



Sports Talk

Ron Sykes,
Sports Editor

So the World Boxing Council has decided to strip World Heavyweight Champion Leon Spinks of his title. What does it mean? Well, in essence it means nothing. The title was won in the ring, and in this case in particular, it should also be lost in the ring. There's no justification at all for stripping a titleholder for fighting Muhammad Ali. Oh, sure we realize that a champion should fight the number one contender and it's these grounds that are being used in Norton's behalf. But there are exceptions to every rule and here, I believe, is where an exception is certainly justifiable.

For no one has ever meant as much to boxing as Ali, and in fact Muhammad Ali...is boxing, or perhaps even bigger than boxing. During Ali's hey day he dodged no one. He fought all the contenders and nobody is more deserving of a title shot than Ali. So if Ken Norton thinks Ali is a crybaby and doesn't deserve a chance, then he should just remember that Ali gave him a title shot when Norton was not the number one contender. Ali was champion for years and when he was dethroned by young Spinks, it is my belief that he (Ali) should automatically become the number one contender. Muhammad Ali is the peoples choice, always has been, and probably always will be. No matter what Ken Norton says the people and the money is with Muhammad Ali. Why would Leon Spinks want to risk his title for a one million purse against Norton, when he can get five million fighting "The Man?" I rest my case.

Portland hasn't produced a pro prospect since Benson High School graduate Richard Washington. There have been good players since but none outstanding. Mark Radford, ex-Grant ace does have great potential.

However, the best young high school prospect in the state right now is Byron Howell, 6'3" sophomore at Central Catholic.

Howell has the makings of a great one and he'll be certainly interesting to watch over the next two years. He has excellent jumping ability and as a frosh ran a legitimate 9.8 on the track. Keep an eye on this young man for he'll make some big waves in the high school ranks next year.

Baseball at Irving Park is once again in full swing. Irving has an interesting program and the people there seem quite enthused with what is going on.

They have some 330 boys and girls involved during the summer, with programs ranging from 8-12 year old girls softball to 13-15 (Senior) girls softball. In the baseball program they have 8-12 and 13-15 also and a good junior league program for the younger kids. I'm told that umpires are needed badly and anyone interested should simply call 289-8216.

Vida Blue has finally escaped the madman of Oakland. Twice before he had thought he was gone only to have Commissioner Bowie Kuhn veto the deal. With the acquisition of Blue, San Francisco will get a boost at the box office but not even a pitcher of Blue's caliber can help the sorry Giants...They need much more.

PORTLAND VS. SEATTLE

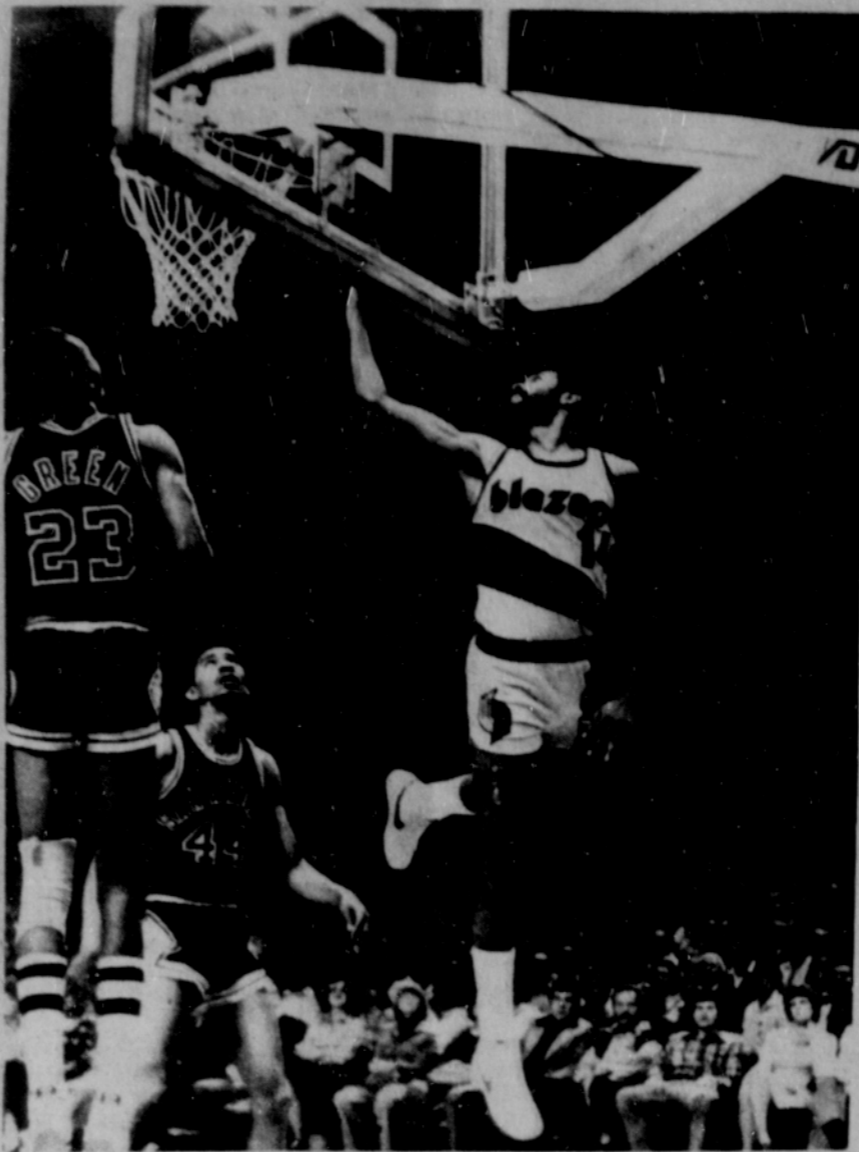
Lenny Wilkens brought his successful traveling roadshow to Portland but was unsuccessful in their attempt to be the first Pacific division team to beat Portland. The score 102-96 Portland. Seattle led by as much as sixteen points late in the third quarter but Lionel Hollins, Johnny Davis and Tom Owens quickly pulled Portland even.

Hollins and Owens led the attack with 26 each. Blazers remain 4 1/2 games ahead of rival Philly for race to have best record in NBA.

BLAZER HI-LITE Portland vs. Atlanta

Portland, playing without their biggest stars Bill Walton and Maurice Lucas simply overwhelmed a lethargic Hawk team at the Memorial Coliseum. Eight days earlier...in Atlanta...Portland was literally run off the court, but this time despite the brilliance of little Charlie Criss and inspite of the dying of Atlanta Coach Hubie Brown the Blazers prevailed.

Lionel Hollins and Johnny Davis continue to spark the Blazer attack. Hollins had twenty points and played his usual strong defensive game. Johnny Davis is awesome and continually plays with his head above the basket.



Hollins gracefully flies through the air for an easy lay-in during the San Antonio game on March 14th. [Photo: Debra Mishler]



Bob Gross tries for basket during the Atlanta game last Saturday at the Memorial Coliseum. [Photo: Jack Ruback]



Brian Gant tries to keep up with Colorado Caribou Jomo Sono. [Photo: Debra Mishler]

Mt. Hood sponsors recreation

The Saturday morning youth recreation program sponsored by the Mt. Hood Community College athletic department begins April 8th and continues for five consecutive Saturdays through May 6th. The weekly sessions meet at the college gymnasium from 9:00 a.m. to noon and are designed for boys and girls from nine to fourteen years of age. The weekly activities are varied, but will include swimming, group games, basketball,

wrestling, racquetball, gymnastics, volleyball, tumbling, body building, badminton and others.

The five-week program registration fee is \$8 per person with a special family rate of \$13 for two or more members of the same family. Registration is limited and those interested should contact Bill Wilde in the MHCC athletic department, 667-7351.

Timbers win local debut

by Debra Mishler

The Portland Timbers made their first appearance before a sparse, but enthusiastic crowd of 7,887 fans last Sunday afternoon, to beat the Colorado Caribou 2-0.

The coming season looks better than past seasons with the addition of new midfielders Jimmy Conway and John Bain. The new midfielders made repeated passes in front of the goal area - but it was late in the second half before Stewart Scullion connected and scored on a crossing pass from John Bain to put the Timbers ahead 1-0.

Minutes later Archie Roboostoff cut in front of Colorado defender, Bernie Fagen,

to put the ball past the Colorado keeper and give the Timbers a 2-0 edge.

Roboostoff was pulled from the starting line-up Sunday afternoon, but made his appearance after replacing a tired Clyde Best. Best arrived in Portland late last Friday night from Holland where he played with Feyenoord of Rotterdam, Holland, during the off-season.

The Timbers play their final exhibition game Saturday, March 25th against the Vancouver Whitecaps in Vancouver.

The Timbers will open their regular season on March 31st against the California Surf in California. Their first home game will be April 8th against the Oakland Stompers, 8:00 p.m. at the Stadium.

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