

# Jack Ramsay: An interview

*Grassroot News, N.W.*—One of the architects of professional basketball is the coach of the Portland Trailblazers, Jack Ramsay. For over thirty years Ramsay has drawn the blueprints for basketball plays. "I always liked playing the game. In the 7th grade my father put a basket up in front of the barn. I used to shovel the snow just to shoot hoops. I stayed with the game and played in the Eastern League. My introduction to coaching was with a college team and I've been a coach ever since."

His definition of good basketball is organization. "To be an effective team you have to have a well-thought-out plan that is feasible. I have put this thought in two books and numerous articles. It can be very exciting and the game requires a lot of team play. Basketball is the most competitive sport in the world. All these factors make basketball an attractive medium to be involved in."

A coach can become the catalyst for praise or the focus of criticism. Jack Ramsay responds to his critics, "I'm not concerned about what people say or think. My only intent is winning the game and each game at hand. Each game is a pitched battle and you have to win enough of those battles to win the war."

The criticism of Ramsay is centered around his system. "Everybody has their own style of play. The thing that I hope my team will do is to play aggressive, sound defense. If we don't succeed with that we have a good half-court offensive. I expect 100 per cent effort from my players and if I don't get it I will get other players."

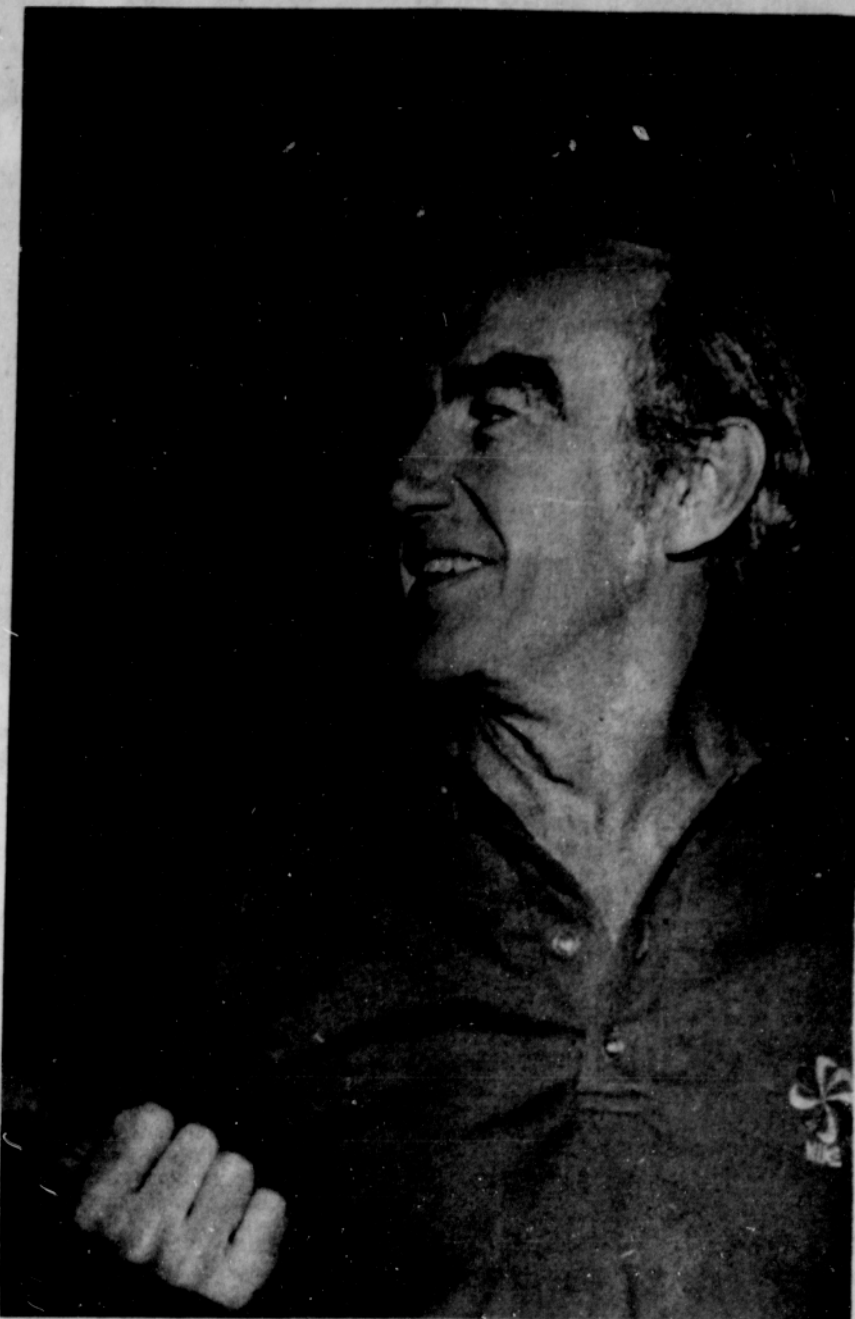
And Ramsay has. "Moses Ma-

lone was dealt for economic reasons. If you look at players who have left Portland very few have done as well as they did when they were with Portland. Tom Owens, Maurice Lucas or Lionel Hollins have had their best years in Portland. I require that players perform for us. If they do not perform they just can't play here."

Does Jack Ramsay ever over-coach? "That's possible. I'm not immune from error. But I will say that I'm giving it my one hundred per cent effort. If that doesn't appeal to a sportswriter who has only a superficial knowledge of the game, that is the least of my worries."

Many Trailblazers fans want to know why there hasn't been a championship since the 1976-77 season. "There are some franchises who have never won a championship. This is a very competitive sport. I'm willing to stand on my record. My team has won more games in the last eight years than any other coach in basketball. We have been in the playoffs eight years in a row. We've lost some key players through injury, contract dissatisfaction and whatever else prevented the players from reaching their maximum point. We are now working with a very young team."

From what perspective should we view the Portland Trailblazers? Coach Jack Ramsay says, "I think the public should perceive this current team as very young with potential to grow. It's a team that I hope will make the playoffs. We currently have the eighth-best record in the National Basketball Association. There are 23 teams in the NBA and that's not bad."



JACK RAMSAY



## Boxers dislike safety glove

Some boxers are resisting a New York regulation that requires a thumbless boxing glove. At the first New York boxing card, on January 22nd, boxers complained that the gloves are not comfortable, that their wrists hurt, that they cannot spin their opponents by gouging their thumbs into their ribs, that they cannot pull up their trunks without thumbs.

Impetus for the new regulations came through cooperation between New York State and Quebec. This came about because no one had noticed that Willie Classen had taken a severe beating in London six weeks prior to his fatal fight in Madison Square Garden in 1979. Nobody knew Cleveland Denny had been soundly beaten by a heavier sparring partner days before his fatal bout in Montreal in 1980.

As part of the research by Quebec following Denny's death, Quebec discovered that different makes of gloves were vastly different even though their weights were the same. Some gloves are hard and flat at the point of impact, while others have thick padding.

The Quebec Board, after studying extensive research done at Wayne State University, concluded, "The

mobility of the thumb has also been identified as a source of injury." The Board concluded that, "The gloves should have the following characteristics: be as light as possible, have a maximum of absorbent material at the point of impact, and a minimum of roughness and seams. They should not have thumbs, for better protection of the boxers' thumbs and eyes."

New York also has been studying thumbless gloves for several years, led by Floyd Patterson, now a state commissioner. His two brothers suffered detached retinas during their boxing careers. New York State has had nine incidents of detached retinas in two years.

New York boxing commission chairman Jack Prenderville ordered use of the thumbless glove, developed by Everlast, to be used in all non-title fights beginning January 15th.

Additional New York-Quebec cooperation includes trading information on safety standards, issuing identical passports to all boxers, and computer linkage that assures that no boxer can be knocked out in New York and then slip into Quebec for a match until his health is certified.

## OSU's Lester Conner

Lester Conner, 6-4 sr. guard is having a banner year for OSU. Many say that Conner is the "glue that holds the Beavers together." Conner is leading the Beavers in scoring with a 15.7 average, in assists with 87 and steals with 63. Conner is second in rebounding with 77 and is second in minutes played with 960. When the OSU Beavers take the court Lester Conner is always a marked man.

Does anyone remember OSU's promising 6-11 Center, Greg Wiltjer?

## How will fence affect Mariners?

In the five seasons since the Mariners joined the American League, the Kingdome has gained the reputation as a hitter's paradise and home-run haven. That reputation is well-deserved, but may be changing in 1982. The outfield wall in the Dome is 11 feet, 6 inches high. However, the Kingdome has agreed to raise the wall from the right field line to deep right center field to approximately 23 feet.

What effect will this have on home runs and the way the game is played? Manager Rene Lacheman answers, "It is going to help our pitchers from the standpoint that they know they can get by with a mistake. They are not going to give up as many cheap home runs. This game is so mental, it has to help. Our outfielders will have to learn to play the angles off the wall, much in the way they do at Fenway Park."

In each of the last three seasons, more home runs have been hit in the Mariners' home than in any other park in the major leagues. When the

round trippers around both leagues are tallied, we again find that the total in the past four seasons is tops in Seattle. The other most productive home run parks have been Fenway in Boston, Tiger Stadium in Detroit, and Atlanta Stadium.

As the chart shows, only Boston fans have witnessed more home runs at home since 1977 than Mariner fans in the Kingdome.

City	Last 3 years	Last 4 years	Last 5 years
Seattle	460	611	789
Boston	432	598	817
Detroit	434	586	767
Atlanta	394	570	778

Spring training 1982 is less than a month away. For the Mariners it will be the biggest (55 player) and earliest (Feb. 18) in club history. A total of 15 players have been invited to Tempe, Ariz., by Manager Rene Lacheman to join the 40 on the major league roster.

The additional players include pitchers Bob Galasso, Tracy Harris,

Mike Moore, Roy Thomas, Ed Vandenberg and Matt Young; catchers Jerry Narron, Gary Gray, Jamie Allen and Vance McHenry; and outfielders Rod Allen, John Moses, Casey Parsons, Steve Strouther and Reggie Walton.

Pitchers and catchers will check into Tempe Diablo Stadium on Thursday, February 18, and work out on February 19. The balance of the squad will report February 25 and take the field on February 26.

*Trivia:* How many players in the 1982 Mariner spring camp were also in the club's first spring training in 1977?

*Answer:* 4—Glenn Abbott, Julio Cruz, Bob Galasso and Roy Thomas.



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## Bozeman explains 'problem'

Last December James Bozeman left the Florida State basketball team. He was prepared to take his damaged knee and damaged ankle and disappear quietly from the school basketball scene. He decided that he would take his injuries to his own doctor, rather than take the drugs he says the basketball office was pushing at him.

Joe Williams, Florida State's basketball coach said Bozeman had left the team because of "personal problems". This statement forced Bozeman to publicly let people know the kind of "problems" he was having.

James Bozeman's personal problems including pride, curiosity, and the will to succeed put him at odds with the ethics of big-time college sports.

"I want to graduate and work in Florida. I knew I would have trouble getting a job close to home if people really believed I have personal problems. That is why I wrote the letter," Bozeman said.

Bozeman's letter, charging Florida State's athletic department with improper medical attention, financial exploitation, mental harassment, academic and scholastic misrepresentation" adds to the evergrowing impression that college athletics are out of control in this country.

Bozeman's most specific charge was that basketball officials at Florida State injected his ankle with novocain and cortisone last summer. They didn't give me any program for the leg in the off season."

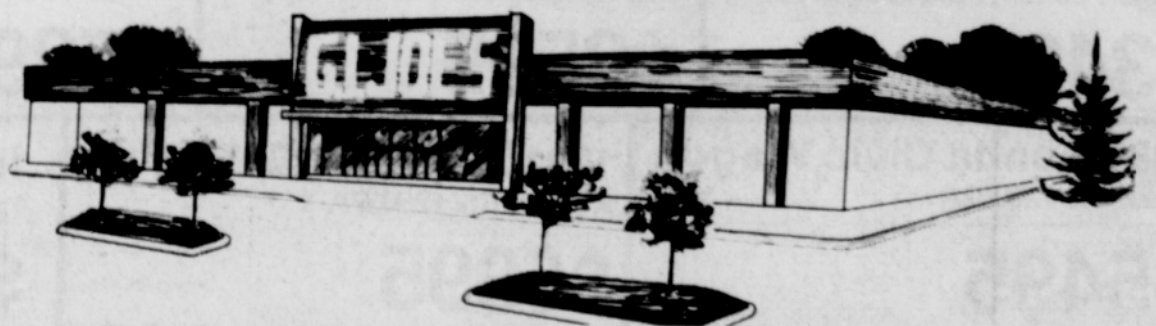
With boosters taking over the hiring of coaches and buying all kinds of illegal favors for athletes, and with rival athletic associations fighting tooth and nail for television money the ideal of the student-athlete has never seemed more distant.

"Students would only talk to me about basketball," Bozeman recalled yesterday. "They acted as if I were different from them. Players got to feel that if you didn't get into pro basketball, you had failed."

A 6-5 senior from Tallahassee, Bozeman was regarded as Florida State's top senior going into this. Now he is a former player eager to help other athletes through an outfit based in the South Bronx — the Center for Athletes' Rights and Education.

The Center is sponsored by the National Football League Players Association and the National Conference of Black Lawyers — with even a grant from the Department of Education — the Center has proposed a Bill of Rights for college athletes.

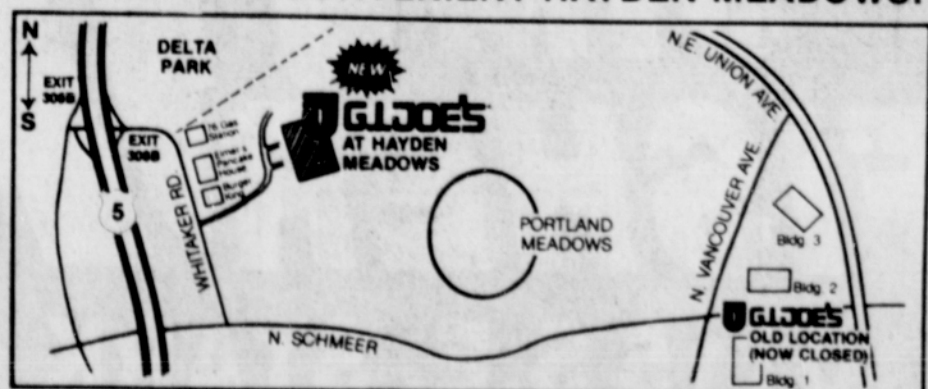
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