

Sport Talk

by Ron Sykes, Sports Editor



Once again, the second season is at hand. The play offs are here. There are many questions to be answered as we run now to determine if Philadelphia can become the first team in more than a decade to repeat as world champs, or will the powerful Boston Celtics, owners of the best win-loss record, 62-20, in the NBA, be able to dethrone the Sixers. Will LA rise out of the West to proclaim themselves kings?

These questions and more will be answered in time. Here are the match-ups:

76ers vs. Nets

The Sixers are struggling. For some strange reason, they are not the powerful club of last year: while the ingredients are the same, the end product leaves something to be desired. Moses Malone, last season's MVP, is slowly regaining the form that earned that award for him. A painful ankle injury took most of the big guy's game during the middle season, but he's now back and banging like before. Julius Erving has been superb, while Andrew Toney has struggled at times. Last year, it was Toney the team looked for in crunch time. However, this year, it's been the 36-

year old Erving who has carried the load. At times, coach Billy Cunningham has shuffled his back court which has caused inconsistency.

The Sixers, 52-30, must be on their game if they are to advance. The New Jersey Nets, 45-37, are undoubtedly the most improved club in the Eastern conference. Darryl Dawkins, now playing every game under control, is probably the main reason for the Nets' improvement.

Dawkins has become devastating inside and no longer roams outside trying to put down those 20 foot jumpers.

Michael Ray Richardson, of drug abuse fame, has had a great year. Richardson will be of great concern to Toney. The Nets' back court of Richardson, Kelvin Ramsey, Otis Budsong and Darwin Cook is hard to beat. The Nets must improve their free-throw shooting if they are to win in the playoffs. Dawkins must stay out of foul trouble.

This should be a tough series for the Sixers. The two teams tied 3-3 during the regular season. The Sixers, by virtue of their home-court advantage, should win, 4-3.

Lakers vs. Kings

The Lakers are just too tough.

They will have little trouble doing it to the Kansas City Kings. The LA arsenal is full and it's ready to explode. The Lakers can send Magic Johnson, Kareem Abdul Jabbar, Jamaal Wilkes, and Byron Scott into the fracas. And if that isn't enough, in comes James Worthy, Michael Cooper and Bob McAdoo to clean up. As if there was anything left of the war. The Laker record of 58-24 doesn't really tell how good they are.

Weaknesses: The Lakers have very few. McAdoo and Byron Scott are thought to be the only outside threats for the Lakers. But Magic has now emerged in this category. Johnson is shooting better than 59% from 20 feet out.

As a result, the defenses are having to come out, and the magic is going in (to the hoop). Jabbar, at 36, is having a super season. Kareem is averaging 21.5 ppg; shooting .578 from the field and grabbing nearly 10 boards per contest. Jabbar is also among the leaders in blocked shots.

The Kings must rely on their back court of Eddie Johnson and Reggie Theus to make it respectable. KC's weaknesses are too numerous to report. None, however, stick out more than at the center spot. LaSalle Thompson and Joe C. Meriweather just cannot cut the mustard at center. The KC Kings will fall 4-0.

Boston vs. Washington

Another NBA mismatch. The Celtics with the best record in the NBA, 62-20 will have little trouble with the Bullets who sport the worst play off record, 37-45.

The Celtics can be had, however, it will be tough. Larry Bird, Cedric Maxwell and Kevin McHale will do most of the Celtic scoring. Dennis Johnson will defend well while Gerald Henderson will bring the ball up. The Celtics hurt when Henderson is out as they do not have another bona fide point guard. The Bullets are not a play off team. Coach Gene Shue should plead "no lo contendre" and go back home to Washington. Or, better yet, isn't there another team based in the D.C. area, one known as the Hoyas? Maybe they should send John Thompson's crew.

Pistons vs. Knicks

This could very well be the match of the first round. The Pistons, 49-

33, are a much improved club. They have "Mr. Everything" guard Isiah Thomas and "Mr. Outside" in forward Kelly Tripucka.

The Knicks rely on the sturdy Bernard King too much. King has single handedly brought the Knicks to respectability.

Coach Brown's New Yorkers finished the regular season at 47-35. But were only 4-13 with King out on injuries. Knicks suffered a tremendous season ending slump. The question now is, can they regain the form that got them to the play offs? Bill Cartwright must be assertive against Pistons' Bill Laimbeer. Detroit definitely enjoys the edge up front, except for King. The aggressive play of Rory Sparrow and Ray Williams is a plus. But look for the Pistons to advance 4-3.

Portland vs. Phoenix

The Blazers are struggling to say the least. Ramsay will make some changes. He has decided to play Peter Venhoeden instead of Audie Norris. He will give Clyde Drexler his minutes at the deus guard spot. The question now is where will Mychal Thompson put in his "laid back minutes." If Portland is to have any chance, Thompson is going to have to become aggressive. Maurice Lucas has issued the challenge. Kenny Carr, Portland's muscle man, has accepted. Good. But alone he cannot prevail. Help is needed and it would be nice if it came from Mychal. With Phoenix now going with Kyle Macy in the back court.... The Blazers should take the opportunity to exploit his lack of speed. Macy is a better-than-average scorer but shows definite inadequacies elsewhere. With Darnell Valentine and Fats Lever, the Blazers are much quicker at the point.

Key Match ups: James Edwards vs. Mychal Thompson. Edwards at 7'0" is not the most dominate center in the game. He loves to shoot the jumper inside 15 feet. He does not position well for rebounding. Thompson, 6'10", is not a legitimate NBA center. He simply does not enjoy banging inside. He, too, enjoys taking the 15 foot jumper and is not strong inside. Edwards, two inches taller, gets the nod.

This series should go down to the wire. Pick Portland by one game.

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District 18 Candidates:

Margaret Carter

(Continued from page 2, column 2) those out there who put their personal ambitions over that of the community," one voter stated when he saw her lawn signs.

Because of the presence of a spoiler in the race, Carter faces a tougher battle and the aspect of the first Black woman in the Legislature has been diluted. Carter faces the challenge of attracting votes away from the incumbent.

Ed Leek

(Continued from page 1, column 6) Prior to this date, Leek had informed those inquiring him about the seat that he was undecided. The morning of March 15th, Leek called Ronnie Herndon, co-chair of the Black United Front and among the architects of District 18, to ask for support if he decided to run for Multnomah County Clerk. Herndon said no.

"I had been trying to reach Mr. Herndon for some time. He was one of a number of people I spoke to."

When asked whether he would have filed if Herndon's response had been "yes", Leek said, "I don't know. He did not support me and after my discussion with other people, I made the decision to run. I cannot speculate what decision I would have reached if he and other people had given me different reactions."

Other points of Leek's campaign platform are his experience in the Legislature. In August of 1983, the Willamette Week newspaper surveyed 24 individuals which included lobbyists, news reporters, legislative staffers and legislators. Leek was rated below average.

"Votes leave bills when Ed's name is on them. He alienates allies and makes enemies work all the harder against him. He is pompous, distasteful and self-righteous."

Leek responded by stating, "Everyone that they rated highly

supported the sales tax. Everyone they rated low opposed the sales tax. If I don't have any clout, how was I able to pass the major economic bill of the session or the "medically needy" bill? As far as my personality goes, I have decided opinions about things. I state those opinions strongly."

Leek has built up a support base among some neighborhood associations and labor union groups.

"I did not move into District 18 to run for State Representative. Instead of one district, I would have preferred a multiple district because it is more important for the residents of District 18 to have pieces of more than one person in Salem."

Reporter's note: When redistricting was first brought up in Salem, a hearing was held in the community and the multiple district was not favored among major groups and organizations in Albina.

Many residents in District 18 were upset with Leek when they read in The Oregonian that he was in New Hampshire campaigning for George McGovern. Currently, he said he is uncommitted.

Leek takes credit for the "racial harassment" bill. But, in testimony on the House floor, Leek stated gays were discriminated against more than other minorities. "What I said was, gays needed the protection of this bill to the greatest degree of any group in the society today."

The term of sexual orientation was excluded from the bill because there was no definition of sexual orientation.

In the fall of 1983, the District 18 Forum was developed to throw the resources of the Black community behind one candidate. The hope that process held was shattered when the loser of the forum violated the agreement and stayed in the race. Whether the Black community likes it or not, Leek remains a political factor they have to reckon with.

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