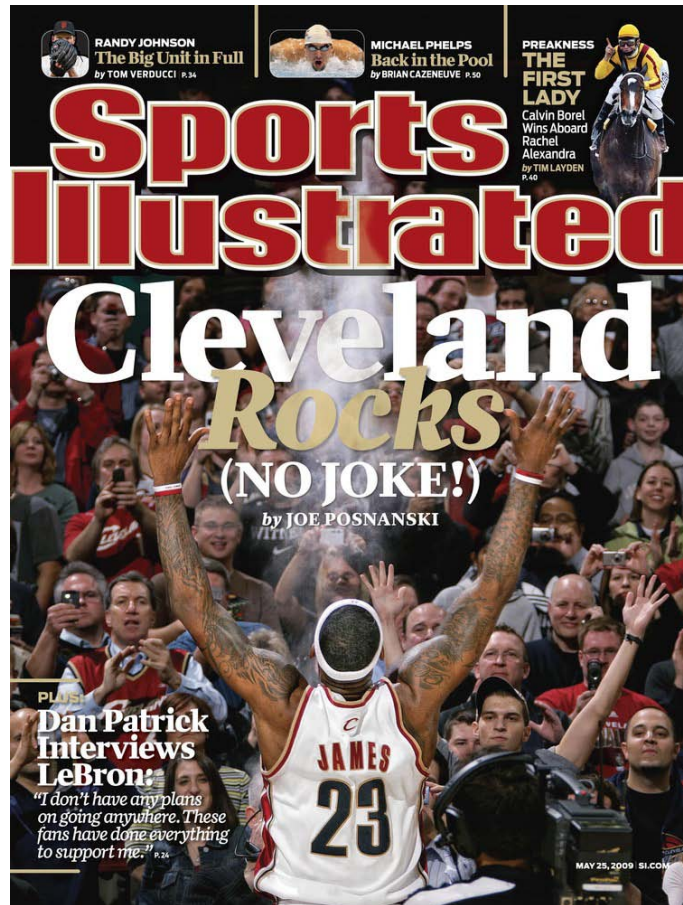
sales, according to the NBA. Approximately \$72 million dollars worth or 1.6 million jerseys featuring James' name and Number 23 have been sold since they first went on sale on June 26.



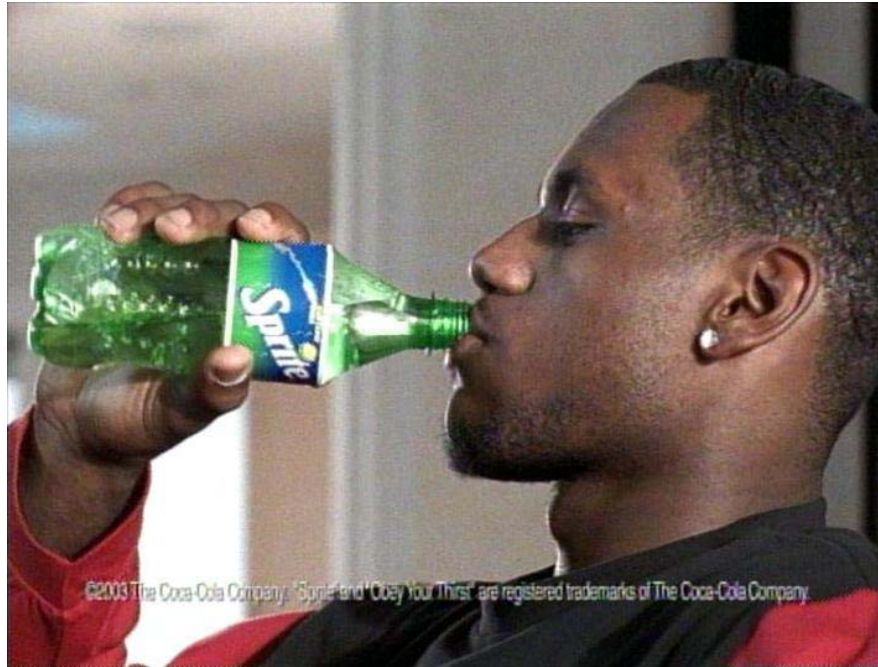
I got this picture from [www.sportsbusinessdigest.com](http://www.sportsbusinessdigest.com). This picture is saying if you drink vitamin water then you can do anything.



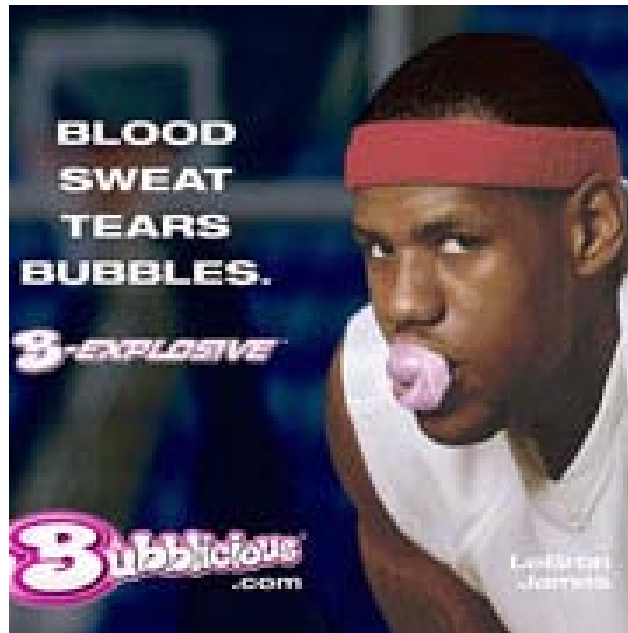
I got this picture at [www.basketballnews.me](http://www.basketballnews.me) . This picture is referring to LeBron's Zoom Soldier II sneakers. It is saying if you were the soldiers then you can become as strong as an army.



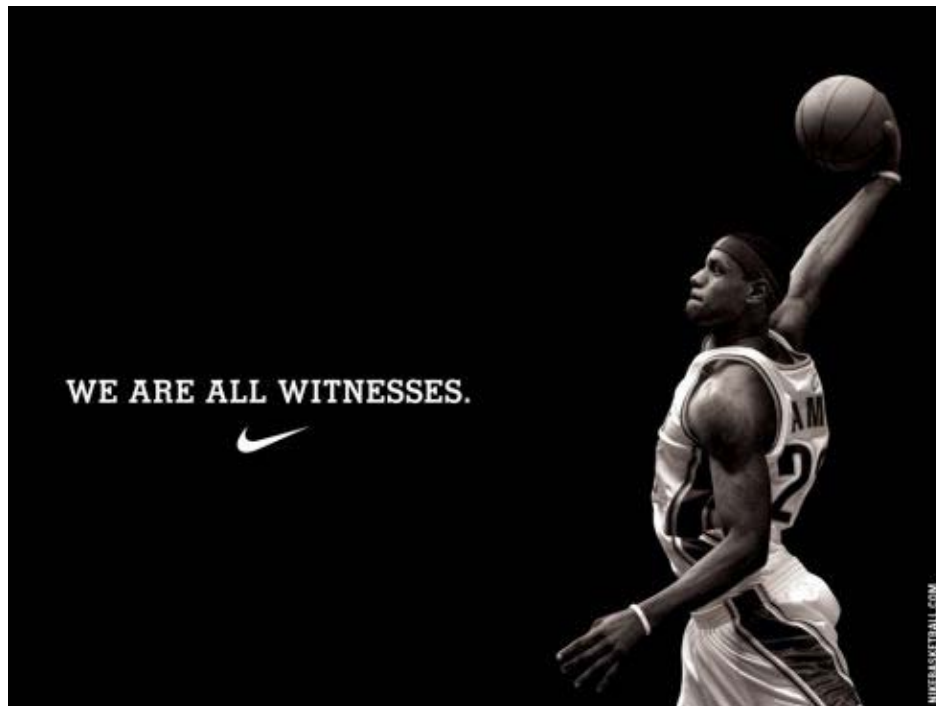
I got this picture from [www.cleveland.com](http://www.cleveland.com). LeBron is promoting this by being on the cover of Sports Illustrated.



I got this picture at [www.sportsbusinessdaily.com](http://www.sportsbusinessdaily.com). This is saying if you drink sprite then you can become like LeBron.



I got this picture at [www.bubblicious.com](http://www.bubblicious.com). This picture is saying you will be explosive if you chew Bubblicious gum.



I got this picture from [www.fanpop.com](http://www.fanpop.com). This picture is telling you everyone has seen what LeBron can do and it is because he wears Nike.