



by Roy Lee Jernigan
Sports Editor

SPORT TALK • SPORT TALK •

NBA Playoffs — 1985

Eastern Conference

The Philadelphia 76ers closed out the Milwaukee Bucks 4-2 Sunday night in Philadelphia and are now awaiting the winner of the Boston-Detroit series. Although the 76ers swept the Bucks, Billy Cunningham's crew can use the rest. These two squads played four tough battles to prepare for the war that will ultimately decide the eastern representative. Moses is still doing his thing inside the painted area and leaving

the rest of the floor to his mates. The rebounds aren't coming in bushels for Moses as they have in the past because of the board action that Charles Barkley has laid down. Barkley just might be the player this team needs to get past the Celts, if the Celts survive. Maurice Cheeks and Andrew Toney comprise the best backcourt in the league at this point in the season, and they are the keys to defeating the 76ers. Stop both of them and you stop the team. Good luck!

Lastly but never least, the Doctor. Julius is getting his prescription filled right now, he's resting. A well rested Doctor in his twilight years spells trouble for the next opponent. Right now this is the best team in the playoffs and my choice for the eastern crown.

Boston and Detroit

No matter who wins this series, the winner is in trouble. If Boston prevails, it's expected. If Detroit wins, it's "Can they pull it off?" The Celts had too much trouble eliminating Cleveland and every team they play will be inspired by that fact. That invincible machine needs fine tuning and adjustments but can't find the time to get into the shop.

Vinnie Johnson may have just caught on with the media but the players have known for some time that this dude can flat out fill it up. Terry Tyler has made life miserable for K. C. Jones and company throughout the series while spelling Kelly Tripuka. When Kelly gets into form, that means double trouble for the green machine. Tripuka showed plenty smarts when he bounced the ball of Robert Parish's leg to let the three remaining seconds tick off in game No. 4.

The strategy of forcing Bird to play defense has caused the Bird-man to adjust his pace and that takes away his late game heroics, at least thus far. Dennis Johnson will again be the key for the Celtics if they are to win this series. Ultimately D. J. will be called upon to stop the Detroit guards from scoring and penetrating, and he has the credentials to do the job.

I'm aware that I haven't mentioned the name of Isiah Thomas in the Pistons' attack and it's intentional. Isiah can turn the tide to Detroit if he breaks loose to control the game tempo so let's sit back and enjoy some good old fashioned roundball. The series is deadlocked at 2-2 at this writing.

Western Conference Denver and Utah

Thanks to Stu Inman and the Blazer front office, the Nuggets have got a team to challenge the Lakers. Denver has taken their series 4-1 over the Jazz with relative ease and won't be pushovers for the Lakers.

Calvin Natt and Alex English are the heart of this team but the loss of Fat Lever will put a severe crimp in the Nuggets' attack. Doug Moe has his team prepared for the running that the Lakers will attempt to employ but the secret to the Nuggets is their good defensive efforts.

When Utah lost the services of Mark Eaton inside they were all but out of it against a penetrating, ball moving unit like Denver. Kareem will slow down the Nuggets' inside game, but the Lakers will never intimidate Calvin Natt and Alex English down low. There's one sure bet to make in this series, the 24-second clock will never go off, no matter how many games they play.

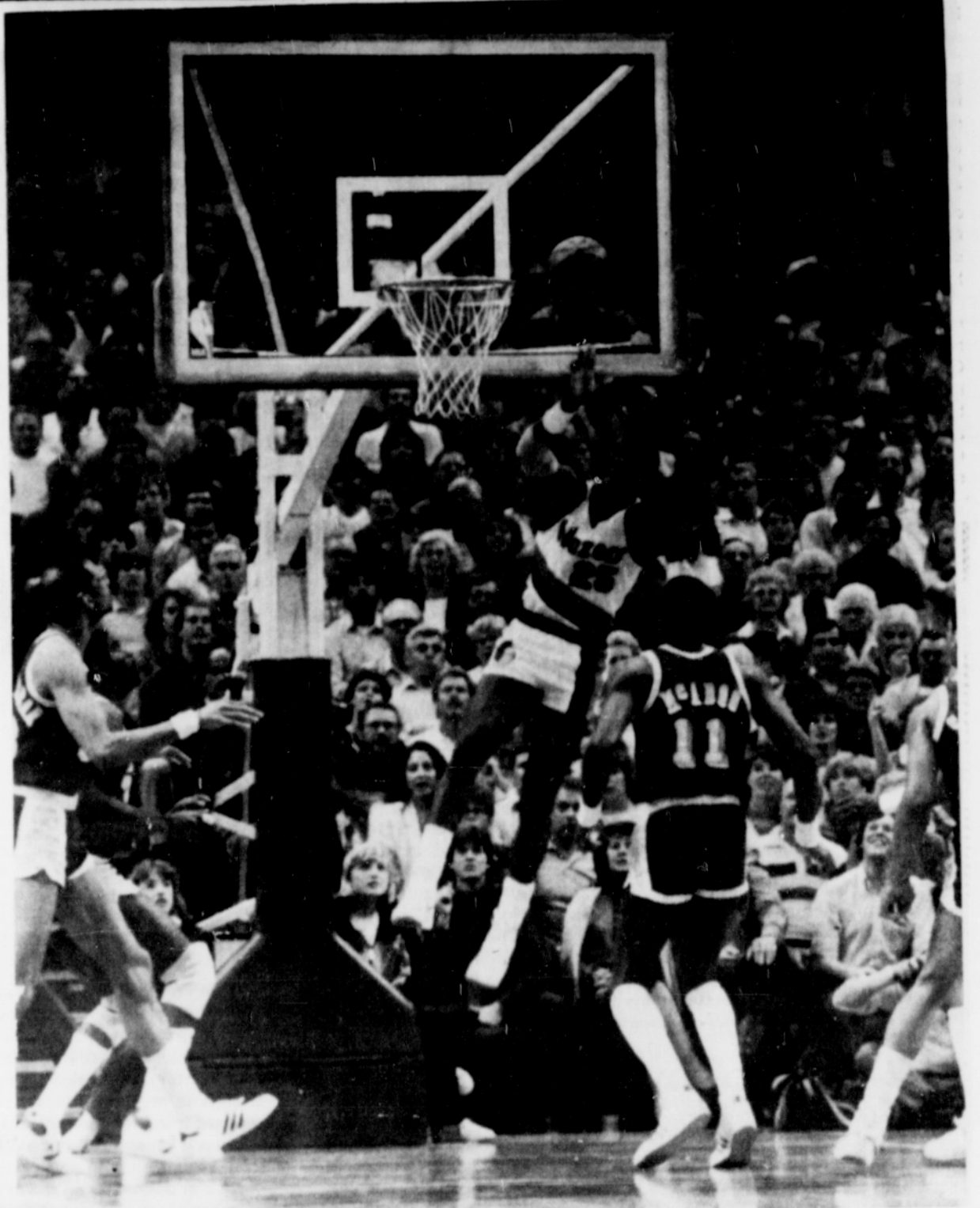
Portland and Los Angeles

Well, it's over. The Blazer season was officially over Tuesday night in the Forum. I'm still convinced that Jack Ramsey lost the series to L.A., and if you saw the games on the tube, you're convinced, too. The personnel to whip the Lakers watched from the bench. Jack seemed to suffer from the full court stress that he speaks on in his commercial.

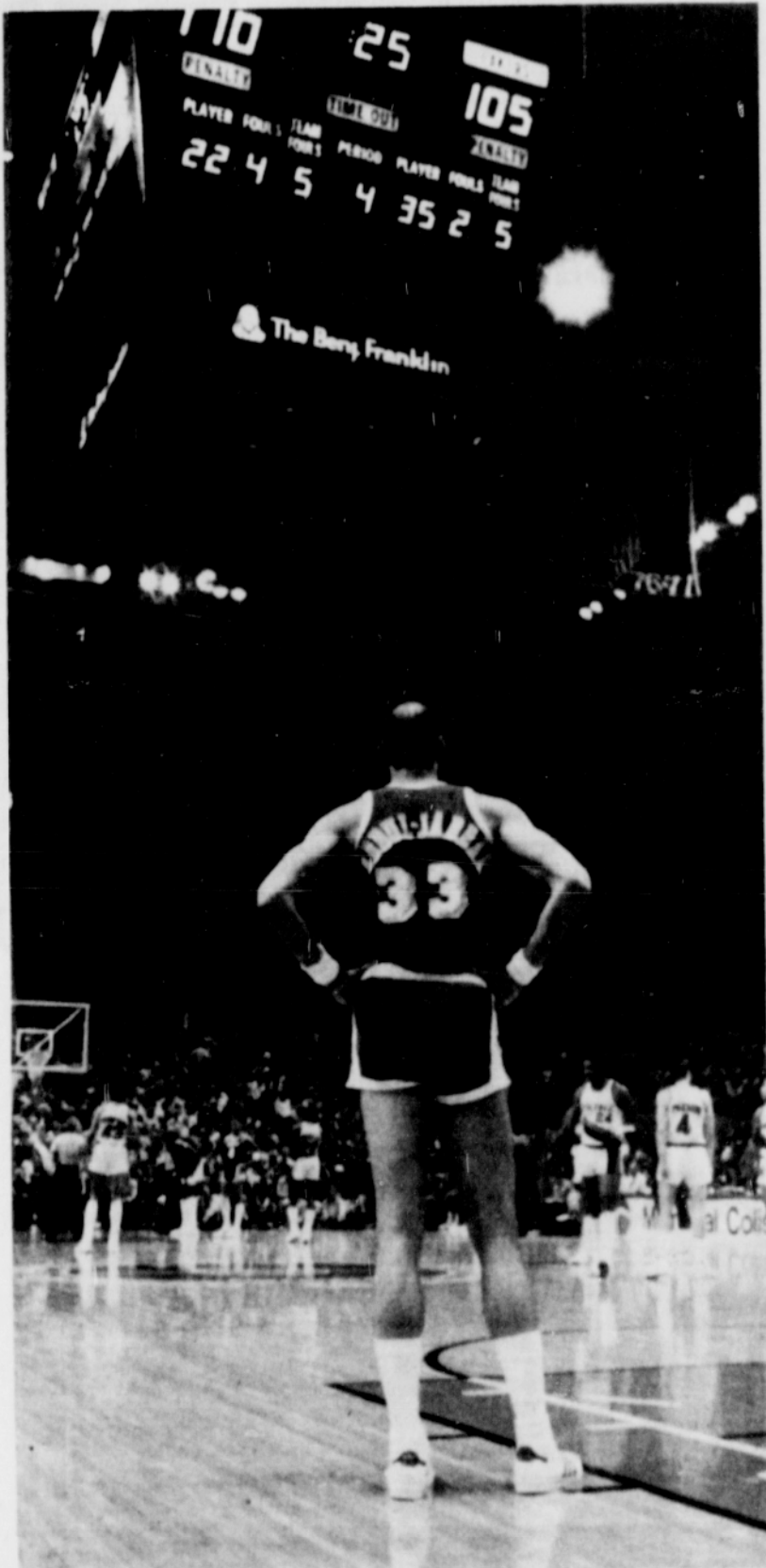
Los Angeles didn't suffer any injuries and that's as important as winning when you reach May. Magic Johnson personally took things into his hands in the walk past the Blazers and he must do the same when L.A. faces Denver.

I'm sure that the greatest difficulty in defending a man 6-foot-9 with the eyes of an eagle, must be the wondering of where he wants to go with the pill. Magic is in a class by himself. He earns his paper.

The Blazer obituary will come in a later edition but credit must be given to them now for the effort that the team displayed this season. With so many rookies on the team and to have gotten as far as they did, the squad, and Coach, should be commended. They could have gone farther, but they didn't. L.A. won the series, 4-1.



Jerome Kersey gave Blazers a stay of execution in home victory over L.A. (Photo: Richard J. Brown)



The scoreboard tells you what's on Kareem's mind as Blazer win put series at 3-1. (Photo: Richard J. Brown)



PAT BROWN

Blazer ball boy Pat Brown finds work it's own reward

by Robert Lothian

Amid all the playoff hoopla there's a part of the Blazer organization that's often overlooked: those unsung young people that mop up the sweat of the stars, quench their thirst and keep them supplied with towels.

Pat Brown is one of the crew of eight ball boys and one ball girl at the Coliseum for every home game.

He works the visitors' bench, handing out cups of water and gatoraid to visiting players, and snatching up their warm-ups as he sprays down the sideline.

Magic Johnson and Larry Byrd

have given him their autographs, but Pat's heart is with the Blazers. "I hope they win," he said.

Pat, 15, a ninth grader at Fowler Junior High in Tigard, said the most exciting moment of his first year as a Blazer ball boy came during the March 26th game with the Lakers.

The game went into overtime. "I didn't think they were going to beat 'em," said Pat.

But Audie Norris' breathtaking long shot with only a second remaining clinched it for the Blazers.

"It was loud and crazy. I thought the whole building was going to fall down," he said.

Pat's uncle, Steve Jones, is the Blazer commentator for KOIN, and the Brown family has been Blazer fans for a long time. Pat said he wanted to be a ball boy when he was 12. He wrote a letter to the Blazer office and was accepted for the '84-'85 season.

"I've done all the jobs," he said, including working the Blazer bench, helping the referees, cleaning the locker rooms and mopping sweat off the floor in the free throw area.

Being out on the floor when the Coliseum is packed is "weird," according to Pat, who said he sometimes feels as if the crowd would like him to make a mistake.

Clyde Drexler and Steve Colter are the Blazers he feels closest to, said Pat. "I talk to them the most."

Sam Bowie is "real quiet," he said, and Mychal Thompson "cracks jokes all the time. I know him pretty well."

Pat said he learned early that "you don't want to talk to them too much after they lose," but after winning, "they go crazy" and "clown around a lot."

Coach Jack Ramsay "gets mad when they lose but after the game he's pretty nice," he said.

Pat said he wants to play basketball and own his own computer company when he finishes school. Being a ball boy means he doesn't have time to be on his school team, he said.

The ball crew must be at the Coliseum two hours before each game and they often don't get done until 10:30. "I just get something to eat and then go to bed," he said.

"It really hasn't interfered with his homework," said Pat's mother, Jacquelyn Brown. "It can't; that's one of the stipulations of being a ball boy." Her job is to give Pat rides to and from the games.

"A lot of people think it's really easy, but you have to know what you're doing, and you have to stay cool," said Pat.

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