



Sport Talk by Ron Sykes, Sports Editor

Where are they now? Wasn't it exciting to see Portland's 1976-77 NBA Champions once again in action? Channel 6 provided viewers another chance, last Wednesday, to see poetry in motion, as they aired the game between Philadelphia and Portland.

When you talk about the correct chemistry needed to form a championship team one only has to look back at that Blazer team.

So, after five years, where are they now?

The starters were Bob Gross and Maurice Lucas at forward, Bill Walton in the middle and Johnny Davis along with Lionel Hollins in the backcourt.

Only Bobby Gross remains with the club and his status is very shaky. Maurice Lucas, then considered the best power forward in the game, is now with Phoenix after stops in New Jersey and New York. Johnny Davis is with the Indiana Pacers and this year will become a free agent. J.D., it is said, will test the free agent market. Look for the Knicks to show a good deal of interest in the former Dayton flyer. Lionel "Train" Hollins is with Philadelphia and still playing his brilliant floor game along with sturdy defense.

Bill Walton, the 1976-77 MVP, is making a comeback after an absence of some two years. And if Bill is able to play... look out western division.

The Blazers' current starting lineup of guards Darnell Valentine and Jim Paxson, forwards Kenny Carr and Calvin Natt, along with center Mychal Thompson, could hardly compare with that great team of '76-77. Those boys of the Walton era could win more than a few games today. And they're all still young men.

After watching Bobby Gross' play in that game I have some sound advice for San Diego owner Donald Sterling.

If Walton does return, then San Diego should take Gross also.

Bobby Gross' game was tailored for Bill Walton.

Gross' game is predicated on running and cutting to the hoop. Walton's game is passing and rebounding. Gross and Walton were made for each other.

It is becoming alarmingly clear that Billy Ray Bates is not in coach Jack Ramsay's scheme for the upcoming year. Portland plans to use Darnell Valentine and Jim Paxson with rookie Fats Lever and second year man Jeff Lamp backing up.

Lamp has reportedly won his spot by a brilliant performance in the Los Angeles summer league. "I believe Jeff Lamp will become a great clutch player in this league," said Harry Glickman, Blazer official.

Many things are unclear about the upcoming season but there are two things fans can count on. Jeff Lamp will play and Billy Ray won't stay.

Portland has tried unsuccessfully to trade Billy. At the time of this writing there are still no takers.

Billy's popularity among the fans remains at an all-time high, while Blazer brass is seemingly fed up with Billy for numerous reasons, and playing basketball is not one of them.

"I'll be out there come fall," states Bates. "It's all up to management."

But it isn't up to management as Billy so states. It's up to Billy Ray and on Billy Ray. This writer is pulling for Bates to make it somewhere. I still firmly believe that despite all his troubles, that there should be a spot somewhere for a Billy Ray Bates. Bates is a tremendously talented individual and if he can't play in a structured system as Portland uses, then perhaps a freelance team like Denver could use a good shooting, hard driving 6-4 guard.

And how about the pennant races in major league baseball? This has got to be the best pennant race year ever. In the American League west, Kansas City is still leading the California Angels by 2 1/2 games. These two teams have traded positions throughout the season. Kansas City leads the major leagues in batting with a team average of .286. Willie Wilson, KC outfielder, is leading the major leagues in hitting with a lofty .348. But KC will need a bigger

lead than 2 games to hold off the high-flying Angels down the stretch.

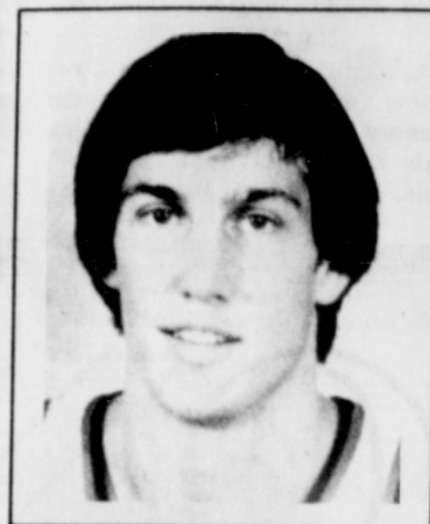
In the NL West the Atlanta Braves are leading the Dodgers by just percentage points at the time of this writing. Atlanta got off to that good lead early only to have the Dodgers make up ten games in eleven days to pull even and eventually go ahead. LA's pitching should prove the difference in this race. Look for Atlanta to stay close, however.

In the NL east, St. Louis leads Philadelphia by 2 games. Again it will be the team, Philadelphia, with the best pitching winning it. St. Louis should fold during the dog days of September.

Milwaukie, playing in the AL east, leads Boston by a comfortable 4 1/2 games. Milwaukie's sheer pow-



BILLY RAY BATES



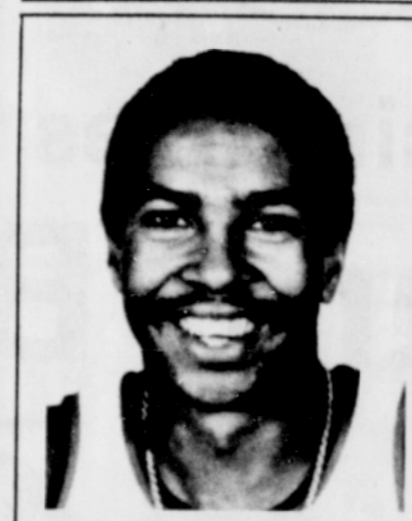
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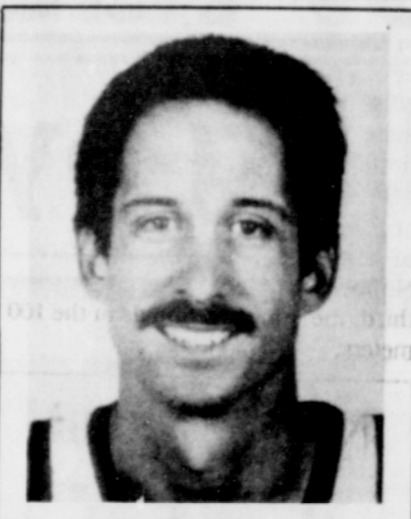
JIM PAXSON



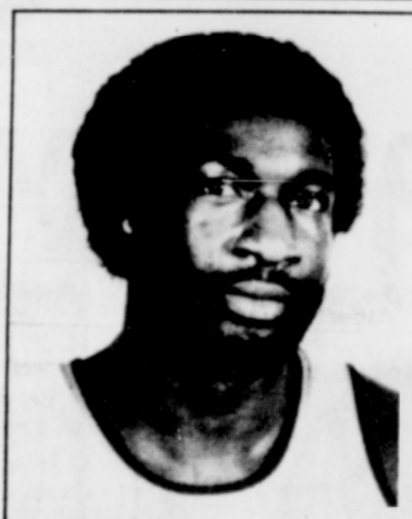
DARNELL VALENTINE



MYCHAL THOMPSON



BOB GROSS



CALVIN NATT

er (they're approaching a major league record for team home runs) should prevail in the end. Milwaukie boasts three players among the top ten home run hitters in the AL. Gorman Thomas is the leader with 34, followed by Cecil Cooper's 26 and Butch Ogilvie's 24.

No one knows where life began, but for KC outfielder Hal McRae it begins at 36. McRae is currently enjoying the best year of his life. He has already set personal highs in homers (22), RBI's (105), and is hitting .314, the second best of his career.

The collegiate football season is slated to get under way this Saturday and the Oregon Ducks will be one of the first to toe the line as they host the highly rated Arizona Sun Devils at Autzen Stadium. Oregon coach Rich Brooks is still eating crow after last year's dismal 2-9 season. Remember, Brooks told us that Oregon was to be considered a legitimate contender for the PAC-10 crown. That was before he lost 7 offensive linemen and three quarterbacks, really four QB's because Edmund Rivera chose to redshirt last year. Oregon's already troubled program now was troubled with injuries. The 1981 Ducks were expected to battle USC and Washington for top dog, only to lose the opener to little Fresno State. What a turnaround. This year the injured are healed, the quarterbacks are sound, so just what kind of season can Duck fans expect? The team will be better than the record will indicate. The schedule is tough. The Ducks will face Notre Dame, Washington and USC back to back, with both USC and the Huskies on the road.

Aretha Franklin sang of respect and Rich Brooks is yearning for the same thing.

The offense once again will be exciting, even with the loss of the highly touted freshman running back Kevin Willhite.

Willhite chose to redshirt after suffering an injury to his hamstring.

Willhite's ability will be missed but this team is knee deep in running backs. Redshirt senior Dwight Robertson will lead a corp of talented running backs.

Robertson is expected to have a great senior year. The 6-1, 195 pound speedster should emerge as one of the top running backs in the conference. Others counted on at tailback are: Harry Billups, Terrence Jones and Ladaria Johnson. Punt returner Choo Choo Young has been moved to flanker and along with Greg Moser and Osborn Thomas should make for an exciting pass catching crew.

Arizona is favored by a touchdown. Take it. ASU, UCLA and USC are the names most mentioned to challenge Washington. The Huskies will be tough but so will USC.

Larry Holmes demands respect



LARRY HOLMES

Larry Holmes, the undisputed heavyweight champion of the world, demands the respect he thinks he's earned.

Holmes has the admiration of business associates, family and friends; but he has yet to receive recognition equal to his predecessor and former boss, Muhammad Ali. Holmes only began getting media attention after his knock out victory over Gerry Cooney. He says, "Cooney helped my name to become bigger... Wherever I fit in boxing history, Cooney is an added plus."

Holmes was criticized for accepting all terms of Cooney's challenge, including the equal purse of \$10 million to each fighter. Holmes says he was more interested in silencing his detractors than he was in the money. Holmes states that a rematch is a definite possibility; although this time he would expect \$25 million and "there would be no more equal purses."

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"The Day After Trinity" focuses on the dramatic events preceding July 16, 1945—the day the first atomic bomb was tested over the desert of New Mexico. The 90-minute color film profiles J. Robert Oppenheimer through the eyes of the people who joined him in the nuclear race with Nazi Germany.

There is no charge for The Nuclear Age, which is being presented by the Center for Urban Education (CUE) in Portland. CUE is an agency of Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon. For more information call CUE, 221-0964.

This project has been made possible in part by a grant from the Oregon Committee for the Humanities, an affiliate of the National Endowment for the Humanities.

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