



Drexler trade opens up hole in Houston

HOUSTON (AP) — Clyde Drexler and Hakeem Olajuwon are together again. The reworked Houston Rockets, however, are far from settled.

Drexler was traded to the Rockets on Tuesday in a deal that sent power forward Otis Thorpe to Portland. His 22-point average gives Houston more scoring punch, but the trade leaves a hole in the Houston front line.

It also appeared to have further damaged the team's relationship with suspended guard Vernon Maxwell, who failed to show at practice Wednesday for the second time this week. Maxwell and Drexler both play

shooting guard.

Drexler and Olajuwon, however, were all smiles about the trade that reunited two members of the University of Houston's "Phi Slamma Jamma" that made back-to-back Final Four appearances in 1982 and 1983.

"This is a dream come true," Drexler said. "This is Phi Slamma Jamma II, on the professional level."

Drexler and reserve forward Tracy Murray, also sent to Houston in the trade, took their physicals Wednesday but didn't practice with the Rockets because Thorpe had not yet been examined by the Trail Blazers.

Both were expected to play Thursday when the Rockets play at Charlotte.

Wednesday's reunion celebration was dampened by the latest disappearance by Maxwell, who is allowed to practice despite a 10-game suspension imposed by the NBA for punching a fan in Portland last week. The volatile guard was a no-show Monday because of what team officials called a "miscommunication," but he had promised to attend workouts Wednesday.

Maxwell's repeat absence was not well-received by coach Rudy Tomjanovich.

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Beuerlein tops NFL expansion draft picks

NEW YORK (AP) — Steve Beuerlein joined a "Who's Who in the NFL" club Wednesday when Jacksonville made him the first pick in the first expansion draft in 19 years.

For the rest of the day, it was mainly "Who's that?" as the Jaguars and the Carolina Panthers went for the unknown, the underpaid and, in some cases, the relatively unfit. The Panthers in particular stayed with low-priced, low-profile players throughout.

Beuerlein, who fell out of favor with coach Buddy Ryan after a good 1993 season with the Arizona Cardinals, became an asterisk when the Jaguars made him the first pick. Overall, Jacksonville went for veterans and spent more money while Carolina, hoping to attract free agents, went young and cheap.

He goes to Jacksonville with no illusions.

"One of my claims to fame throughout my career is that I've always been able to take a hit," Beuerlein said. "I'm sure that won't be any different going down to Jacksonville. I'll stand in there and take a hit with the best of them."

But after the 30-year-old quarterback, due to make about \$2 million next year, the new teams turned to youth and low salaries. Carolina didn't go for quarterbacks until late, taking the veteran Jack Trudeau from the New York Jets on the 28th round after taking Miami's Doug Pederson six picks earlier.

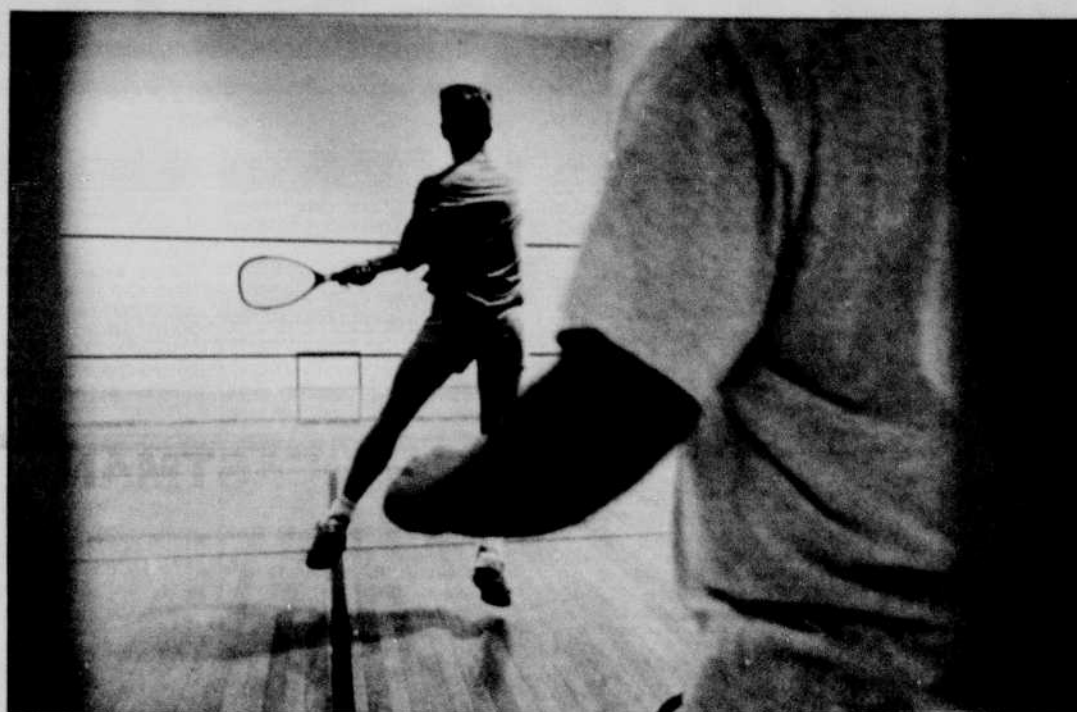
And a number of big-name, high-priced players were ignored, including Michael Dean, William Perry, Gary Clark, Dante Jones, Chris Doleman, Mark Rypien, Tom Rathman and Chris Miller.

Rod Smith, a 24-year-old cornerback who started seven games for New England last year, was Carolina's first pick.

"I'm just one of 30 guys," Smith said. "I'm not worried about the contract at this point."

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Hit and run



If the weather put a damper on outdoor sports opportunities, you can still play racquetball at the Esslinger courts Monday through Thursday, 6:40 a.m. to 12:30 a.m., or Fridays, 6:40 a.m. to 9:30 a.m.

Clubs ready to go ahead with season

FORT LAUDERDALE, Fla. (AP) — A hodgepodge of potential strikebreakers, minor leaguers and non-roster invitees milled about the New York Yankees' locker room Wednesday, giving a preview of replacement baseball.

And like the strike itself, the presence of the players raised more questions than it answered.

"We told them our policy, and I hope you get this correct, that they are not replacement players until April 3," general manager Gene Michael said.

"We're not calling them major leaguers, we're not calling them minor leaguers, we're calling it Yankees' spring training, and if they make the team they'll become major leaguers and play the games," Michael explained.

Four teams — the Yankees, the St. Louis Cardinals, the Seattle Mariners and the San Francisco Giants — will have replacement players in uniform Thursday when they open camps to pitchers and catchers. Other teams will begin practice by Monday.

The Yankees held an orienta-

tion session in the morning, and players then underwent physicals, received uniforms and got a feel for the spring training complex.

The Yankees issued a roster with 27 players' names, but the team made no differentiation between the 14 minor leaguers who are going about business as usual and the 13 others who are either replacement players or non-roster invitees.

When the baseball strike began Aug. 12, the 763 players who were on major-league rosters stopped working. Since then, the Players' Association has asked all players on 40-man rosters (major leaguers and top minor league prospects) to stay out of camp. That has pushed the total of potential strikers to nearly 1,100.

In addition, the union has asked minor leaguers to boycott games involving replacements. Michael said none of the players on the Yankees' 40-man roster had agreed to come to camp.

"We're going to bring in the best players we can," he said. "We're hopeful that the caliber will be good enough. We don't know exactly what it is because

it's new territory, but we are going to have baseball."

At the Cardinals' camp in St. Petersburg, players were told they'd be given different color uniforms, some with the same numbers.

"I'm curious more than excited," manager Joe Torre said. "I think it'll be an opportunity to see the young players that you don't ordinarily see. The bulk will be our minor-league players."

The Baltimore Orioles are refusing to field a team of strikebreakers. At their camp in Sarasota on Wednesday, all the fields were unoccupied except for a lawn mower. The clubhouse was practically empty.

"I keep looking up, thinking Mike Mussina or Ben McDonald might come walking in. I'm trying to stay positive through this thing, but I guess it looks like they may not be coming in for a while," new manager Phil Regan said.

The Yankees' players who showed up a day early ranged from a confused and wary Triple-A starter to a sandlot

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THURSDAY

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America3 ends streak

SAN DIEGO (AP) — America3's all-women crew beat Dennis Conner's Stars & Stripes in the opening race of the third round-robin of the America's Cup trials on Wednesday to end a three-race losing streak.

The women led the entire way around the six-leg, 18.6-mile Pacific Ocean course and won by 1 minute, 26 seconds. It was their first victory since defeating Young America in the opening race of the second round-robin on Jan. 29.

Their losing streak would have been four, but a loss to Stars & Stripes on Feb. 3 was thrown out when the second round was shortened by three races because of weather delays.

With victories now worth four points, America3 closed the gap in the Citizen Cup standings and trails co-leaders Stars & Stripes and Young America, 9 points to 7.

NHL Scoring Leaders

NEW YORK (AP) — Scoring leaders through Feb. 14:

Player, Team	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM
Jagr, Pit.	12	13	11	24	4
Francis, Pit.	12	5	15	20	2
Sakic, Que.	12	5	15	20	6
Zhamnov, Win.	13	5	15	20	8
Selanne, Win.	13	9	10	19	0
Hull, StL.	12	10	7	17	8
Nichols, Chi.	12	7	10	17	6
Rosenick, Chi.	12	5	12	17	8
Tilov, Cal.	12	10	6	16	6
Trachuk, Win.	13	8	8	16	59
Oates, Bos.	12	5	11	16	0
Clark, Que.	12	9	6	15	19
Neely, Bos.	12	9	6	15	8
Mullen, Pit.	12	8	7	15	2
Sundin, Tor.	14	9	5	14	0
Ferraro, NYI	12	8	6	14	8
Tikkanen, StL.	12	5	9	14	6
Bourque, Bos.	12	4	10	14	2
Yzerman, Det.	12	4	10	14	10
Lindros, Phi.	13	4	10	14	14
Kurri, LA	11	3	11	14	4

Harding heads for Germany

PORTLAND (AP) — Tonya Harding has left on a flight to Cologne, Germany, to do three interviews for a tabloid-format television show.

Multnomah County Presiding Judge Donald Londer gave permission for Harding to leave the country Tuesday after he learned she may receive \$25,000, which she would turn over to Oregon Special Olympics.

"At first, I wasn't too keen on it," Londer said. "But the possibility of making money for Special Olympics persuaded me."