

Pilot Profile...

by Ulysses Tucker, Jr.

The University of Portland Pilots are off and fast-breaking to their best start since 1951, that's when James "Mush" Torson's team dashed to a 12-0 start. Coming off a two-day road trip to Hawaii, the Pilots now stand strong at 7-0.

This past weekend the Pilots defeated the University of Hawaii twice behind 6'5" junior forward Rick "Dr. Y" Ravio's 20 points, 7 assists and 6 rebounds, (Ravio is a graduate of Benson Tech). Helping him was Darwin Cook who added 17 points, 6 assists, and excellent floor leadership. Three other Pilots also scored in double figures, not to mention 6'7" senior forward Ken Downey, who scored only five points; however, he dished out 11 "sweet" assists. The final score was 84-68.

The night after, the Pilots defeated the tough Rainbows by the score of 71-64 in a "very physical" game. It has been said, "that where there's contact, there's Rick Ravio," and that proved to be the case. Ravio led the Pilots in elbows taken, most times on the floor, and in scoring with 20 points again. He also cashed in 12 out of 12 free-throws, and added thirteen rebounds. Darwin Cook and Jose Slaughter, were the only other Pilots in double figures with 11, and 13 respectively. Jeff Heller, the 6'9" senior center helped to control the boards with 10 rebounds to complete the team effort.

"We are rapidly improving with each game," said Head Coach Jack Avina. "But the season is very young. At this point, I'm concerned more with getting my freshmen seasoned for W.C.A.C. play."

By far, freshman guard Jose Slaughter, a native of Compton, California has been the most productive for the Pilots. Against the University of Hawaii, he received his first college start and fired in 13 points in 24 minutes. Slaughter, at 6'4" and 205 pounds, has been averaging a shade under 10 points in 13 minutes a game until then.

"Jose has the potential to be a great player in the future. He's very strong and aggressive. He can pass, shoot and has an excellent attitude towards the game," said Avina. "Jose can also play with his back to the basket, I plan to bring him along slowly." Avina also praised the play of freshman guard Moby Oliver, the 5'11" playmaker, and 6'5" forward Sidney Watson. Both players are from the talent rich Los Angeles area.

What is the conference outlook? "San Francisco is led by 7'1", 250 pound All-American Bill Cartwright, and 7'0" Wallace Bryant, a freshman who is showing greatness already. Nevada-Reno has five starters from a 19-8 team which had two All-W.C.A.C. Players in: Edgar "Slam Dunk" Jones at 6'10"; and Johnny High a 6'4" guard — then there's Santa Clara. They are led by 6'10" center Mark McNamara, 6'7" Kurt Rambis (All-W.C.A.C.) and classy 6'4" guard Londale Theus. These team should be the forerunners," said Avina.

"But Seattle (with their 7 footer Jawann Oldham, and All-League Forward Clint Richardson), Pepperdine, and the Pilots all have a chance to upset the big teams. Loyola, and Saint Mary's look the weakest on paper but they came close to



RICK RAVIO

knocking off a couple of the giants last season. It's going to be rough for every team," he said. "Last year, there were four teams that won nineteen games or more."

When questioned about how the Pilots will counter against the size in the conference, Avina said, "We will have to rely on our quickness and mobility to overcome our size deficiency." Despite being the second smallest team in the league last season, the Pilots still finished as the third best rebounding team.

This past summer, Coach Avina conducted a survey on the overall road progress of all the W.C.A.C. teams over a two season span. In his research, Avina found that during this period, San Francisco has compiled a record of 12-2, Nevada-Reno 9-5, Santa Clara 7-7, and the Pilots struggling at 4-10. "It's very important that our players understand the value of being successful on the road," said Avina.

Last season the Pilots dictated at home and currently have a sixteen game winning streak at the Memorial Coliseum. If the Pilots hang tough away from their natural habitat, then "we will have a good season," said Avina.

Avina, took over the Pilot coaching duties back in 1971 when the program was at an all-time low. He departed to Oregon by way of San Mateo College in California where he never had a losing season. After experiencing five losing seasons in his first six "out on the bluff," Avina has turned the fortunes of the program around with records of 13-3 and 19-8 over the past two seasons. When questioned about pressure to win this season, Avina responded, "there's no pressure on me, the hard part is over," he said. "Coaches learn to live with pressure, if they can't, they do not last long. Sure, people afflicted with the program have high expectations, but there is no pressure." Last season, Avina was voted by his W.C.A.C. peers as "Coach of the Year."

The Pilots will host the University of California-Irvine this Thursday at Howard Hall (campus) at 8:00 p.m., and St. Martins a week later. On December 29th and 30th, the Pilots will be guests at the KOA-Classie in Billings, Montana (Cal-Fullerton, LaSalle and Montana) before opening up conference play January 4th against Nevada-Reno.

Blazer win snaps losing streak

by Ulysses Tucker, Jr.

The Portland Trailblazers snapped a four game losing streak by overcoming an excellent display of skills by Kareem Abdul-Jabbar and playmaker Norm Nixon to hang on for a 117-115 thriller over the Los Angeles Lakers Tuesday night.

By half time the Blazers closed the first quarter gap of 33-25 to 61-60 as Maurice Lucas and Tom Owens scored fifteen points each. Jabbar led a balanced Laker attack with 10 points while Nixon dished out five assists.

Jerry West's Lakers appeared to be on their way to victory as Nixon, Jabbar and Keith Wilkes fired the Blazers up from every angle. The Lakers fast-break seemed almost impossible to stop. Portland however, closed the gap to 91-85 at the end of three quarters.

With 6:26 left in the fourth quarter Kareem Abdul Jabbar passed to Jim Price for an uncontested lay-up that gave the Lakers a commanding 107-95 spread.

At that point the sellout crowd of 12,666 in attendance pondered the predicament of the Blazers in total silence, after Price scored, 6-year-old

Todd Moore (after consulting his parents) realized that his team was losing.

"Come on," he screamed with all the energy of a youngster his age. "Get it together Trailblazers!" That they did, Ron Brewer responded by pumping in a short jumper to make it 107-97. Then the Blazers went on a 16-2 tear that brought the crowd back to life. The Blazers took the lead for good at 111-109 when T.R. Dunn stole a Norm Nixon pass and scored on a "cradle" slam dunk.

The key play came when Arkansas rookie Ron Brewer rebounded a shot by Jabbar. Brewer drove the length of the court and missed a lay-up, luckily T.R. Dunn's natural instincts caused him to follow up the shot giving the Blazers a comfortable 113-109 margin with 2:46 left.

Blazer coach Jack Ramsay: "This was a very big win for us, especially the way it was accomplished. I thought Ron Brewer, Clemon Johnson, Mychal Thompson and Tom Owens just played great games for us."

"Pressure helped us and Ron, Clemon, Mychal and Larry applied increased pressure and stopped their

fastbreak. That's what it takes to beat them," Ramsay said.

Los Angeles coach Jerry West: "We haven't played very well lately; don't seem to take advantage of our opportunities. For example, we had a lot of good fastbreak opportunities tonight, had them at a disadvantage, then turned the ball over. Turnovers have been a problem for us, particularly against pressure. We don't handle pressure very well."

"They put some pressure on us, but it didn't look from the bench that it was all that much pressure. But we didn't handle it at all well."

"It's easy to scrutinize a loss from the bench when you aren't out there, though. But it's not the coaches who make things happen; it's the players who make things happen. Portland executed very well and handled pressure. We didn't execute and didn't handle it," West said.

Asked his opinion of the Blazers, West said, "I haven't seen them since pre-season, but I think they are a good team. They have talented players; they are well coached. They execute well and they have a lot of confidence when they're playing here. You can't relax against them and you must take advantage of

everything they give you. We didn't and we lost."

Ramsay thought Clemon Johnson really gave the Blazers a lift when Owens picked up his fourth foul. "And Ron really gave us a lift. This was probably his best over-all game of what I hope will be many more to come. T.R. (Dunn) also made great contributions for us at the end," said Ramsay (noting that Dunn and Brewer, rather than Twardzik and Hollins, finished the game). He cited Dunn for his key baskets, steals and rebounds and his overall play at both ends of the court in the final quarter.

Top scorers for the Blazers were Tom Owens, 27 (5 rebounds); Ron Brewer with his best game of the season, 24 (off the bench). Maurice Lucas, 19 (7 rebounds); T.R. Dunn and Mychal Thompson with 10 each.

The Lakers were led by Kareem Abdul-Jabbar's 31 points (18 rebounds). Norm Nixon with 23 (10 assists); and Keith Wilkes who hit 21 points (11 rebounds).

Portland will travel to Denver on Friday to play the Nuggets, the game will be aired on KPTV-12 (8:00 p.m.). The Blazers are 3-11 on the road and 11-3 at home. The lakers are now 19-10.

Don't Zap Your Christmas Zip!

The holidays are no time for electric contact accidents. So, as you're decking the halls, here are a few common sense seasonal reminders from People at Pacific Power.



Up on the roof top: Reindeer Yes. People No. Unless you're as sure-footed as Santa's four-legged friends, stay off the roof. If you're packing a new TV antenna, decorations or whatever... know what you're doing and stay far, far away from the power lines.

Deck the halls... but carefully. Power tools are safer now than ever before. But if your new tool isn't double insulated, don't short-circuit safety by ignoring those three-way, grounded plugs.

Electricity is nothing to toy with. Defective or wrongly assembled electric toys are dangerous. Make sure all plug-in toys are UL or otherwise safety approved. And if you're all thumbs when it comes to assembly, let someone who knows what they're doing take over. Don't leave electric toys plugged in overnight. And let the kids know the rules for playing safe.

If you're lighting up... check all circuits, frayed wires and plugs. Replace strings of lights if they blink on and off when they aren't supposed to. Make sure tree and outside lights are turned off when you leave the house and before retiring for the night.

Our warmest wishes... we wish you the happiest and safest of all holiday seasons. And we invite you to stop by any Pacific Power office for plenty of free advice on how to save money and energy.

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