

Sports

A heavenly team in the NBA?

Although the National Basketball playoffs are in their third week now, I'm not really interested in who wins or loses. Sure, I'm a big sports fan, and basketball is my favorite sport. But I feel sorry for all 26 NBA teams — the eight remaining in the playoffs and the 18 enjoying vacation.

You see, the NBA created a soon-to-be dynasty three weeks ago. And they don't really know it. The man who knows it is none other than Frank Kruppenbacher.

Kruppenbacher, not exactly a household

From the sidelines By John F. Weber

name in the basketball world, is president of the Greater Orlando Chamber of Commerce. It was his city of Orlando, Fla., that received an expansion NBA franchise beginning in the 1989-90 season.

Prior to being awarded the franchise, it was thought that Orlando and Miami would be competing for just one franchise in Florida. Needless to say, both schools were less than complimentary to each other. Consider Kruppenbacher's jab at Miami the day before the announcement.

"Anybody that thinks about putting an NBA franchise in Miami ought to have their head examined," he said. "While Miami may be the larger city, Orlando's got far more style and class. It's the difference between heaven and hell. We're heaven; they're hell."

In so saying, Kruppenbacher settled questions which have been puzzling people for ages: Is there a heaven and hell? If there is, where are they?

Well, the answers are quite clear. Yes, it's Orlando and Miami.

It's kind of funny. All my life, people have

been comparing heaven and hell. And the comparisons have always been so different.

Now I come to find out that the two really aren't that different. I mean, they can't be too different if they're only a couple hundred miles apart. And the weather!

People always say that hell will be miserable and heaven will be paradise. If weather counts for anything, and it should, these two places are beautiful nearly all year long.

The implication of Kruppenbacher's revelation are endless. Take golf, for example. I've always wondered if one would be able to golf in heaven and/or in hell. Now we know both have more than adequate golfing facilities. I still wonder if you can ground your club in a trap at either place.

Well, Kruppenbacher didn't get into that. He was too worried about Orlando, er, heaven, getting a team. Fortunately, the NBA allayed his fears by allowing the Orlando Magic into the league. That's why I feel sorry for the rest of the NBA.

Think of their motto: The Orlando Magic, a higher level of basketball. The team would have no problems at all. With the Almighty himself as owner, general manager and coach, putting together a team wouldn't be tough.

High-flying Michael Jordan could play for Orlando, but he couldn't score all the points. This club would have a little more teamwork. Kareem Abdul-Jabbar could sign a multi-year contract since he wouldn't have to worry about aging.

There would be no contract disputes as the Almighty presumably has a steady cash flow. Likewise, there would be no drug abuse with any Orlando players. When the coach says his players are clean, he certainly should know on this team.

So if you're following the NBA playoffs, enjoy the Los Angeles Lakers-Boston Celtics battle, if it happens. I'm going to sit back and wait for the Orlando Magic. Their time will come and they'll do just fine.

Have some faith.

Oregon men take OSU dual meet half-speed; some Ducks stay home

By Aaron Knox
Of the Emerald

The Oregon men's track team will be heavily favored to put the wraps on its second-consecutive undefeated season on Saturday, when it travels to Corvallis to challenge winless Oregon State University in the final dual meet of the season for both schools.

Oregon (5-0) has defeated the Beavers (0-4) 12 straight times, and holds a commanding 62-21 lead overall. The Ducks humbled OSU last year by the most lopsided margin in the history of the series, 139-24.

Only the long-range stratagems of coach Bill Dellinger will prevent an even worse drubbing this weekend, as the Ducks fine-tune their squad for the upcoming Pacific 10 Conference and NCAA championships.

"We want to get out of there healthy," Dellinger emphasized. He said that several Oregon athletes would forego competition this weekend in favor of rest, and that the bulk of the Ducks' top distance runners will not be entered.

"We've been competing hard for several weeks. These guys need to train, but they don't need to race," he said, indicating that most of the distance men who have been carrying the load would participate in a Saturday morning workout instead.

Strength coach Stewart Toger expressed a similar sentiment, although the applica-

tion to field events is slightly different.

"It's very hard to maintain peak performance over seven or eight weeks," he said. "It can't be done effectively. Right now we just want to work on maintaining form, and if we do that, I'll be happy," he said.

Also sitting out this week are two Ducks nursing minor injuries. Sprinter Mark Dannis is bothered by tendonitis, and hurdler and horizontal jumper J.J. Birden has not completely recovered from the fall he took two weeks ago against University of California.

"My knee tightened up a couple of days ago, and I'm only at about 75 percent strength," said Birden, who was inadvertently pulled down from behind in a

bizarre 110-meter hurdle spill with Cal's Rod Jett. Birden, an NCAA qualifier in the long jump (26-1 1/2w), is not expected to miss the more important meets coming up.

Dellinger is cautiously optimistic about gaining a couple more NCAA admissions this weekend, despite his generally conservative approach to the meet.

Pole vaulters Tim Canfield and Jay Davis have been victimized by injury and atrocious vaulting weather all season, after finishing 1-2 in the Pac-10 a year ago. Both were near the 18-foot mark last spring, but have barely exceeded 16 feet so far this year.

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