

# On the road with Moses Malone

by Ulysses Tucker, Jr.

Sitting in the corner of a happy Houston Rocket locker room after they beat the hapless Trailblazers, Moses Malone, the National Basketball Association's leading rebound and third leading scorer relaxed while singing the song, "Mama, don't let your son grow up to be a cowboy," as he prepared to depart for the airport.

"I hate being out on the road sometimes," he said. "I haven't seen my wife and son in almost two weeks but a victory like this one makes it all worthwhile." Malone scored 34 points, including 16 in the third quarter and grabbed a marginal eight rebounds in the Rockets 111-109 win. Currently, he is averaging 27.5 points a game and 13.5 rebounds.

In the Blazer game, Malone became the team's all-time leading rebounder by moving out the retired Rudy Tomjanovich who played eleven seasons with the Rockets. Moses brought the record in only four and a half seasons.

"I enjoy rebounding," said Moses who had four rebounds on one series while scoring before the Blazers grabbed one. "Over the years I've learned to get off the floor quickly and get good position. I never gave it much thought but then everyone started calling me the best rebounder in the history of the league. That's when I started to get serious about working hard on the boards but in the past it just came natural."

A hardship case who signed right out of Petersburg (Virginia) High School in 1974, Malone has led the league in rebounding twice (1979 and 1981) and he leads comfortably this season. He is perhaps having one of his best seasons in the N.B.A. but there is something in the back of his mind. He will be a free agent at the end of the 1981-82 season.

"I've been thinking about it a lot but not to the point where it is affecting my game," he said. "I think it would be in the best interest of the club to sign me early because I'm gonna be rolling by the All-Star break and my value will be up there. I just want to hurry up and get it over with."

Malone is reportedly in the last year of a five-year contract that called for over \$700,000 annually and he will be asking for a new sal-



MOSES MALONE  
(Photo: Jimmy Robinson)

ary that begins around \$1.7 million annually.

"All I want to do is play until I'm thirty and get out of the game while healthy. I don't want to hang on like some guys. I have a wife and family. I want and like to spend as much time as possible with them. I think 12 years in the league at age 30 will be more than enough."

"I've made some sound investments in shopping centers, land, and other areas that will aid my transition from basketball. I believe in preparing myself and my family for the future."

During his brilliant career, Malone has scored over 9,000 points and grabbed 4,000 or more rebounds. His career scoring average stands at a sparkling 22.3 and he has appeared in four N.B.A. All-Star

games. Malone was also named the M.V.P. of the N.B.A. in 1979.

Del Harris, head coach of the Rockets, had nothing but praise for the 26-year-old Malone.

"He is from the old school of hard work," he said. "I haven't seen a harder all-around worker in the league outside of Moses. He's real tough around the boards and he draws a lot of fouls. I'd much rather coach him than coach against him because Mo is one helluva athlete."

Since his departure from High School, Malone has played with the Utah Stars, St. Louis Spirits, Buffalo Braves, and ultimately to Houston. He is happy in Texas and wants to finish his playing career there but he doesn't want his son to grow up to be a Cowboy.

appointing eighth place finish in the Beaver State Handicap on November 14, the H.M. Nonamaker-trained son of Growler finished second to Not Now in the \$15,375 O.T.B.A. Sales Stakes on October 31.

Ria Slam, one of the few fillies nominated to the six furlong Columbia Speed, has started in four stakes events during the current Portland meet. She finished fifth in both the Beaver State and the

\$16,345 Janet Wineberg Stakes prior to a fourth place finish in the Oregon Futurity and a runner-up effort to Feature Fantasy in the \$6,025 Sylvan Handicap on January 2.

Expected to press the favorites during the race are Lighthouse Jim and Chip O'Lark. Chip O'Lark, a Washington-bred son of Flying Lark and Vitalady, was second to Hi Yu LuLu in the \$9,800 Beaver State, which was run at the Columbia Speed distance of six furlongs.

Lighthouse Jim boasts a pair of six furlong victories here. In his last start on January 2, Lighthouse Jim bested a band of Oregon-breds in a six-furlong test. In that race, the Howard Belvoir-trained son of Jim and Hill Flame defeated Hopa Star, another Columbia Speed nominee, by six lengths.

Rounding out the list of nominees are Oui Farrah, Fabulous Omen, Cat Isle Don, Up Your Income, Festen Resten, Jacket's Chief, Jacket's Song, and Fancy's First.

Post times this weekend are 7:30 p.m. Friday night and 1:30 p.m. on Saturday and Sunday.

## It's Gospel

The Black Cultural Affairs Board at Portland State University will be presenting a Gospel Festival, at 7 pm, January 23, in the Ballroom of the Smith Memorial Center (3rd floor). There will be number of local groups and individuals performing. Although no one in particular is being promoted, some of the best gospel singers in Portland will be there that night, says the Board. Everyone is invited. Admission is free.

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## Track Talk

PORTLAND MEADOWS, JAN 19—Thirteen three-year-old sprinters were nominated to this Saturday's \$6,000-added Columbia Speed Handicap, which headlines this weekend's racing at Portland Meadows.

The list of nominees is headed by a pair of Oregon-breds, Future Fox and Ria Slam. In his last start, Future Fox was runner-up to Laundauer in the \$41,048 Oregon Futurity on December 12. Prior to a dis-

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