

hoto by Dave Kao

Former Harlem Globetrotter Meadowlark Lemon played basketball with inmates at Lane County jail Monday.

## Former Globetrotter visits jail, challenges inmates to one-on-one

Former Harlem Globetrotter Meadowlark Lemon said Monday he has "no doubt" in his mind that he could have played in the National Basketball Association.

Lemon, speaking at Eugene's Heritage Restaurant, and known as the "Clown Prince" of basketball, cancelled Bucketeer practice in Florida to speak to 5,000 people in Eugene for the Bill Glass Crusade Monday night.

Lemon coaches and plays for the Bucketeers, a team he found-

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ed five years ago. He said they train in Florida and will take on the California Coasters for the first game of the season, a season he believes will be very successfull.

"This is the year," he said in an interview after the crusade.

Lemon spent part of his day in Eugene telling 50 Lane County jail inmates what he's been doing with his life.

"I talked to them like they were human beings," he said.

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Lemon challenged the inmates to one-on-one basketball on the recreational court inside the jail.

"I played a couple of games with them."

Coordinator of Inmate Services Dan Heuvel said at first, only two women would accept the basketball challenge. But after another man volunteered, Lemon was able to form a team and shoot some baskets between rain showers.

Heuvel said even though the court was wet, the rain stopped long enough for Lemon to "throw a few of his famous hookshots."

After the basketball game Lemon signed autographs for the inmates, Heuvel said.

Lemon, who lives in Cierro Vista, Ariz., will return to Florida to work with the 11 team members he has recruited so far this year.

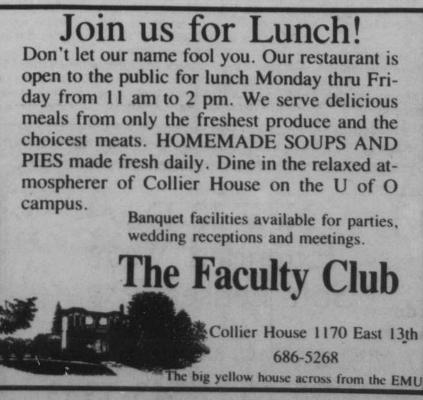
Lemon said he doesn't think being on the road for another year as a professional basketball player should be a grind.

"When things become a grind I feel you're doing something wrong," he said.

Lemon, who was divorced five years ago, has five children between the ages of 17 and 27. Only one ever played basketball and Lemon said she quit law school to begin a Christian ministry in Arizona.

Lemon said he doesn't think he has an image.

"I'm just one of the king's kids.
I've given my life to God and if
that is an image, it is the greatest."



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