



## Sport Talk

by Ron Sykes, Sports Editor

In violation of National Basketball Association rules, the Portland Trail Blazers were fined \$250,000 dollars for making contact with two college undergraduates ... Georgetown's 7'0" center, Patrick Ewing and Houston's 7'0" center, Akeem Olajuwon.

The fine is one of the largest ever levied against a member team. Only the 1973 fine against the Atlanta Hawks, when they attempted to pry "Dr. J" from the ABA's New York Nets, was higher.

Blazer vice-president Harry Glickman still maintained that the Blazers "did no wrong" and Glickman felt that the team (Blazers) were exonerated by Commissioner David Stern. We're still wondering how a \$250,000 fine can make one feel exonerated.

The feeling here is that Portland actually did no wrong. What the Blazers did could hardly compare to the Red Auerbach fiasco with Ralph Sampson some four years ago. Red actually met with big Ralph and personally tried to persuade the tall Nigerian to trade in his Orange uniform of Virginia for the Celtic Green of Boston.

Portland, obviously, feels that the fine is minimal. The Blazers are planning no appeal and the coin flip will be held on schedule. Rule 6:05B is the basis for Portland's heavy fine. The rule states simply that no

NBA team can deal with a player who still has collegiate eligibility remaining 45 days prior to the draft. This is a bad rule; however, it's still a rule so, therefore, the violation. What Ewing and Olajuwon's "friends" were doing was in the best interest of these young men. They were seeking to find out how the salary cap would affect their "buddies." There are five teams in the NBA whose salaries already exceed the \$3.6 cap. These teams can only pay their top pick \$75,000 when drafted.

Olajuwon and Ewing wanted to make sure that neither Portland nor Houston were in that group. Many consider the actions by Portland as stupid. Why would a team that has a 50-50 chance of getting Olajuwon want to commit such a questionable act? Why not just wait? One should remember that there's the Jim Paxson deal yet to complete, right. If the Blazers could expedite and guarantee their first round pick, they would then have more time to sign Pax.

Paxson will become a free agent whenever the playoffs end. Portland, because of the cap, cannot sign Pax before they sign the center that is so badly needed. Paxson has said that he's going after a deal immediately.

Portland is asking the all-star guard to be patient until after the

flip and signing. Paxson has answered no, that Portland must make a choice between signing him or their no. 1 pick. There is no choice to be made. Guards are a dime a dozen, centers of Olajuwon's ability come once in a lifetime. The Blazers want to keep Jim Paxson; however, they cannot lose a big man in order to maintain a guard. If Paxson makes a deal quickly, then Portland must match that deal in 15 days. This is the belief here as to why the Blazers were trying to expedite matters. With Jim Paxson, Portland will be a great team, without Paxson, next year, Portland will be a great team. Paxson has surely been an underpaid player by today's standards. But, if he (Paxson) chooses to leave Portland, then Jim will once again be the only loser. Okay, so now the flip will take place between Portland and Houston. Portland has made it known that they will draft Olajuwon whom they covet so much. Houston, oddly enough, has said they, too, will draft Olajuwon should they win. As we all know, the Rockets already own Ralph Sampson and his million-dollar plus contract.

Every year, before and after the draft, there are many deals offered and made. Many rumors are flying this year. One deal has Sampson coming to Portland.

Here's how it could happen:

Houston calls heads and wins the flip. They immediately make a deal with Portland: sending Ralph Sampson for our choice with which they will use to pick Michael Jordan. Both teams would then be solidified. Portland will have a bonafide big man, while Houston would get the local favorite (Olajuwon) and two-time college player of the year in Jordan.

Another rumor has the Rockets ready to make a deal with L.A. The Lakers are beating the bushes for a replacement for Kareem Abdul-Jabbar. Jabbar has made it known that he will only play one more year. Rumor has it that the Lakers, who are loaded with good personnel, will send Byron Scott, Bob McAdoo, Jamal Wilkes, a first round draft choice and 1 million in cash for Ralph Sampson.

That's an offer Houston can't refuse. Imagine Olajuwon, Rodney McCray and Michael Jordan ... all on the same floor. Houston would immediately join the elite. Imagine again Sampson, Calvin Natt, Mychal Thompson and Jim Paxson. Portland would join that select group at the top.

Imagine Olajuwon in Portland, imagine Sam Bowie in Portland. Imagine, imagine, imagine and pretty soon, one of these scenarios will become true.

## Wrestler overcomes odds for Olympic bid

by Edward Hill, Jr.

Paul Cotton may be considered an underdog to compete in the 1984 Summer Olympics. But the former Howard University wrestler and present head coach has fooled many a skeptic in rising to qualify for the Olympic trials.

It seems that being a longshot has been a way of life for the Olympic hopeful in Greco-Roman style wrestling. Yet, he is among the nation's top 24 wrestlers in the 114-pound weight class.

Greco-Roman wrestling is one of three styles in international wrestling and participants aren't allowed to use their legs in competition.

Cotton will participate in a wrestle-off June 7-10 at the University of Minnesota that will determine the six wrestlers in his weight class who will make up part of the 1984 U.S. Olympic wrestling squad.

"I had a rather successful high school career, but none of the schools in the area wanted to offer me a scholarship," recalls Cotton, a native of Chicago. "They all said I was too small. The only school that showed interest was Howard University. And even when I got there, they had never seen me, and there were doubts."

Despite performing in relative obscurity his first two years, Cotton emerged his junior year as he made it to the finals of the NCAA Eastern Regionals in the 118-pound class.

"I proved to people what I always knew: that I could compete with some of the best," says Cotton.

After his four years of eligibility had expired, Cotton continued to work out while pursuing an undergraduate degree in nutrition. The work paid off as he went on to win a gold medal in Somo wrestling at the prestigious National Sports Festival.

"I can recall the times when I was preparing for the National Sports Festival and people jokingly would say things like, 'You're training for a national championship, huh?' or 'What are you doing, training for the Olympics?'" says Cotton.

"Even the people at the Sports Festival doubted me. Those kind of things just motivate me more. After winning that gold medal, I began to set a goal of working toward the Olympics."

Cotton's schedule had to be put on the back burner momentarily when he was named head coach at Howard this past season and guided the wrestling team to its most successful season in a decade. Coaching, in addition to being a full-time graduate student in nutrition, has hampered his training regimen.

But the 23-year old thrives on defeating odds as he proved at the Eastern Regional Olympic Qualifying Tournament in April in Trenton, N.J.

"With classes, coaching and recruiting, it was difficult to put in a

consistent training program," says Cotton. "To add to that, I had other disadvantages. Most of my competition had given up their studies or whatever they were doing to concentrate solely on the Olympic trials. I had not wrestled Greco-Roman style since 1979."

"But I'm the type of person who does not like losing. I psych myself up when I feel the odds are stacked against me."

Cotton overcame the odds nicely as he finished among the top three out of 20 wrestlers in the Eastern Regional Olympic Qualifying Tournament to advance to the Olympic wrestle-off in June.

While Cotton says he realizes the odds are great, he feels they are by no means insurmountable.

"Hey, I'm a realist," he says. "I know it is not going to be easy. The competition is going to be tremendous. But that is what it's all about. That kind of situation brings out the very best in me. Hopefully, some of my competitors will take me lightly. One thing is for sure. I'm going in there to make it to the final six."

Now with his semester studies and recruiting for next season behind him, Cotton has begun an intensive three-week training regimen that will include running, swimming and competing against local wrestlers who have also qualified for the trials.

Cotton has ingeniously surmounted another obstacle. Unlike many of his competitors, he has no coach. But he has found a way to offset that void.



PAUL COTTON

"I went out and got a video camera," he says. "I taped my matches at the Eastern Olympic

Regionals so I could play them back and analyze them. In effect, I coach myself."

Jefferson's John Frazier anchors Jefferson's City Champions in the 400-meter relay. Frazier is the State defending champ in both the 100 and 200 meters. He will defend both titles this weekend at

Eugene. Frazier's strongest competition will come from McKay's sensational sophomore, Gus Envela.

(Photo: Richard J. Brown)

## Mayes named Scholar-athlete

Teddy Mayes, a sophomore honor roll student who plays football, basketball, and is on the track team, has been named Jefferson's Multnomah Athletic Club Scholar-Athlete. The award, which goes to an outstanding sophomore from each of Portland's high schools, will be presented at a dinner May 23rd. Teddy will receive a courtesy membership to the "MAC" Club for the duration of his high school career.

Upon graduation he can elect either a \$250 scholarship or an Intermediate Student Membership to the club.

Other Jefferson nominees were Carrie Waldrip and Joseph Curry. The Jefferson Committee which selected the winner included A.W. Williams, vice principal; Vic Carlson, athletic director; Mark Pinder, coach; Tony Hopson, counselor; Donna Fisher, former winner.



Cathy Strong, one of the State's top sprinters, awaiting the start of the women's 400-meter relay. Wilson finished second to Jefferson in 43.8. Strong qualified for State in the 100-, 200- and the 400-meter relay, despite an aggravating foot injury.

(Photo: Richard J. Brown)

## Support home team

Next week, The *Portland Observer* will publish, in limited quantities, "Champion Na'im Hasan."

This collector's item will record his road to the Olympics. Hasan is a second-degree Black Belt in Tae Kwon Do and he needs financial assistance to get to Chicago, Illinois, June 15th.

Born and raised in Portland, Hasan was a three-sport star at Grant High School in the mid-70's when he was known as Gary White.

Since 1975, he has studied under Ali Muhammad, who operates the

Universal Academy of Self-defense in Northeast Portland.

We need your help!! For a small fee, we can list you and your family as supporting his Olympic efforts. For businesses, a special ad rate will apply. Time is of the essence. For more information, call GRASS-ROOT NEWS Promotional Service, Lanita Duke, 286-9351.

Hasan says, "U.S. athletes are strong, but we need more financial support. It is hard to raise money and compete nationally."



### Rose City Connection

P.O. Box 5101  
Portland, Oregon 97208

presents the First Annual

#### Community Team Challenges

Saturday, June 30, 1984

12 noon - 4:00 p.m.

Delta Park

DON'T MISS OUT! BE A PART OF THE MOST EXCITING EVENT OF THE SUMMER!

Form a team of 12 people and compete for exciting prizes in events, such as:

3 legged races • team relays • egg toss • long jump obstacle courses • volley ball • tug of war • dunk tank and more!!

To register your team, call 295-3415.

Deadline: Monday, June 11, 1984

Come on!! Accept the Challenge!!

## A.M. PRINTING CO.

2201 N. Killingsworth

Phone: 283-2487

FOR ALL YOUR PRINTING NEEDS



Office & Business  
Letterheads • Business Cards  
Bulletins • Price Lists • Charts  
Newsletters • Forms • Flyers  
Envelopes • ADS PLACED