

Former Oregon basketball star comes home

By Jake Berg
Emerald Sports Editor

PORTLAND — Terrell Brandon's first NBA statistic was not as memorable as his first regular-season game.

Brandon, the former Oregon basketball star who is now the starting point guard for the Cleveland Cavaliers, first earned himself a spot on the score sheet Friday by fouling Portland Trail Blazer guard Terry Porter, but the game itself is one Brandon will always hold dear.

"It's something that I'll never forget," said Brandon, a Portland native who was picked 11th by the Cavaliers in the 1990 NBA draft, "but I've got to move on. There are 81 more games left."

And if Game No. 1 is any in-

dications of how the 5-foot-11 rookie will do in his first season, he should fit in fine in the NBA. Cleveland did lose the game 117-106 at Memorial Coliseum, but Brandon, though disappointed in losing the game, was happy with his own efforts.

Brandon's debut contest saw him score 15 points on 6 of 15 shooting, dish out six assists, steal the ball three times and only turn it over twice during his 30 minutes of playing time.

The guard saved some of his best moves for last. Brandon scored the Cavaliers' last four points, weaving through Portland's Clyde Drexler and Cliff Robinson for a reverse lay-in and making a backcourt steal from Porter and dunking it with one hand.

A number of his passes early

in the game were equally impressive. His first official NBA assist was to a slamming Larry Nance, and on Cleveland's next play, Brandon made a swift, no-look pass to John Williams, who dunked.

'I appreciate the crowd very much. They could've booed me.'

— Terrell Brandon,
Cleveland Cavaliers

"I played the best that I can, that's it," Brandon said after the game. "You know, I did all right."

Brandon wasn't the only one impressed by his efforts. Family,

friends and mentors also expressed pleasure at the rookie's debut.

Brandon's father Charles was especially proud of Terrell, who said he will make \$7 million over seven years.

"He did a real good job, considering he's at home," Charles said. "It's a lifetime dream. He worked very hard."

Cleveland coach Lenny Wilkens said Terrell did make some mistakes and needed to get into the offense quicker, but the coach said he thought Brandon performed well overall.

"He played hard," Wilkens said. "I think he's going to be a great player."

Randy Grant, a former Oregon basketball player and friend of Brandon's, agreed after watching Brandon's debut, saying Brandon will someday

be among the best in the league.

"You could say he's going to be a star in this league," Grant said. "I'm just proud because I know somebody who made it."

The sellout crowd of 12,888 seemed to hold a good amount of pride in its hometown hero, too, giving Brandon a rare standing ovation for an opponent during the introductions.

"I appreciate the crowd very much," Brandon said. "They could've booed me."

Those attending hardly had any plans like that. Walking out of the Cleveland locker room following the game, Brandon was greeted by several people who came to see him play.

He gave out hugs, kisses, smiles and autographs to his hometown fans just as easily as he gave out assists to his Cleveland teammates.

STANFORD

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side Cardinal territory, and came away with only two Gregg McCallum field goals.

"We need to try and get an offense," Oregon coach Rich Brooks said. "We didn't run the ball nearly well enough. We needed to get some points on those first two possessions."

"They challenged us and we met the challenge," Stanford coach Denny Green said. "Offensively, we made big plays."

The Ducks' initial first down didn't come until 10:40 of the second quarter, and they managed only 10 first downs for the game.

Oregon converted only one of 13 third down situations, but even without an effective offen-

sive threat, the Ducks still had a good chance to win Saturday.

Trailing 12-0 late in the first half, the Ducks again had excellent field position starting at the Stanford 41.

After quarterback Kyle Crowston ran for 13 yards on a fourth-and-two from the Cardinal 33, he threw an errant option pitch to tailback Sean Burwell, losing seven yards and setting up a third down and long situation.

Oregon failed to convert and had to settle for a 35-yard McCallum field goal.

Then, trailing 12-3 early in the third quarter, the Ducks started a drive at the Stanford 38, following a poor Cardinal punt.

On the first play of the series, Crowston scrambled and found

Burwell wide open. Burwell took the short pass 29 yards to the Stanford 9, and the Ducks had a golden opportunity to pull to within a field goal.

But Oregon was held to negative yardage on three plays, and McCallum's second field goal, from 27 yards, closed the deficit to six points with 8:23 left in the quarter.

Then, on what might have been the pivotal series of the game, the Oregon special teams and defense had their only real lapses.

Ozzie Grenardo took the kickoff 35 yards to the Stanford 39. On third-and-three from the Cardinal 46, quarterback Steve Stenstrom found flanker Jon Pinckney open in the flat, on a play designed to go to Stanford's big play man, Glyn Mil-

burn.

Pinckney eluded Oregon defenders Herman O'Berry and Chad Cota, and just slipped into the end zone ahead of Eric Castle for the 54-yard touchdown.

"It was a breakdown," Oregon cornerback Muhammad Oliver said. "We lost sight of one of our receivers."

"One of our cornerbacks left his man to cover Milburn, even though Milburn was already covered," Brooks said. "That was the big turnaround in the game."

"That play got the emotion in our favor," Stenstrom said. "From there we started to close the door on them." On their next possession, the Ducks helped finish the closing of that door themselves.

Crowston — nearly in the grasp of a Stanford defender — made a poor last-second decision to pitch to Burwell, but the toss went wild and the Cardinal recovered on Oregon's 9.

Oregon linebacker Joe Farwell stopped bruising Stanford fullback Tommy Vardell on two straight plunges from inside the Duck 3. However, Vardell broke through the left side on the fourth down for the Cardinal's second touchdown in less than three minutes.

Stanford led 26-6 with just over four minutes left in the third quarter, and its first win at Autzen Stadium since 1986 was all but wrapped up.

Crowston regretted his decision on both pitches.

"I kind of lost my head on those," Crowston said. "I want those pitches back."

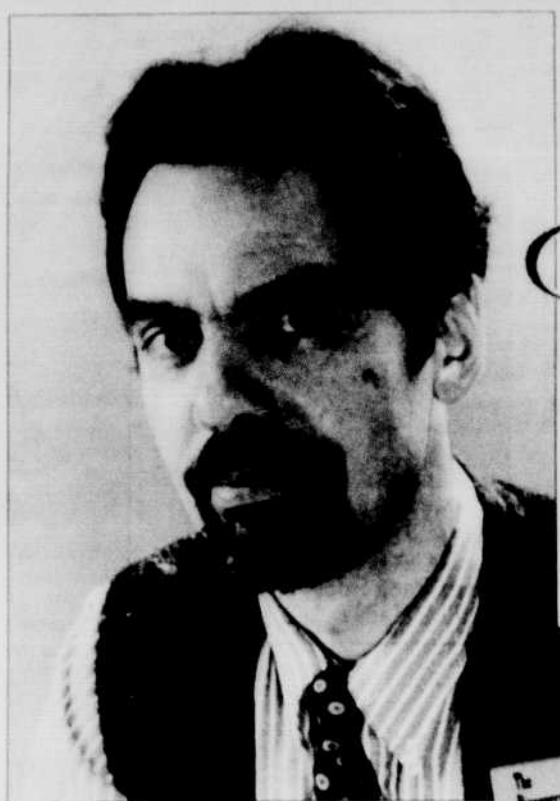
"I knew since they had a young quarterback they'd run the ball at the beginning," Stanford tackle Estevan Avila said. "We were really eager to beat them since they beat us so bad last year."

The Cardinal took its largest lead at 33-6 late in the game when Stenstrom hit wide receiver Chris Walsh for a touchdown on another fourth down, this time from the Oregon 4.

Oregon defensive coordinator Denny Schuler wasn't the least bit impressed by the scoring combination, which had earlier hooked up in the first quarter from 23 yards to give Stanford a 7-0 lead.

"The last touchdown was their first team against our second team," Schuler said. "I thought that showed a lack of class on their part, and I don't mind being quoted on that."

BOOK SIGNING



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