



by Roy Lee Jernigan
Sports Editor

SPORT TALK • SPORT TALK

NO NCAA SHOT CLOCK

The curtain is about to come down on the NCAA basketball tournament for this year and there should be no doubt that the best four teams have emerged through the field of 64. The NCAA selection committee should be congratulated for their selections and seedings. We've been deluged with some exciting collegiate roundball and each game seems to go right down to the wire. I'm sure many spectators have been upset with the fact that the last three minutes of most games have lasted for fifteen, but that is part of the strategy that allows the team that's down to catch up or the team that's ahead to ice it.

more talented team. The big money of the NBA is at it again and the kids will only suffer. The pros would prefer a shot clock for collegians and any other changes that will allow scouts to easily determine whether the athlete can adjust to the NBA game. Next the shot clock will move to the high schools so these kids can get ready for the collegiate game.

If a college team is weak at the foul line that weakness should be exploited—not eliminated. What happens to the little man in the college game without the shot clock? He is of little or no value. When the shot clock hit the NBA the little man became extinct and the same will be true in the college game. The little man has the ball handling skills to control the

road to Lexington and I don't believe he will be denied a second consecutive NCAA title. Like Ahab pursuing his great white whale, nothing short of victory can be considered for this captain and crew.

The Hoyas will go against their Big East rivals, the Redmen from St. Johns in the semifinals Saturday, March 30. These two teams have met on three previous occasions during the season, with the Hoyas winning the last two encounters. Both teams are at their peak but the Hoyas have too much bench for the Redmen from that quaint place called Brooklyn.

That dummy from CBS, Brent Musberger, has been pushing for what he calls the Italian open, a coaching matchup between Lou Carnesecca and Villanova's Rollie Massimino, but it won't happen. I wonder what Musberger will call it when we have two Black coaches bumping heads in the finals?

Musberger has started right where he left off last year by second guessing Thompson's coaching decisions during the game. When Coach went to the four corners in the first half Musberger quickly predicted that Georgia Tech might have been given a chance at victory because of Thompson's decision. The Yellow Jackets were playing well enough on their own to win the game and no decision by Coach Thompson could alter that fact. Thompson said it last year and it's still true: Musberger's record as a coach is still perfect, 0-0.

Villanova has surprised me by getting to the final four although they certainly deserve to be there. Villanova took it to the Tarheels from North Carolina in the second half of their game and showed that they wanted the victory more than the Tarheels. Ed Pinckney has to be more productive on the offensive end if Villanova wants to force an all Big East final against Georgetown.

Memphis State has a veteran crew to match up with Villanova so this game will be a battle to control the boards. Both teams play a physical game and the sparks will fly under the hole. The refs will have their hands full but it will enable the players to determine exactly how physical these last four games will be played.

If Keith Lee can stay out of foul trouble in the first half, Memphis State should handle the Wildcats from Philly. Rollie Massimino is a tough coach to beat when he gets his players charged up, and with a group of seniors that's not difficult to do.

Monday, April 1, will belong to the Georgetown Hoyas no matter who they face. Too much bench, too much Ewing, and too much Thompson.

NBA INSIDE STRAIGHT

You always know when it's close to playoff time in the NBA because the teams that have clinched their playoff spots seem to have a rash of ankle, wrist and flu ailments. Not coincidentally, the injuries are to key players who need some rest before going into the playoff season.

Not all of the injuries that will be reported can be classified this way, however. Bernard King, high scoring forward for the N.Y. Knicks, looks doubtful for the remainder of the season due to a knee injury sustained during a game Saturday night against the K.C. Kings. Bernard is currently leading the league in scoring at a 32.9 points per game average. Unless someone in the league goes off in the next few weeks, Bernard will end the season as the scoring leader. Under NBA rules, a player must play 70 games or score at least 1,400 points. The King has bagged 1,809 points already in just 55 games. The Knicks' playoffs hopes are all but dead without Bernard.

The Los Angeles Lakers are the only team that have clinched their division at this point. Kareem and company have an 18½ game lead over the second place Trail Blazers. Playoff spots have been secured by Boston, Philadelphia and Milwaukee in the Eastern Conference. The only team in the Western Conference to clinch a playoff spot at this point is Denver. There's no question in my mind now about the infamous trade. The Nuggets are playing at a .634 clip.

The Trail Blazers have their work cut out for them even if they do make the playoffs. The Blazers seem to lack that killer instinct that should carry them past the teams that are behind them in their own division. Pax should be getting back before season's end, and that's great news for the team, the rest he's getting now will definitely be a plus if he can come

back from his finger injury.

Eight Western Conference teams will qualify for the playoffs. Each Division winner qualifies and will be ranked 1-2 on the basis of season records. The other six teams will be ranked according to season records.

The Western Conference is as follows:

1. L.A. Lakers... 52-18 .743 ---
2. Denver..... 45-26 .634 7½
3. Houston..... 40-29 .580 11½
4. Dallas..... 40-32 .556 13
5. San Antonio... 36-37 .493 18
6. Utah..... 37-37 .479 18½
7. Portland..... 34-37 .479 18½
8. Phoenix..... 32-39 .451 20½
9. Seattle..... 30-41 .423 22½

Portland has six games remaining at home and they need to win them all considering the way they act on the road. There are five games left on the road against teams that they must beat. They play the Clippers, Seattle, Denver, the Lakers and Utah.

Boston has to be the favorite to come storming out of the East. The Celtics are playing great ball and received a gift, in the form of Ray Williams, from the Knicks. With the rivalry between those two teams, I can't believe that Dave DeBusschere made that deal. Red Auerbach has to be the Devil's son-in-law. That man can deal for players that immediately strengthen his team. Check him out. The Chief for Joe Barry Carroll, DJ for Rick Robey, and he drafted Bird a year before his class graduated. Shrewd!

I have to believe that Dr. J. made a mistake in not accepting that trade to the west coast last year. The Doc would have a few more years out here where the play isn't so rough and he wouldn't have those body-snatching forwards to contend with in his twilight years. If the 76ers are to make a championship move this year, the Dr. is going to need some rest through the regular season. Moses is game enough to carry the extra load but those eastern playoffs can be treacherous on the body.

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KENNY CARR

Winning through intimidation

If basketball fans cast their ballots for the "scowl of fame" those selected would include Kenny Carr, Moses Malone, Maurice Lucas, and Jeff Ruland. The criteria for selection is the ability to contort your face, pretend as if the opposition was about to steal your meal money and play downright mean.

Meanness in the NBA doesn't mean violence. These men are some of the toughest, most hard nosed and intense players around. They rely on strength, position (they set great picks), and determination.

Kenny Carr, power forward for the Portland Trail Blazers epitomizes the position. With Carr out of the lineup, teams saw the Blazers trying to win friends and influence people, but with him in, it's winning through "intimidation."

"Even though I missed most of this year," said Carr, who has recovered from a knee injury, "I know I had to be mentally ready when I returned. Mental toughness is the critical part of the game. I know that there are times when I can turn the tide in a game with my intensity."

He does just that. With Jack Ramsay juggling a young lineup looking for the right blend he knew the power was the only ingredient missing. Carr provides that power. "Because this team is so young, they need someone to look to in crunch time — I love to be that player."

Call Kenny Carr the biceps of the team. His return adds a dimension to the Blazers that's been missing. Carr has the strength and desire to propel the Blazers into playoff position.



Power forward Kenny Carr leaves the rest of the floor flat-footed as he slams home two points during the Blazer victory over the L.A. Clippers at the Memorial Coliseum. (Photo: Richard J. Brown)

There has been much talk about a shot clock for next year's tournament to eliminate the closing minutes' parade to the foul line. I'm against the shot clock in college and I'll tell you why. We can see all of the fast-paced basketball we want by watching the NBA, where the motto is fire and fall back. That's not basketball, that's entertainment. All college ballplayers can not, and will not, go on to the NBA to further their basketball aspirations so why not allow them to play a game that they have a chance to master?

In a fast-paced, racehorse style game, there are only a few that will excel, evidenced by the few that make it to the pros each year. Zone defenses make you adjust and the four corners give you another dimension to conquer. The heart of collegiate basketball is the tempo changes and coaching strategies that permit weaker teams to remain in a game against a taller or

ball, and the game, in today's college game, but he will be lost forever because the object will be to get the ball up quick and have as many big people as you can to work the boards. When more shots go up there automatically will be more shots to rebound. There's no need for the little man in that game. This year's tournament was stocked with little guys moving their squads through the regionals and into the semi-finals. Take Spud Webb away from North Carolina St., and I doubt that they would have made it to the tournament. Take Adams away from Boston College and the Eagles would have suffered the same fate as N.C. State. When I want to see 6'9" guards I'll watch the NBA.

FINAL FOUR SHOWDOWN

John Thompson has taken his Georgetown Hoyas down the winding

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Californians say that more people visit the Golden Gate Bridge, which spans San Francisco Bay in California, than any other man-made wonder.

Remember, if your effort changes one person's attitude on drinking and driving, or saves a life, then you have succeeded.

"To become mature is to recover that sense of seriousness which one had as a child at play."
— Friedrich Nietzsche

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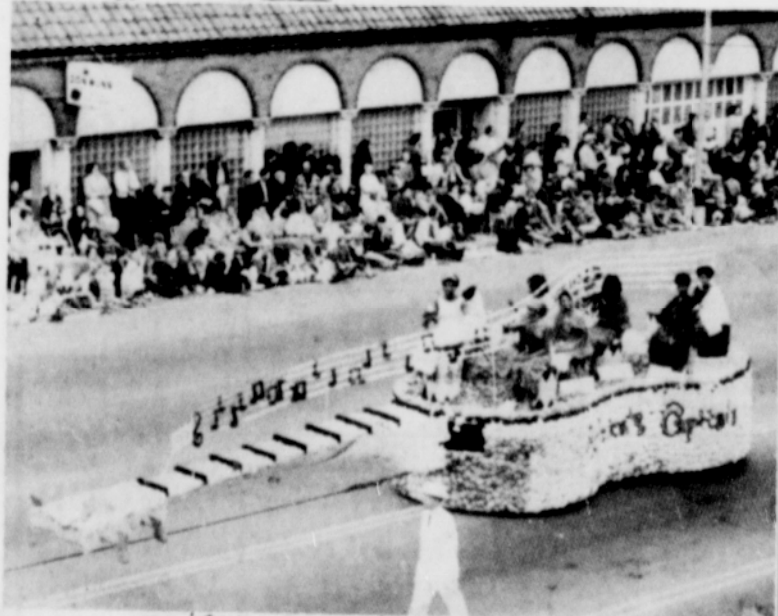
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