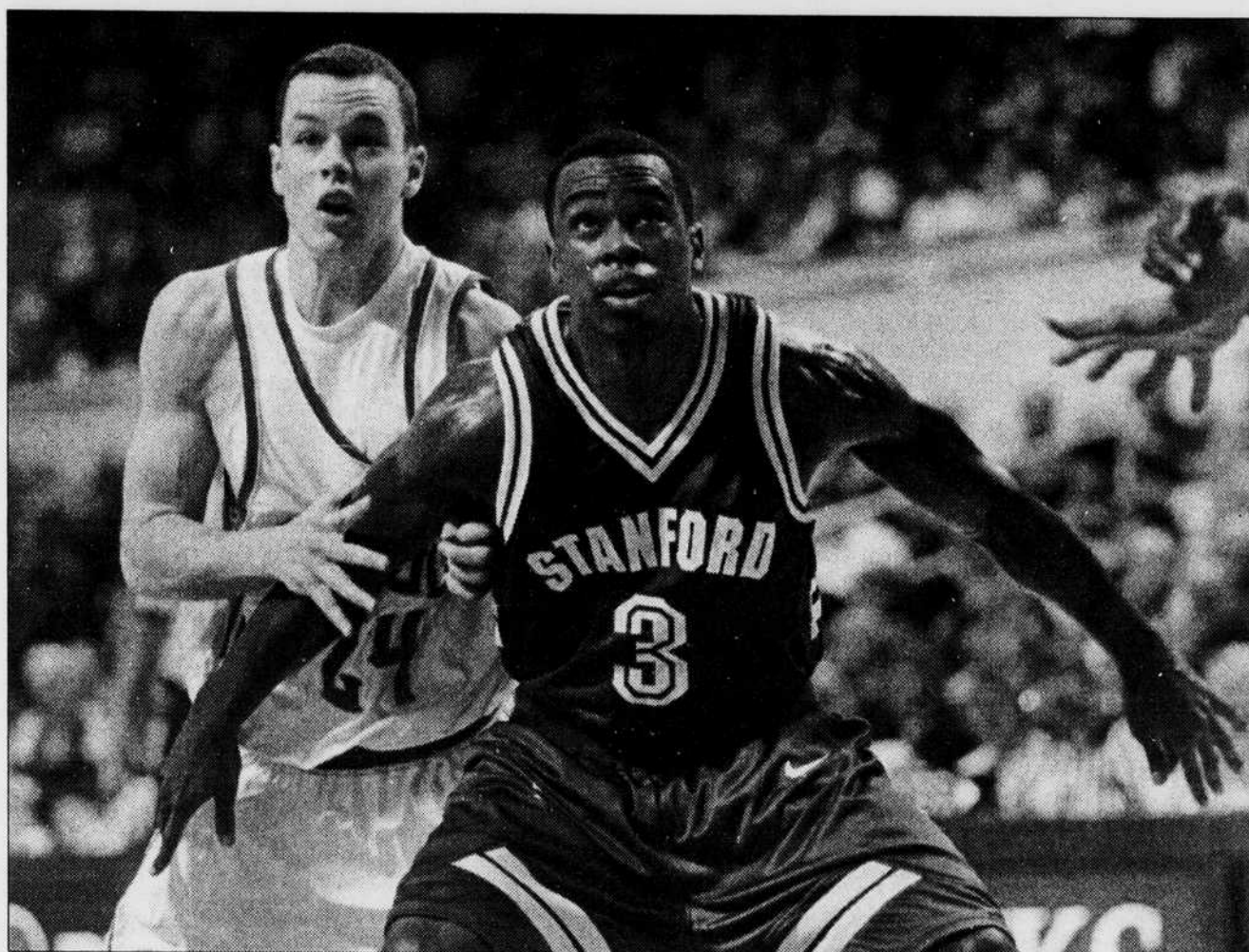




Baseball
SF Giants at Houston,
ESPN (34) 4:30 p.m.

SPORTS



CHAD PATTESON/Emerald

Kris Weems and the Cardinal's march to the 1998 Final Four added to Stanford's growing reputation as an athletic power.

Cardinal can repeat title run next season

For the fourth time in five years, the Pacific-10 Conference placed a team in the national semifinals, with Stanford losing in the Final Four last weekend to eventual national champion Kentucky in an overtime thriller, 86-85.

The scariest aspect of the Cardinal's run through nationally ranked opponents is the fact that they return every single impact player, including all five starters.

Stanford will lose both Kambe Tshionyi and Pete Van Elswyk to graduation, but will add another big body in the post in the form of 6-foot-10 redshirt freshman Jason Collins. Collins' twin brother Jarron saw big minutes in the tournament, but Jason was forced to take a medical redshirt after undergoing arthroscopic surgery on Dec. 10 to repair his left knee.

Pac-10 opponents were faced with a similar challenge entering this past season, as 1997 national champion Arizona returned its entire starting lineup, finished 17-1 in conference, then lost to national runner-up Utah in the Elite Eight of the tournament this season.

The Wildcats will probably lose four of their five starters this offseason. Both forwards, Michael Dickerson and Bennett Davison, are seniors, as is shooting guard Miles Simon. Sophomore point guard Mike Bibby is also expected to enter the NBA draft in coming weeks.

Joining Stanford as a favorite next season will be California. The Bears finished in a three-way tie for fifth with Oregon and Arizona State this season, and although no California players garnered all-conference recognition, the Bears were well-represented in postseason honors. Juniors Geno Carlisle, Michael Gill and Thomas Kilgore all earned all-newcomer honors, and Raymond King collected honorable mention. Furthermore, forward Sean Lampley, who averaged 11 points and almost eight rebounds in his final 11 games, all starts, was named to the Pac-10's all-freshman team.

BASKETBALL



Men's
Pac-10
Notes

by Rob Moseley

Turn to MOSELEY, Page 8

All-around Excellence

Stanford's appearance in the men's basketball Final Four enhances its claim as the NCAA's premier athletics program

By Tim Pyle
Freelance Sports Reporter

Stanford. To most people this word represents a prestigious, Ivy League-like California school that offers one of the best college educations in the United States.

But there is another, lesser-known definition that rings just as true.

That definition is: Stanford, a collegiate sports empire.

In fact, the Cardinal has won 14 national championships in the past three complet-

ed school years. Furthermore, Stanford has been awarded the last three Sears Director Cups, which denote the best college athletics program in the United States for a given school year according to a statistical formula that takes into account all Division I-A sports.

In this era of college athletes as opposed to student athletes, how is Stanford able to maintain its academic prowess while simultaneously ruling the sports landscape? The answer is multi-faceted.

"We feel that Stanford University is one of the greatest universities in the country,"

says Gary Migdol, Stanford assistant athletic director. "And the combination of athletics and academics and competition at the highest level, along with a great coaching staff and a great university, attracts the best student-athletes."

Oregon State athletic director Mitch Barnhart echoes Migdol's opinion that Stanford's all-around excellence pushes it to the top of the collegiate sports world.

"[Stanford] has a wonderful, rich tradition with some quality coaches," Barnhart

Turn to STANFORD, Page 12

Season starts with a bang

Mark McGwire's grand slam, the first by a St. Louis Cardinal on opening day, highlights the beginning of the Major League season

By Ben Walker
The Associated Press

Swimming pools, cigar bars. Devil Rays, Diamondbacks. Revamped Marlins, new-look Brewers. They were the stories on opening day — until McGwire and Griffey.

Mark McGwire and Ken Griffey Jr., quickly showed what this expansion season may be all about. Both homered Tuesday, beginning the chase for Roger Maris' record of 61.

McGwire became the first St. Louis Cardinals player to hit a grand slam on opening day, highlighting a 6-0 win over the Rupert Murdoch-owned Los Angeles Dodgers.

"It's an awesome feeling," said McG-

wire, who hit 58 last year. "How can you not get chills?"

Griffey, who hit 56 last season for the Seattle Mariners, kept pace a few hours later. The American League MVP connected for a solo home run against Cleveland.

The Florida Marlins, meanwhile, also got off to a strong start. Having stripped nearly half their roster in a move to slash a \$53 million payroll to \$33 million, the World Series champions scored six runs in the first inning and beat the Chicago Cubs 11-6.

For at least one game, these Marlins looked a lot like last year's champs. World Series MVP Liván Hernández was the winning pitcher and October stars Gary Sheffield and Charles Johnson hit three-run homers.

"Nobody should get carried away," said Florida manager Jim Leyland. "It's just one game, and we're a very young ballclub. We're going to take some bumps and bruise-

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Today

National League
Pittsburgh at Montreal
Chicago at Florida
San Diego at Cincinnati
San Francisco at Houston
Colorado at Arizona

American League
Minnesota at Toronto
Detroit at Tampa Bay
Kansas City at Baltimore
New York at Anaheim
Cleveland at Seattle
Boston at Oakland

Cleveland's late rally spells doom for Seattle

The Mariners blew a 9-3 lead before an opening-day record crowd in the Kingdome

By Jim Cour
The Associated Press

SEATTLE — Once again, Ken Griffey Jr. and the Seattle sluggers were undone by the Mariners' bullpen.

Griffey, Jay Buhner, Edgar Martinez and Russ Davis each homered Tuesday, but the Cleveland Indians rallied for four runs in the eighth inning against Seattle's shaky relievers to win 10-9 on opening night.

Seattle's bullpen, which blew 27 save chances last season, betrayed manager Lou Piniella.

Bobby Ayala, loser Tony Fossas and Mike Timlin combined to allow two hits and five walks in the eighth.

In contrast, Cleveland's relievers — Paul Shuey, Jose Mesa, Paul Assenmacher and Mike Jackson — were perfect, retiring all 13 batters they faced.

Manager Mike Hargrove said he decided late Monday afternoon during the Indians' workout in the Kingdome not to use Mesa as his closer — at least to start the season.



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