

Iverson scores 48, spoils L.A.'s plan

By Chris Sheridan
The Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — There won't be a sweep in the NBA Finals unless it's the 76ers — not the Lakers — who can pull one off.

In a thrilling opener to the championship round, Allen Iverson had a mesmerizing first half, a poor second half and a clutch overtime, scoring 48 points to lead Philadelphia to a 107-101 victory Wednesday night.

Iverson scored seven straight points after the clock ticked inside two minutes to give Philadelphia a lead it never relinquished. The 76ers ended the Lakers' 19-game winning streak, giving them their first loss in 67 days.

"We knew we could win before we came here, with everybody counting us out," Iverson said. "They thought we would get swept, and that is like a slap in the face."

Iverson and Shaquille O'Neal both had 41 points at the end of the fourth quarter, but Iverson scored only three over the final 19 minutes of regulation as he was hounded defensively by speedy Lakers reserve Tyrone Lue.

O'Neal hit a jump hook for the first points of the overtime, Kobe Bryant spun around Eric Snow for a layup and O'Neal hit one of two from the line for a five-point lead with three minutes left.

Raja Bell flung up an underhanded shot with his left hand that fell through, and Iverson hit two foul shots to get the 76ers within 99-98 with 1:46 left.

Lue then missed a drive and Iverson beat him downcourt and hit a wide-open three-pointer. After a turnover by Rick Fox, Iverson buried a corner jumper over Lue for a 103-99 lead.

Bryant answered with a jumper, but Snow hit a runner from the lane with 10.5 seconds left for a four-point lead that all but ended the game — along with all the talk about how the Lakers would sweep the 76ers and become the first team to go undefeated through the postseason.

"That's the way we are. We play hard," Iverson said. "We came in

here expecting to win. We know we can win. Everybody's been counting us out."

O'Neal finished with 44 points and 20 rebounds, but Bryant scored just 15 points on 7-for-22 shooting.

"I don't think Kobe Bryant had a Kobe kind of day, and he will play better Friday," Snow said. "In OT, we came out slow but gathered the troops. Allen hit a big shot and we got some stops."

Game 2 is Friday night. Iverson had his third consecutive 40-point game, and Snow and Dikembe Mutombo added 13 points each.

Fifteen minutes before tipoff, the crowd at Staples Center began chanting, "SWEEP! SWEEP!"

But when Iverson started hitting from all over, the chorus turned to "OOH" and "AAH."

Iverson scored 30 points in the first half as the 76ers came back from an early 13-point deficit, and he opened the second half with a jumper that hit nothing but net and brought more howls of astonishment from the celebrity-studded crowd.

Midway through the third quarter, Iverson came up with a steal, raced ahead of O'Neal and braced himself for a 350-pound impact as he went up for a layup. O'Neal, however, barely even swiped at the ball. The layup gave Philadelphia a 68-56 lead, and a three-point play by Snow put the Sixers ahead 73-58 with 5:23 left in the third.

That's when the Lakers started to show some resiliency of their own.

O'Neal scored the Lakers' next 12 points, dominating Matt Geiger and Todd MacCulloch as 76ers coach Larry Brown gave Mutombo (who had three fouls) an extended rest — the final 6:18 of the quarter. Brown picked up a technical foul with 55 seconds left in the quarter, and the Lakers were able to cut their deficit to 79-77 entering the fourth.

Mutombo made a hook shot with 8:41 left for an 88-81 lead before Lue — perhaps the only player in the NBA quicker than Iverson — came up with two steals and a three-pointer that got the crowd on its feet.

ceived no interest from Dellinger when he graduated from Crater High School in 1996.

The same went for Tom Pappas when he graduated from Lane Community College that same year. In 1998, Pappas broke the collegiate decathlon record for Tennessee.

Smith doesn't look to make the same mistakes, as he netted the nation's top recruiting class last season, which included mostly Oregonians.

This year's roster included 25 Oregonians, 11 others from the West Coast, four from west of the Mississippi River and three overseas athletes. Their ninth-place finish nationally proves that a team of local talent can work.

Eleven of Oregon's 27 NCAA points this year came from Coos Bay native John Stiegeler, the national javelin champion, and Azalea native Billy Pappas, the younger brother of Tom, an All-American decathlete. Six more came from prized U.S. recruit Jason Hartmann.

With all the Ducks' NCAA scorers, and many, many more, it looks as if Smith and the Ducks will be a national power with local talent for many years to come.

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scored five points and placed 47th.

Many thought that it was Dellinger's refusal to recruit significant international talent during this time that led to the program's decline. In fact, two of the very few NCAA scorers in the late-'90s lull were Denmark's Piotr Buckiarski and Britain's Karl Keska.

Dellinger left in 1998 and handed the reins to Smith, who had two years similar to the past seven — sixth and seventh in the Pac-10 and 65th and 44th at the NCAAAs.

That was before Smith's first recruits became sophomores and juniors. Smith has dipped into the international pool of athletes, bringing in the school's first Kenyan and Ethiopian runners — Simon Kimata and Michael Kasahun — as well as Argentinean decathlete Santiago Lorenzo. But they have been Smith's only ventures outside U.S. borders, and for that matter, some of the only ventures outside Oregon.

One of the keys for Smith has been not missing out on blue-chip recruits from within the state of Oregon. This year's 1,500-meter champion, Bryan Berryhill of Colorado State, was one of those blue-chips. The Central Point native re-

Amazing M's continue streak

SEATTLE — The Seattle Mariners stretched their winning streak to 14, the longest in the American League in seven years, by beating the Texas Rangers 7-3 Wednesday night.

Jamie Moyer (8-1) allowed three hits in seven shutout innings and Edgar Martinez homered. The Mariners, 46-12, haven't lost since a 12-11 defeat at Minnesota May 22.

Seattle, which took a 7-0 lead in sweeping its fourth straight series, matched the second-best 58-game start since 1900, trailing only the 1912 New York Giants (47-11). The 1907 Chicago Cubs and the 1939 New York Yankees also started 46-12.

The last AL team to win 14 straight had been Kansas City from July 23-Aug. 5, 1994. Atlanta won 15 in a row from April 16 to May 2 last year.

Texas is 2-7 against the Mariners this year.

Alex Rodriguez, who left Seattle to sign a record \$252 million, 10-year contract with Texas, saw the last-place Rangers fall 26 games behind the Mariners. He was 0 for 2 in the game and went 1 for 10 with a home run in the three-game series, his second as a visitor in Seattle.

Moyer, who struck out seven, joined teammate Aaron Sele (8-0) as the second eight-game winner in the

AL. Arizona's Curt Schilling has 10 victories.

Darren Oliver (4-2), activated from the disabled list before the game, gave up one run and five hits in seven innings. He pitched for the first time since May 7, when he was hit in the left thumb by a liner off the bat of Tony Graffanino.

Martinez homered in the first, a drive to center just over a leaping Gabe Kapler.

Seattle broke open the game with a six-run eighth, getting seven hits.

Martinez and Bret Boone had RBI singles off J.D. Smart, pinch-hitter John Olerud had a two-run double off Juan Moreno, and David Bell and Dan Wilson added RBI doubles off Jeff Zimmerman.

Bullpen coach John McLaren was 4-0 while filling in for manager Lou Piniella, who went to Tampa, Fla., for his father-in-law's funeral. Piniella is expected to return for Friday night's game against San Diego.

Ken Caminiti hit an RBI single in the ninth off Jose Paniagua, and Ruben Sierra hit a two-run single off Arthur Rhodes.

Game notes: Seattle OF Mike Cameron was scratched from the lineup at game time because of a sprained left knee. He was injured Tuesday night in Seattle's comeback 5-4 victory. ... Martinez has hit the most home runs

(23) at Safeco Field. Jay Buhner of Seattle is next with 18 and Rodriguez, who played in Seattle with Safeco as his home for 1 1/2 seasons, has 14. ... Seattle is 7-2 against Texas this season. ... The Mariners are 18-4 against AL West teams.

Schilling becomes first 10-game winner

PHOENIX — Curt Schilling pitched a six-hitter to become the major leagues' first 10-game winner as the Arizona Diamondbacks beat the Los Angeles Dodgers 4-1 Wednesday night.

Schilling (10-1) struck out eight and didn't walk a batter in his major league-leading fourth complete game, his third in four starts.

Damian Miller drove in two runs with a homer and a double, and Jay Bell also homered and doubled for the Diamondbacks, who had lost the first two of the four-game series between the top two teams in the NL West.

Mark Grace extended his hitting streak to 15 games with an RBI double.

Shawn Green spoiled Schilling's shutout bid with a one-out homer in the ninth.

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