

sideline

TODAY IN SPORTS

Globetrotters sign former Oregon star

PHOENIX — The Harlem Globetrotters announced today the signing of 6-foot-2 shooting guard Orlando Williams and 6-foot-8 power forward Elmer Martin. No terms of the contracts were released.

Williams, 24, attended Oregon from 1991-95. During his senior season, Williams averaged 18.7 points and 2.9 rebounds in 28 games with the Ducks. Overall, he concluded his career averaging 14.9 points and three rebounds. Williams became the first Oregon player to be selected to the All-Pacific-10 Conference teams twice, earning the honor in 1994 and 1995, since Terrell Brandon accomplished the feat in 1990 and 1991.

Green Bay assistant improving after fall

DALLAS (AP) — Green Bay Packers assistant coach Gil Haskell has made significant improvement after fracturing his skull in a sideline mishap during Sunday's NFC championship game.

"He is still confused, but is conversing and recognizing family members," Dr. Michael Foreman said.

Haskell was injured late in the second quarter of Sunday's game at Texas Stadium, won 38-27 by the Dallas Cowboys.

Cowboys safety Darren Woodson blocked flanker Robert Brooks out of bounds and into Haskell, his head striking the artificial surface.

Sabonis, Stoudamire to play in rookie game

■ **NBA:** The Blazers' center and the former Portland high school standout highlight rookie game

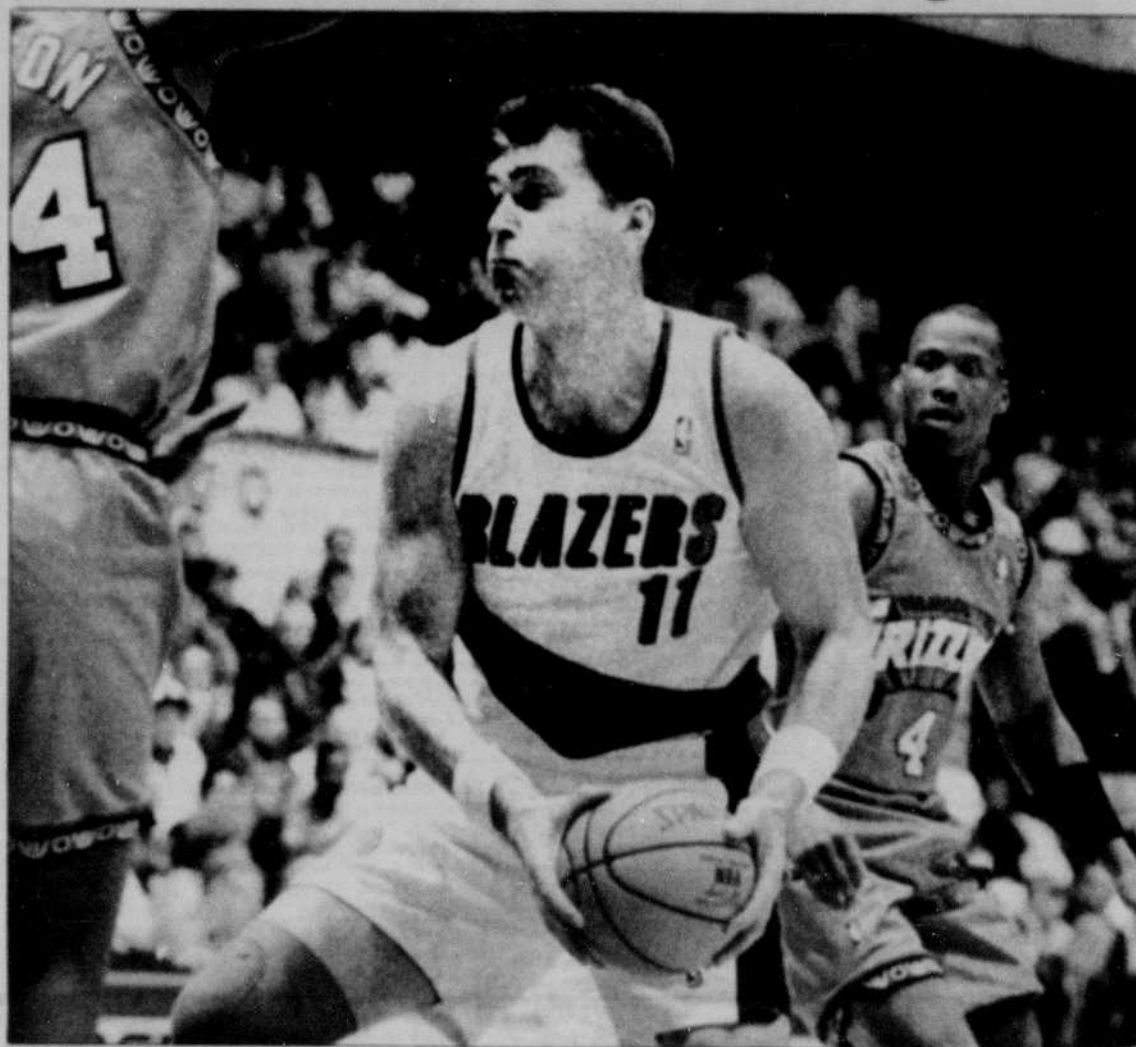
NEW YORK (AP) — Arvydas Sabonis of the Portland Trail Blazers and Damon Stoudamire of the Toronto Raptors are among those selected Tuesday to play in the NBA rookie game Feb. 10 during All-Star weekend.

Stoudamire, picked for the East team, leads the expansion team in scoring and assists.

Also picked for the East team were forwards Alan Henderson of Atlanta, Kurt Thomas of Miami, Rasheed Wallace of Washington and Eric Williams of Boston; guards Jerry Stackhouse of Philadelphia and Bob Sura of Cleveland; and Charlotte center George Zidek.

No. 1 draft pick Joe Smith of Golden State heads the West team, which also includes a member of an expansion team, Bryant Reeves of Vancouver.

The others picked for the West were guards Tyus Edney of Sacramento and Brent Barry of the Los Angeles Clippers; forwards Michael Finley of Phoenix, Kevin Garnett of Minnesota, and Antonio McDyess of Denver and Sabonis.



Portland center Arvydas Sabonis will represent the Blazers on the West team at the NBA Rookie game.

Why did the Packers have to lose?

Having spent the better portion of a week in Dallas, Texas, covering the Cotton Bowl, I have experienced first hand the obsession of the Dallas Cowboys.

And with that in mind, I shutter to think what that town was like after the Cowboys beat the Green Bay Packers on Sunday.

Don't get me wrong. I liked the town; I was very intrigued by it.

Great food. Great people. Grassy Knoll. What's not to be intrigued by?

But the city's deep-rooted fascination with the Cowboys is just a bit overbearing.

'America's Team' carries a following unlike any other I have ever seen. Sure, there are a lot of 49ers fans spread across the country. And there are a lot of Blazer fans in Portland. For that matter, there are a lot of Duck fans throughout this state.

But none can even compare to Cowboys fans.

From the minute I stepped foot off my incoming flight until the minute I was in the air over Dallas, it was Dallas Cowboys this, Dallas: Cowboys that. Emmitt Smith this, Deion Sanders that. Michael Irvin this, Troy Aikman that.

And, of course, Jerry Jones at the bottom of it all, eating pizza with Deion.

At the airport. At the gas stations. In the restaurants. You just can't go anywhere in that city without catching a glimpse of that damn star on a shot glass or the old blue and silver plastered on a T-shirt.

The entire time I was in Dallas, I saw Emmitt Smith at least 30 times ... or some derivative thereof, that is. Smith hats. Smith coats. But most of all, Smith jerseys flood Dallas on a regular basis. Tall Emmitt, skinny Emmitt, fat Emmitt; you name a type of Smith-wannabe and Dallas has it.

Sure, some Dallas-area people like the Mavericks. And some even like the Stars.

But it seems that everybody loves the Cowboys. It must be an unwritten law in Dallas that you must either wear or sell a certain amount of Cowboys merchandise in your lifetime.

Actually, at a Dallas grocery store, it was a written law. On Sunday, employees could wear a Cowboys shirt or their regular uniform, or get a pink slip. Period.

(One guy tested the policy. The rather witty and very brave employee wore a Packers jersey to work and refused to take it off. Considering the popularity of guns in Texas, he was lucky all he lost was his job.)

The point is, the Dallas Cowboys carry a little bit too much of a following. People love their 'Boys,' and that seems to be why so many people outside of the Dallas area don't.

While I'm not an avid Cowboys hater, on Sunday I found myself asking, "For the love of God, why couldn't the Packers have beaten the Cowboys?"

A modest request, I think.

But as it stands, on the most sacred Sunday in a sports fan's life, all of us faithful football fans will have to sit through Decoy Deion trying to play offense, Owner Jones in the act of selling his soul to Nike, and the most ridiculous of end zone dances yet to be seen.

Yes, the Cowboys are going to the Super Bowl. Whoopee.

Congratulations, Troy. You deserve it, Emmitt. Be careful, Michael — you're not as young as you used to be, you know. Don't make an ass of yourself, Deion.

On second thought, maybe I won't be a faithful football fan on Super Sunday after all.

Trevor Kearney is the sports editor for the Emerald.

OPINION



Trevor Kearney

Slumping Suns fire Westphal

■ **HIRING:** The head coach will be replaced by the same man whose position he took over

PHOENIX (AP) — Hailed as a hero for guiding the Phoenix Suns to the NBA Finals three years ago but labeled a loser when his team of walking wounded fell below .500, coach Paul Westphal was fired on Tuesday.

Westphal, dismissed by Suns president and owner Jerry Colangelo, may be the only NBA coach in history to replace, and be replaced by, the same man — Cotton Fitzsimmons.

Fitzsimmons, a senior executive vice president and color analyst for the Suns, was glad to return to the bench.

"Jerry took my sign off my desk," said the peppery, talkative Fitzsimmons, who will be the team's coach for the third

Turn to **HIRING**, Page 12



ON THE TUBE

JANUARY 17

- 4 p.m. ESPN
NCAA Basketball, North Carolina at Virginia
- 4:30 p.m. PRIME
NCAA Basketball, George Mason at Old Dominion
- 5 p.m. TBS
NBA Basketball, Orlando at Phoenix
- 6 p.m. ESPN
NCAA Basketball, St. John's at Connecticut