

# THE INFAMOUS

BY ACE SIX  
PHOTOGRAPHY BY HELLER

*Is there anyone  
more real in the NBA  
than your man Ron-Ron?*



Ron Artest is living the dream of every kid in the hood, especially his hood - the Queensbridge projects in New York. Ballin' off-court with his recent *My World* album, Artest on-court brings hustle, desire and an unwillingness to tone himself down. Really, this is the guy who wore two different sneaker brands on each foot during his first NBA All Star game and kept switching them up in hopes of getting a contract from one of the companies. He wore DaDa spinners, for Christ's sake! And, using a black marker to make them fit the league's uniform policy, a pair in Indiana colours to one of his first games as a Sacramento King!

#### **Why do you wear 93 as your number?**

I wear 93 because my sneaker company, K1X, uses the slogan '93 Til Infinity that they got from the Souls of Mischief track. I thought that was an ill concept. It also looks like my hood; I'm from QB, where Nas is from. If you look at it, the 9 kinda looks like a Q and the 3 kinda looks like a B.

#### **It was a unique move to sign with K1X, a European street basketball company. How do you feel about your relationship with them and how good did it feel to have them step up and actually give you ad campaigns?**

K1X is dope. I like their company because they have a lot of street credibility, and I wanted to be with a company that was really underground, hardcore. That's why I went with K1X.

#### **Did wearing different shoes on each foot in the All Star Game mess with your balance or game?**

It kinda did, yeah, but I didn't want to give any one

brand that much exposure at the time. Some of the soles were thinner than the others, though, and I lost my balance a couple times and almost hurt my ankle.

#### **Who did you grow up with in Queensbridge?**

Every rapper from QB, I know: Nas, Mobb Deep, Cormega, Nature, Tragedy, Capone, MC Shan, Roxanne Shante, Screwball, Hostyle. Man, I know everybody out there. Everybody is still trying to grind, trying to make it with this music.

#### **Is there a better hip hop album than *The Infamous*?**

That album is sick! There's not many albums that are more authentic, more real than that. Everything they said on there was real talk, from the hood.

#### **Who was a better basketball rapper, Kobe or A.I?**

A.I had that "40 Bars" joint, that was gangsta. I don't think I ever heard Kobe's sh\*t.

#### **Do you own or have you heard *B-Ball's Best Kept Secret* featuring tracks from Jason Kidd, Cedric Ceballos, Dana Barros and more?**

Get the f\*\*k outta here! Get the f\*\*k outta here!! I never heard of that, but I gotta try to find that and check it out. It's always special to have a project like that, even if it's weak or whatever. It's a piece of history.

#### **Would you ever rock at the All Star Game halftime show?**

I don't think I'd ever have the opportunity, but I would love to. That would be big.

#### **Your performance on-court shoes also have a casual look. K1X is one of the few companies to maintain that balance between those two worlds. Why do you think that no one wears performance shoes on the street anymore?**

I don't like basketball shoes, straight up. If I can't wear them with a pair of jeans off the court then I don't really want to wear them. The only sneakers you can really do that with is Jordans or some Pennys. That's why K1X is ill, because they make a performance shoe that I can still wear with a pair of jeans and it looks good.

#### **What do you think about bootleg Jordans and other kicks being all over the hood?**

I don't even understand how they do it, how they make millions and millions of bootlegs. It's so crazy. It's hitting the street hard, you gotta respect that. People want to be part of the movement so they cop the fake joints if they can't afford the real thing. That's real, so I can't be mad at that. If I were in that situation, I'd cop 'em.

#### **What are your top shoes of all time?**

Penny Hardaways, Jordan XIs, Jordan Is, Huaraches, and Bo Jacksons.

#### **Do you think anyone in the L is capable of averaging a triple double for the season?**

Yeah, I think LeBron James could. There's going to be a player to do it, you just gotta train your body properly to be prepared.