

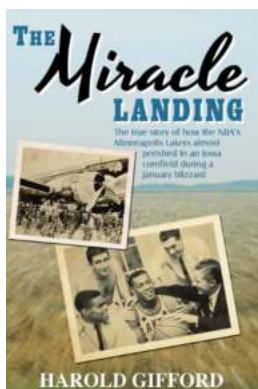
The True Story Of How The NBA Minneapolis Lakers Almost Perished In Iowa

They say history has a knack for surprising us, revealing tales that were unknown to most. The NBA, famously known for its vibrant and dramatic history, holds within it an extraordinary story of the Minneapolis Lakers and their harrowing brush with extinction in the heartland of the United States, Iowa.

The Rise of the Minneapolis Lakers

Back in the late 1940s and early 1950s, the Minneapolis Lakers were a dominant force in the blossoming National Basketball Association. Led by legendary figures such as George Mikan and Jim Pollard, the Lakers were feared and respected by their opponents.

The team displayed incredible skill, precision, and a relentless drive to secure victory. The Lakers' success drew a wave of admiration from fans across Minnesota and beyond, solidifying their place in NBA history.



The Miracle Landing: The true story of how the NBA's Minneapolis Lakers almost perished in an Iowa cornfield during a January blizzard

by Karen Anna Vogel (Kindle Edition)

★★★★☆ 4.6 out of 5

Language : English

File size : 3850 KB

Text-to-Speech : Enabled

Screen Reader : Supported

Enhanced typesetting : Enabled

Word Wise : Enabled

Print length : 176 pages

Lending : Enabled



The Unexpected Turn of Events

Despite their success on the court, the Minneapolis Lakers faced a formidable challenge off it, one that threatened their very existence. In 1959, the team was struggling financially, unable to generate the necessary revenue to sustain their operations. The future of the Lakers hung in the balance.

Desperate to stay afloat, the team's management explored various options, including relocation. This search led them to the Midwest, where the state of Iowa emerged as a potential new home. The Lakers were on the verge of making a fateful decision that could have forever altered their legacy.

The Fateful Night in Des Moines

It was a cold, frozen night on January 15, 1960, when fate intervened and cast its shadow over the Minneapolis Lakers and the state of Iowa. As the team traveled to Des Moines for a crucial game, disaster struck.

An unexpected snowstorm hit the region, immobilizing the Lakers' plane and leaving them stranded at the Des Moines airport. The unforgiving snowfall made it impossible for the team to proceed with their journey, leaving them in a tight spot both financially and logistically.

As the hours turned into days, rumors spread like wildfire. The Lakers' uncertain future became a hot topic of discussion among basketball enthusiasts and sports journalists across the nation.

The Turning Point

As the Minneapolis Lakers waited for the weather to clear and the skies to open up, something remarkable happened. The people of Des Moines rallied around the stranded team, extending their support and generosity.

Local businesses and individuals offered food, shelter, and entertainment to the Lakers, providing them with a taste of Midwestern hospitality. The unexpected bond formed amid the adversity marked a turning point in the team's history.

The Decision That Saved the Lakers

In the midst of their uncertain situation, the Minneapolis Lakers faced a critical decision – whether to persist in Iowa or return to their roots in Minneapolis. The outpouring of support from the people of Des Moines resonated deeply with the team's management and hierarchy.

It was this overwhelming display of unity and generosity that convinced the Lakers' owners that Iowa could indeed become the new home for their struggling franchise. The team decided to take a leap of faith and build their future in the heart of the Midwest.

The Legacy Lives On

The Minneapolis Lakers, now officially known as the Iowa Lakers, rose from their tumultuous past and embarked on a new chapter in their history. The team thrived in their adopted home state, embracing the passionate support of their newfound fans.

Under the leadership of coach Johnny Kundla, the Iowa Lakers went on to achieve remarkable success, winning several NBA championships and solidifying their place as one of the league's most beloved franchises.

An Unforgettable Journey

The true story of how the NBA Minneapolis Lakers almost perished in Iowa is not just a testament to the team's resilience and the unwavering spirit of its fans, but also a reminder of the unpredictable twists and turns that define the world of sports.

The Lakers' unexpected detour to Iowa and the collective efforts of the people of Des Moines saved a franchise that would have otherwise faded away into oblivion. It is a tale that deserves to be remembered and shared, serving as a reminder that sometimes, the most extraordinary stories emerge from the most unexpected places.



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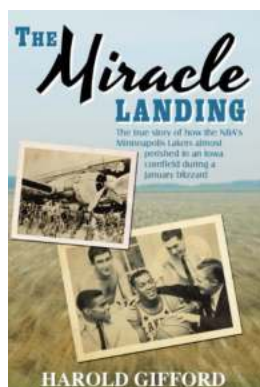
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It was a rough couple of years for the NBA's Minneapolis Lakers. But at least the 1959-60 season had a promising start. Team owner Bob Short had drafted college standout Elgin Baylor the year before and was rebuilding his team around this future superstar. Adding a new coach in the form of Jim Pollard along with a

dose of hometown enthusiasm had fans looking up. The team even bought an airplane so they could play teams further away in the newly expanding NBA. Then something happened, completely out of anyone's control, that almost changed everything. On January 17, 1960 after a game in St. Louis, the Lakers boarded their DC-3 for the flight home. Perhaps the memory of Buddy Holly, Ritchie Valens and the Big Bopper perishing in an Iowa cornfield only 11 months earlier had faded. In any case, this flight would be like no other. For the first time in print, the co-pilot of that flight, Harold Gifford, tells the real, full story of what happened that almost wiped out the Lakers before that NBA dynasty even had a chance to really get started.



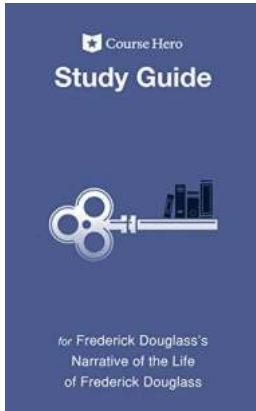
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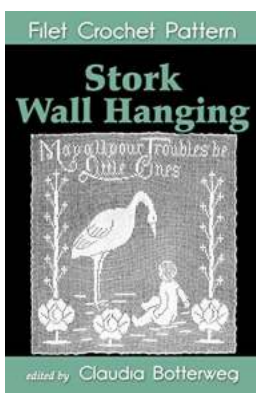
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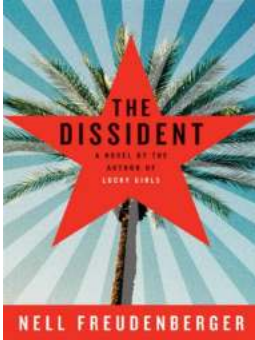
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