



Sports Talk

by Ron Sykes
Sports Editor

And what is this sudden madness about the great play of Blazer back-up center Tom Owens?

Owens the 6'10" acquisition from Houston made his Blazer debut and helped Portland to a 121-109 win over the experimental Denver Nuggets. Now at best Owens' performance was minimal. Ramsey says, "We will get stronger play this year from the back-up center position." All of these early superlatives that are now heaped on the Houston seems unwarranted, at least for now.

Tom Owens appears to be a little short on aggressiveness, doesn't appear to be the strong center that is needed in the NBA.

Just wonder why now, after seven years of journeying around the NBA, he's suddenly a great back-up. What does Portland see that no one else does?

Still believe that Robin Jones, 6'9", 22-year-old, had more potential. And while we're on the subject of the most widely used word "potential" - how about Johnny Davis? For sure the potential and ability is there. So we ask, "now long will Johnny Davis be held back? Davis adds new dimensions to the Blazer attack, and certainly should get more playing time. Should really start - period.

Rookie T.R. Dunn seems to be harnessing that much talked about talent that he certainly possesses. Probably just a case of wanting to fit in gradually, and then too, it is a little different coming to a championship team. The huge Memorial Coliseum crowd must also have an effect on the young man from Alabama.

Dunn will make his presence felt, but his contribution will probably start around the first of the year. Portland now has a roster of thirteen players. One or two good players are going to have to go - none will be out, the obvious route is trade. You can forget Herm Gilliam, the end of last season many thought Herm would not be around for the start of this season. Not only is he here, but is contributing immensely. Any team can use a Herm Gilliam, look to see Herm do his thing for the Red and Black of Portland.

The Blazers now seem to have that nerve that is associated with champions. Maybe it's confidence. Whatever it's called it's certainly there.

The Blazers, on their first two victories, have served notice on the NBA that they are ready to defend.



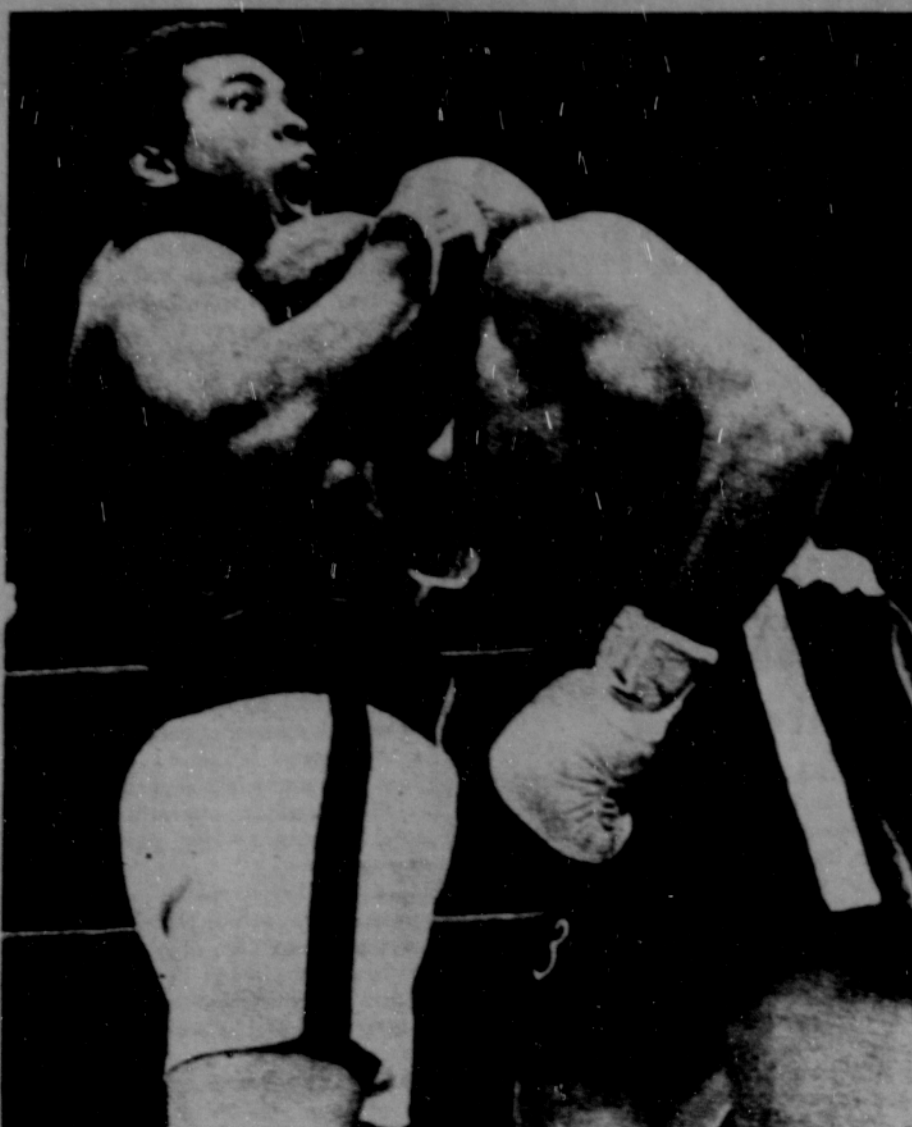
Willie Blasher, linebacker, 6'3", 205 lb., Junior, was clearly the outstanding player in spring practice and has continued to anchor the Duck linebacking crew.

Ex-UCLA greats Bill Walton and Kareem Abdul Jabbar are seemingly always open to comparison. Some say you can't compare the two, saying that they play two different types of games. Well, my contention is that since they're both centers, and both obviously great then comparisons can certainly be made.

Let's take rebounding Bill Walton's strong point. Walton led the league with a 14.4 average. Jabbar was second and had a 13.3 average. Walton collected 211 offensive boards compared to 266 by Jabbar. On the defensive end Walton grabbed 723, and Jabbar 824. That totals out to 934 for Bill and 1,090 for Jabbar. Looking further down the rebound line we see that the most offensive rebounds per season is held by ex-Blazer, Moses Malone with 437. Most defensive rebounds a season belongs, not to Walton, but to L.A.'s Jabbar. Although Walton was the NBA's rebound leader, when you actually break it down you see a different story. Actually there were four people collecting more retrieves than Walton. Jabbar, 1,090; Malone, 1,072; Waltmore, Chicago Bulls, 1,072; and Elvin Hayes, 1,029.

Walton played only 65 games, it's interesting that all the others played the full 82 games.

Blocked shots, another Walton strong-point, reveals the same results: Walton 211, Jabbar 261. Walton average 3.25



Ali Shavers while clenching Ernie Shavers in heavyweight title bout in Madison Square Garden.

and Jabbar 3.18. Most rebounds a game 33, by Milwaukee's Swen Nater, another ex-UCLA player.

Lonnie Sheton, a 6'8" Knick forward, had the most personal fouls per season, 363. This was a problem with the aggressive strong former OSU forward, and continues to be his problem.

Television's presentation of the round-by-round scores of the judges in last week's Heavyweight Championship fight between Ali-Shavers, drew much criticism from the fight world. True, it did take away some of the past fight mystique.

But really, just what did it take away from the fight itself? Nothing. In fact some enjoyed seeing the official score posted. Just what kind of game would it be if our Blazers and the Denver Nuggets played four quarters of basketball, with no score being kept, and after the final buzzer everyone would then put on their warm-ups and wait the decision of the judges. Strange, you bet. Art Rosenbaum writes: It's almost a tradition in boxing for officials to withhold judgement until the end. That's good theatre, which the traditionalists realize, but there is a practical aspect...we've seen judges add or subtract a point when the specifics differ from their over-all conclusion. So we can see by publishing it round-by-round that we can certainly deleviate the

chances of whimsical changes. Much has been said, mostly bad about the New York scoring method of awarding rounds instead of points. Critics have long believed that fights should be judged on how big a round was won and points given on a gradation basis. Say on a five point must system - a fighter having a big round would receive 5 points, while his opponent having had a poor round would receive 2. It's easy to see that this could make a big difference in scoring.

Anyway, of any method of scoring Muhammad Ali was the winner. And let it be known that Muhammad Ali - over the hill, certainly - but there's no one

ever, that includes all the great ones... that can display more courage than Ali. He's proven over the years that he's the greatest. Oh, sure, his physical skills have diminished, and he readily admits that - but mentally he's still sharp, and now he out-smarts his opponents. But, just like his duels with Joe Frazier, when he had to he could dig down deep and come up with whatever was needed to win. Who can forget the last round, with Ali tired and obviously showing his 35 years of age. And then to see him suddenly come alive and hammer his younger opponent with combinations fast and furious.

When the "Greatest" retires, boxing will surely suffer.

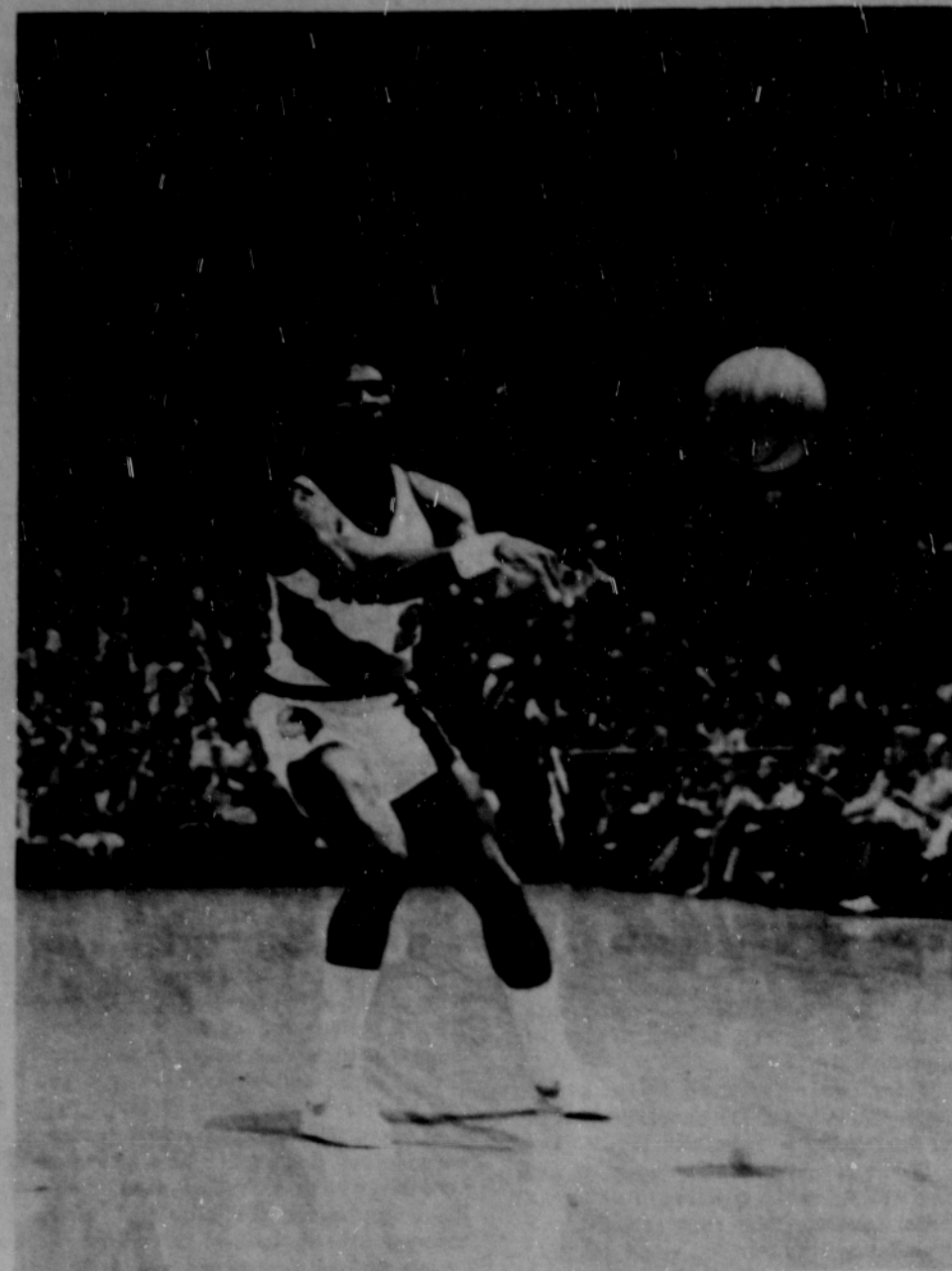
Bowlers aid Cancer Society

Qualifying rounds for Bowl Down Cancer, the annual statewide bowling tournament, sponsored by the Oregon State Bowling Proprietor's Association for the American Cancer Society, will be held in all bowling centers, October 24th to November 7th.

From there a certain percent will progress through House Eliminations, House Finals, and on to the State Finals at Baker Bowl in Baker, Oregon, in May and June 1978.

Entry forms will be available in all bowling centers. The cost is fifty cents per entry and league bowlers must beat their average in their third game. Bowlers can enter as many times as they wish to do so.

There are many donated prizes worth thousands of dollars including two First Place Volkswagen Rabbits donated by OSBP and the Volkswagen Dealers of Oregon. The two second place prizes are \$500 each for men and women bowlers.



T.R. Dunn, Blazer rookie, shows promise and poise in Blazer 121-109 win over the Dallas Nuggets. (Photo: Yasuko Oiyui)

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