

## **Footwear & Life**

### **By Joe Bunn For Forcefield NYC**

I guess you could call me a “Sneakerhead”. I have a lot of shoes. I love them, always have. My first love of sneakers was with Air Jordans for a lot of reasons. One, Michael Jordan went to my favorite school, UNC (where I ended up going as well). Two, I believe and still believe that he is the greatest athlete and competitor that has ever lived. Three, the shoes just looked cool from the very first Jordan 1. I remember having the Air Jordan 1s when they came out in 1985. You were really cool if you had them back then, but it wasn’t like it is today. There were no lines around the mall to get them, no lotteries, no raffles, no “hypebeasts”. Every time a new pair would come out, I had to have them. This carried on into high school where I clearly remember wearing one white Air Jordan 5 and one black Air Jordan 5 to my prom with my tux. I thought I was the coolest kid in school, hell, maybe I was.

After going off to college at UNC, I still followed Jordan’s professional career and would watch the Chicago Bulls win ring after ring, constantly checking out what MJ was rocking on the court. However, my love for the sneakers sort of faded. Maybe I thought I was supposed to “grow up” when I went off the college? Maybe I thought I should wear what everyone else was wearing? I’m not sure, but really anything after the Jordan 5 was dead to me.

After graduating from UNC in 1994, I moved down to Wilmington, NC and then eventually to Raleigh about 16 years ago. About five years ago, I started getting back into really following the sneaker culture and how big it had gotten. I think it was around the time that I rode by a local skate shop one morning and kids were lined up around the block waiting on a certain Nike SB that was coming out. I was like “Holy sh\*t, this has gotten huge since I’ve been gone!” I started buying a few SBs, but eventually ended up right back where I started, Jordans. Nike is smart, they are retroing Air Jordans as fast they can and when I see a colorway I like (especially Jordans 1, 3, 4 and 5), I have to have them! Maybe I’ve fallen victim to the hype, but I do love a lot of the Adidas Yeezy Boosts that are coming out, but so far only able to cop the 350 “Black Pirates” and even then it was through third party and then spent an hour online watching videos to make sure they weren’t fakes! Like I said, it’s a different world out there. I’m also a sucker for Air Max 1 and Air Max 90s.

I have a few rules when I buy. First, I have to love them, like think they are the coolest. Secondly, I have to know I’m going to wear them. I never buy kicks and leave them in the box! I feel like it’s sinful for them not to be out on the streets where they can be seen. Nobody comes to my closet, but everyone sees me walking around in cool kicks!

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