

Lakers take another from Suns

PHOENIX (AP) — The Los Angeles Lakers, playing like the Showtime team of old, shocked the Phoenix Suns' again Sunday with an 86-81 victory that left the NBA's top team one game from playoff elimination.

The Lakers, the only team with a losing record (39-43) in the playoffs, has three chances to become the first No. 8 conference seed to oust a No. 1 under the 16-team playoff format. The next two games are in the Forum in Inglewood, Calif., followed by one more here if the Suns can win twice on the road.

Phoenix, 62-20 in the regular season with a 35-6 record at home, led by six midway through the fourth quarter before Vlade Divac led the Lakers back.

Charles Barkley, second-best in NBA playoff history with a .569 field-goal percentage, hit only eight of 24 shots.

MEN

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"I really ran bad last week at the Penn Relays and was really close to quitting after that," Humble said. "Today, I finished stronger than I had all year. The way I ran today, I think I have an NCAA qualifier in me."

In the 800, junior Gordon Johnson nearly passed Eric Anderson at the finish line but stumbled 10 meters before the finish line to take second.

In the field events, Derek Snelling and Ray Livingston got Oregon off to a strong start with second- and third-place finishes in the pole vault, respectively.

Heath Howington scored points for the Ducks by finishing first in the shot put, second in the discus and fourth in the hammer.

Without the use of Harris, Oregon turned to LaVon Pierce to fill the void. Pierce

ran in both relay races, in addition to the 100 and 200 events.

After helping the Ducks to a second-place finish in the 4x100 relay, Pierce — normally a 400-meter specialist — took second in both the 100 and 200. In the final event of the day, the extended duty finally took its toll on Pierce, as he faded in the final leg of the 4x400 relay, letting Washington State's Michael Joubert pass him at the finish. But by then, Oregon had already locked up the meet.

Oregon controlled both hurdle races, as junior Grady O'Connor won the 400-meter hurdles and freshman Jamar Williams led from start to finish in the 110-meter race.

The Ducks will be back in action next week in Boise for an invitational meet with Boise State, Weber State and Colorado State.

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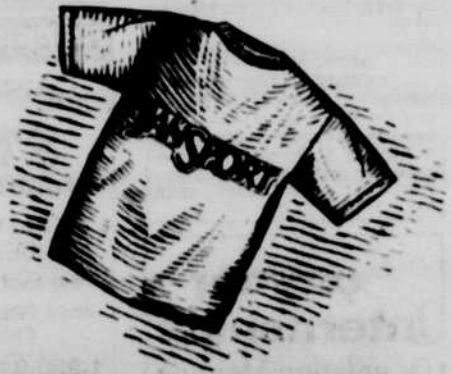
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