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SPORT TALK • SPORT TALK

Blazers take Mavs 2 out of 3 in NBA playoffs

Game No. 1 between the Blazers and Mavericks put the series in perspective for all participants and spectators alike, Marvyn Marvin described his battle with his challenger as being a war, these two challengers are locked into thermo-nuclear war. The first game was played to a double overtime victory by Dallas, 139-131.

It would not be an exaggeration to report that Rolando Blackman gave the Blazers a fit. The game was televised so you are on your own for the stats and play by play. A few observations concerning strategy and individual play and we're off to game No. 2.

Jack has decided to start this new season in the same manner that he began the year, playing head games with the rookies. Sam has forced himself through Jack's door but Colter, Kersey and Bernard Thompson won't be as fortunate as Sam. Not utilizing the bench that established itself during the regular season is a mistake and quite possibly the only stumbling block for the team on the way to the conference title.

The pass from Mychal to Kenny Carr that was so talked about as being the single reason the Blazers lost the game is hogwash. The fact that Jack only gave Colter 8 minutes in a double overtime game gets my vote for the bonehead play of the game. The injury that took Pax out at game's end also hurt the Blazer chance for victory. Sam Bowie would also have enhanced the opportunity for victory but the poor call that gave Sam his sixth foul drastically hurt Portland's bid for the big end of the score.

Game No. 2

Game No. 2 was all Sam Bowie! The big man has come into his own and the Mavericks' lack of a center to occupy Sam's attention will be the undoing of Dallas in this series. Sam controlled the paint in this 124-121

overtime victory for Portland and Clyde controlled the tempo. Big Sam hauled in 24 rebounds and blocked 5 shots in a sparkling performance. Mychal Thompson came off the bench and added 25 points to the cause and erased all memories of his late game passing mistakes. When a team is trying to establish a running game and keeping the tempo upbeat, bad passes are a part of the game. That Bahamian attitude of Mychal's will serve Mychal well in forgetting his passing boo-boos.

Clyde Drexler is about to go off. The floor game that Clyde put on the Mavericks showed the versatility and leadership abilities that has made the man from Houston a constant threat whenever he's on the floor.

Steve Colter got more minutes and that change in strategy had much to do with the victory for Portland. Not to take anything away from Darnell, but Colter has to get some game for the team to advance in these playoffs. Darnell is playing his best ball of the season and Jack proved that he was correct in inserting Darnell back into his starting position. Jack can also take credit for the closeness of both road games because of his lack of confidence in his players on the bench. Jerome Kersey and Bernard Thompson are the two players that could take the closeness out of these games and take much of the load off the starters. When your starters get those big numbers of playing time they get tired and that spells injury.

Game No. 3

This game was down at the old Glass Palace so a little play-by-play is in order for those of you who couldn't attend. The theme of the game was "Get him, Sam." The big man played his hips off. Whenever a Maverick thought about going inside he had to look for Sam. Drafting Sam over Michael Jordan has indeed reaped



SAM BOWIE

huge dividends for the Trail Blazers.

The score was 122-109 Portland, but the game itself was much closer than the score indicates. Clyde got things going with a sweet little jumper and the pressure seemed to be applied from that point on. After scoring 84 points in the first two contests, it was only justice that Rolando Blackman retaliated and scored the first field goal for the Mavericks. The game was on.

The Blazers were out to establish their game from the inside and had numerous opportunities to score but the basket had a lid on it for the first six minutes of the game. The fast break game was what the Blazers wanted whenever they got their hands on the pill. The Mavericks seemed content to shoot the jumpers and to get Mark Aguirre off.

Jack made a change in defensive assignments and had Darnell Valentine defend Rolando Blackman. I guess you could say that it worked because Rolando only scored 30 points. Motta made the mistake of never trying to post up Blackman on Valentine and force Clyde to switch his defensive assignment, in order to make Clyde work harder on the defensive end. Big mistake Motta, that's no way to stop the fat lady from singing prematurely.

Jack is catching on and playing his bench a little deeper too and the extra few minutes of rest gave his troops the strength to produce down the stretch.

The Mavericks took the bait in the first quarter and tried to run with the Blazers and fell behind 31-28 at the close of the period. Sam Bowie had firmly implanted in everyone's mind that the red belonged to him.

The second period saw a slow-down in the game and the Mavericks were quickly trying to take command of the tempo. Jack countered with his bench and some jumpers by Kiki

Blazers up 81-78. Pax came in for Clyde and scored on a few running jumpers and suddenly it was the Blazers in control.

As the teams headed into the final stanza, the game belonged to anyone who wanted to take it. Sam Bowie took it! Defense was the name of the game for Portland now, and the clamps were on. Dallas could manage only 22 points in the final period and the "D" is what did it. Clyde's play was infectious at this point and his teammates were responding to their new-found leader. There was no more thinking his way through the defense, Clyde let his imagination run rampant and he couldn't be controlled.

Clyde hammered out a triple double on the boys from Texas with 10 rebounds, 10 assists, and 20 points. Kiki was his old sweet self on offense with 24 points and — get this — 6 big rebounds. Bowie's totals in no way indicate the game he played! so forget his stats and get into this: The Sam

Bowie we saw at the beginning of the season is gone. Sam has improved his game to the point that he is a constant threat when he's on the floor. He does not get those silly leaping fouls any longer, he blocks shots that stay in play for his team to control and the kid runs the floor with the best of them. When Portland is on a break, always look for Sam to come from nowhere to hover over the rim until the shot falls through the twine.

Whenever a Maverick moved toward the hole, you knew that he would be contested by Big Sam. Players moved away from Sam as if that famous knife was named after him. "The Knife" should be his nickname because he will cut you up if he catches you acting a fool in the lane.

There is no doubt that Portland can win the conference title with the team they have. There is only one man who can hurt this squad and that man is Jack Ramsey.

Player of the Year Karon Howell picks USC

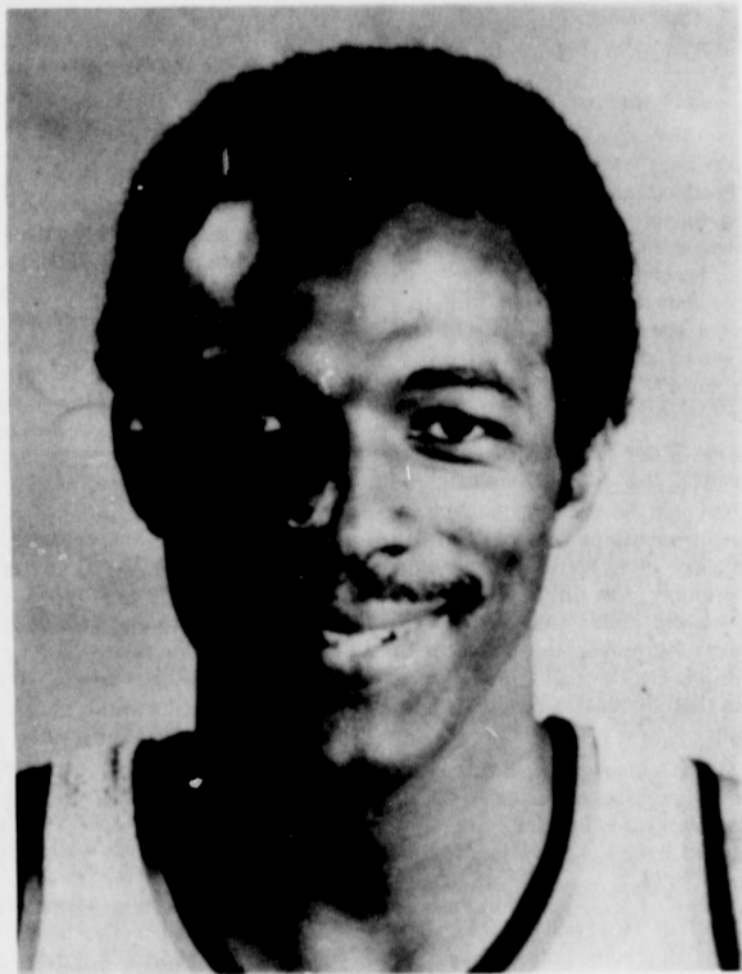
Speaking at a news conference in the St. Mary's gym, Karon Howell announced that she will be heading for the University of Southern California with her hoop game.

"After much thought and prayer, I have decided to attend USC next fall," said Karon in front of her school and teammates. Recently named as the Oregon "Player of the Year" and *Parade Magazine's* first team All-American, the classy lady from the Rose City has the credentials to become one of the top players in the

nation before her career ends at USC.

Karon had her choices narrowed to Long Beach Stae, Louisiana Tech, Texas and Oregon State. Karon was asked if the opportunity to play with Cheryl Miller at USC had anything to do with her decision.

"Yes, it did," she said, adding, "but I could have played for two years with (former Grant High All-American) Cindy Brown at Long Beach, and she's an All-American, too."



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