

Blazers court Russian player

Sabonis in Blazer red instead

With all the fuss made about Arvidas Sabonis' visit to the United States, someone has to say it. So here it is.

Can you imagine if the Blazers got Sabonis to go with Duckworth? Then if Bowie comes back and Johnson gets healthy and the Lakers have a plane crash and this, and that.

Certainly Sabonis would make an interesting Blazer. Portland would be the draw of the NBA with a Russian on the roster, possibly forcing CBS to do without a few Lakers or Celtics telecasts. And wouldn't he fit right in with the Blazers, equipped with a nagging achilles injury that could flare up at any time and have him at Willamette Falls Hospital quicker than you can say Robert Cook? Maybe they can save him a room next to Bowie's.

There are some interesting angles to this Sabonis propaganda. Soviet sports officials seemed to have initiated the contact, a gesture that infers that the Soviets are prepared to let Arvidas go if he wishes. However, suspicion says that the Soviets would not want him to play unless he could be effective, which makes the upcoming Olympics the barometer for his future. If a healthy Arvidas fares well in Seoul, he may end up in Blazer red instead.

Then there's Ted Turner, who was instrumental in bringing Sabonis to Atlanta for his physical check-up. Was Turner's only incentive a boost in TV ratings? Actually, Ted Turner has been quite diplomatic with the Soviets the past few years. Does Ted have his eye on a political office? Maybe Ted should link up with Donald Trump to form an entrepreneur party for 1992. Or does Turner want to cut a path for Soviet sports stars because his Atlanta Hawks own the rights to two of the lesser known round-balls bearing the hammer and sickle? Good guess.

Harry Glickman sure seems wide-eyed at all of this excitement. Never one to play down a

promotion, Harry can already see Blazer Cable ads in "The Oregonian" with a picture of Arvidas capping Ralph Sampson and the question, "Will Ralph See Red Tonight?" Glickman clearly won't suffer from perestroika paranoia.



Some values become tested as Sabonis' future in Portland unfolds. Would the Blazers, in their zest to have another big body and possible all-star, be unknowingly condoning communism? When asked his opinion of Sabonis' presence at a Portland-Utah playoff game, Utah coach Frank Layden stated only that he holds some strong feelings about it, but wouldn't elaborate, indicating it may cause an unwelcome stir. Could this be the kind of attitude Sabonis would face across the NBA? Perhaps his acceptance would be different if he defected. Certainly the "D" word scares the hokey out of Harry Glickman who knows any talk of defection would land Arvidas on permanent Soviet soil. But don't think it hasn't crossed Arvidas' mind, who is from a part of the USSR which holds less loyalty to the union. Plus the lifestyle he could maintain with an NBA contract would arouse any 23-year-old's imagination.

Dwight Jaynes, the Blazer beat writer for "The Oregonian," suggested that Sabonis may only be as good as a typical NBA journeyman center. Nyet.

Sabonis is 7'-3 1/4" and 289 pounds. If he possesses any reflexes or instincts at all he has what it takes to be a defensive force. Ask Mark Eaton. Jaynes indication that an international tiff would be raised if Schuler chose not to play Arvidas is a moot point. Sabonis, despite bearing an eerie resemblance to Petur Gudmundsson, has already demonstrated his skills beyond a reasonable doubt. If he comes over, Schuler won't be able to find him enough minutes.

HOW 'BOUT THEM ORIOLES?—Did the Orioles management overreact by firing Cal Ripken Sr. after he guided the O's to a 0-6 start? Hey, Frank Robinson isn't exactly making a show for manager of the year. When Ripken was fired, the talk around Baltimore was that the town was not accustomed to a losing ballclub. How about now? They will be by the end of the year. This could be the first team to be mathematically eliminated by July. How's that grab your exponents? Here's the Top Ten Orioles' excuses for their losing streak:

10. Sandbagging for the number one pick in the college draft.
9. Extra starch in uniforms makes it uncomfortable to extend your arms.
8. TV in clubhouse has MTV.
7. Heated presidential race makes baseball seem meaningless.
6. Some players thought deaf equipment manager was relaying signs from the dugout.
5. Confusion over new balk rule has entire infield afraid to move.
4. Joe Garagiola's witch-doctor whammy finally taking effect.
3. Ridiculous scheduling has them playing nearly every day.
2. Oriole infield powerless against amazing "seeing-eye" pop-ups.
1. Too much emphasis on playing for fun.



Photo by Beth Coffey

John Davenport, all-star short stop, gives the Cougars the winning edge.

Davenport leads team

by Mark Borrelli Staff Writer

The Clackamas men's baseball team is currently enjoying a very good season, 8-3, and in first place. A big key to the Cougars' success is sophomore shortstop John Davenport.

Davenport, a graduate of Aloha high school, has done an outstanding job in the field, as well as at the plate in his two years as a Cougar.

Davenport got started playing baseball in little league in California before moving to Oregon where he played his high school ball in Aloha.

Out of high school, where he was named first team all-league shortstop his senior year, he decided to go to Portland State, but came to Clackamas after only one year at PSU. "I really didn't get a chance to play that much at PSU, and I knew that I would get a chance to play here." And he has. And he has shown a tremendous glove, and a hot bat while here. Last season, he was named an all-league shortstop, while leading the team in batting (.417), and was voted the team MVP. This season Davenport is picking up right where he left off. He is batting a sultry .351, leading the team in stolen bases and RBI'S and continues to fill the hole very nicely.

Davenport is a general studies major and hopes to move on to a four year college next year and continue to play baseball. "I have talked to a few four year schools, but haven't really made up my

mind yet." Davenport feels hard work was his key to success. "I work hard to better myself at all stages of the game. I take a lot of ground balls, work on my range, my arm, and my quick release." Davenport feels that those are the tools needed to be a good shortstop. He also credits coaching to his success, and comments on coach Paul Roeder. "He is a good players coach. He gets along with the players pretty well."

Davenport's future ambitions include marriage, kids, and possibly playing in the major leagues. "Yeah, I'd love to play in the majors, who wouldn't?" Some of the top players Davenport admires are Tony Fernandez, Shawon Dunston, and Ozzie Smith, all short stops. Davenport feels that his best shot at the pros would be at second base and he does feel he could hit major league pitching.

Davenport's advice to a highschool shortstop planning on playing college ball. "The speed of the runners in college are faster than that in high school. You can't count on your arm as much, you gotta get to the ball quickly, and get set to throw faster." Davenport also would like to be a coach, later on in his career, but would like the chance to play major league baseball.

For now, Davenport is looking forward to what he hopes is a championship season. "I want to win the league championship, as a team."

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