



THE LOCKER ROOM

Greg Smith: Ex-NBA Player and National Sales Manager: KGON

By ULLYSSES TUCKER, JR.

Greg Smith has had a wonderful life as a basketball player. He was a stand-out player in high school (Princeton, Kentucky), an excellent college player at Western Kentucky, and he managed to get in seven years of professional basketball. Smith played in Milwaukee, Houston, and Portland. While in Milwaukee, Smith starred on the same team with Oscar Robertson, Lew Alcindor, and Bob Boozer as the Bucks won the (1971) National Basketball Association Title.



GREG SMITH
Photo by Ulysses Tucker, Jr.

Smith has also played in the NCAA Tournament, had his high school jersey retired (1989), and belongs to the Kentucky Basketball Hall of Fame. At forty-three years old, Smith is married (Gwen Ozaki-Smith) and the proud father of three children. Keith is currently in camp with the Los Angeles Lakers and a graduate of UC-Berkeley; Damon is, if not the best, one of the best (200 and 400 meter) sprinters in Oregon (Wilson High School); and his youngest daughter Sara (three years old) runs the Smith household. Smith retired from the NBA in 1975 and entered the world of radio sales. He has worked for KGW radio, freelance as an NBA announcer, and he currently is the National Sales Manager for KGON-FM radio.

Smith, who majored in social work/physical education at Western Kentucky, still plays for the Blazers Old-Timers team. When questioned about why he

selected a career in radio sales, Smith said that he did not want a regular desk job. He wanted a career that allowed flexibility and travel, like in the N.B.A.

"I evaluated myself and I wanted a job with a fixed salary as well as a commission," he said. "I also wanted to get out, meet people, and sell a product. The more I thought about it, the more the opportunity of media sales came into light. Television and radio. I interviewed heavily here in Portland with all the stations and I was fortunate to get a job with KGW (1976). I've been in the business ever since." Smith said

that sales has met all of his expectations and dreams thus far. One day, he would like to be a General or Station Manager for some station. He would also like to own a radio station one day.

As National Sales Manager for KGON-FM, Smith's responsibilities include setting rates, designing promotional programs, and generating new business outside of the marketplace. He handles companies like Frito-Lay, Ford Motors, and other large vendors. Smith believes that a successful salesperson is outgoing, articulate, and able to take no for an answer. He also said that you must enjoy people because sales puts a person in various social situations.

A very smooth and likable person, Smith has no problem with people and if his silky moves of the past are an indication of his sales ability, he is doing well. Smith is well-respected in the industry and marketplace. Did your career in the

NBA prepare you for a career like sales?

"Yes," he said. "There is a fondness that people have for individuals associated with prior jobs or responsibilities. Being a former athlete or anything like that builds comfort level for people. Folks like to know that you've accomplished something and eventually, you get down to business." Smith enjoys looking deeper into the business he encounters on a regular basis because it gives him insight into potential investments or opportunities in the future.

Regardless of whether you are in professional sports or sales, Smith thinks that a person needs to be competitive. "You have to size up your competition constantly," he said. "If you've got a big gun coming up against you and you know that they have a good product, you have to find the weakness. We do the same thing in radio. We try and find the weakness as soon as possible, if they have one."

Smith has lived the dream as a father, professional/college athlete, and executive. Now, he would like to live the NBA dream through his son Keith, who has an excellent shot to make the Los Angeles Lakers or some other team. Smith likes the odds.

"I like his chances," said Smith. "He's playing very well. He, being a free agent, is looking good and playing parallel to their second round draft pick. Though he is with the Lakers, he also has the opportunity for other teams to see him perform. Free-agency can work on your behalf because you are not tied to the team like the ones drafted."

Smith's advice to young players making it to the NBA is to make and save the money while you can. Eventually, he says, you have to get a career and adjust to the real world. Smith knows the routine well.

NEWS OF SPORTS

Search For 1996 Olympics Site

The search is on for a site for the 1996 Olympics—the 100th anniversary of the Olympic Games in modern times. In the running for this coveted honor is Melbourne, Australia's second biggest city.



The land "Down Under" may be the site for the centenary Olympic Games.

The last time the city hosted the Olympics was in 1956, an event which came to be labeled "the friendly games." Along with the rest of Australia, Melbourne boasts political stability, a moderate climate and a clean and safe environment in which athletes can train and compete. Melbourne's beauty, diversity and culture also help make it an ideal Olympic city, many agree. Melbourne has hosted many sporting events, including World Series Cricket, the World Grand Prix Motor-Cycle Championship and World Cup Weightlifting. It's also home to the million-dollar Melbourne Cup horse race and the Australian Open Tennis Championship.

Already there's wide support for Melbourne in its attempt to win the right to stage the centenary modern Olympics. Also, three-quarters of its Olympic facilities are now in place. More than 75 corporations and institutions have each contributed \$100,000 towards the \$20 million Olympics bid. Some 50,000 Australians have registered as potential volunteer assistants.

It could be the land "Down Under" is the place for tomorrow's up-and-coming athletes to compete in at the Olympics!



The earth is not perfectly round. Distances measured through the poles are shorter than those at the equator.

Pepsi Launches Minority Partnership in Washington, D.C.



Craig E. Weatherup, President of Pepsi-Cola Company, announced on July 25 the formation of the largest minority-controlled Pepsi-Cola franchise in the United States.

The new \$60 million soft drink franchise—Pepsi-Cola of Washington, D.C., L.P.—serving the metropolitan District of Columbia and a portion of Prince Georges County, will be operated under an historic partnership that unites Pepsi with two prominent businesspersons: Earl G. Graves, one of the nation's leading entrepreneurs and publisher of Black Enterprise magazine, and Earvin "Magic" Johnson, 11-year veteran of the National Basketball Association's Los Angeles Lakers.

Weatherup has been a driving force behind Pepsi's acclaimed minority business and educational initiatives, including the Pepsi-Cola Minority Business Enterprise (MBE) program, which has resulted in Pepsi spending more than \$325 million on products and services

offered by minority-owned businesses in the last eight years.

Weatherup stated: "As we enter into this unique partnership of Graves and Johnson with Pepsi, we do much more than consummate another important business deal. Rather, this partnership is indeed a reaffirmation of Pepsi-Cola Company's commitment to broaden substantially the level of our involvement with the minority business community."

The partnership involves Magic Johnson and Earl Graves of Black Enterprise

Pepsi-Cola of Washington, D.C. is a sales distribution company which will employ approximately 160 people, and is expected to generate nearly \$30 million in revenues by the end of its first full operating year. Pepsi recently invested \$1.8 million to upgrade and equip the new facility, which sits atop a 6.1 acre site. Pepsi will serve as "limited partner" and support non-operating aspects of the business. Graves, Johnson, and Pepsi have each made a substantial financial commitment to the venture.

Nike Presents Minority Programs to PUSH

Nike President Richard K. Donahue met with Reverend Jesse Jackson of Operation PUSH to share with Jackson information about Nike's minority hiring, philanthropy and business development programs.

"We welcome this opportunity to show PUSH some of the very aggressive affirmative action programs and development programs Nike is involved with and extremely proud of. PUSH and Nike obviously have similar goals when it comes to generating equal opportunity for all citizens," said Donahue.

"Nike is proud of our association with such great black role models as Michael Jordan, David Robinson, Bo Jackson, Spike Lee and John Thompson, all of whom have been featured in our advertising," Donahue said. "This is an outward indication of our inner commitment to the minority community. When PUSH looks beyond the surface at the way Nike conducts business, they will see how deep our commitment goes."

"We also agree wholeheartedly with Rev. Jackson's statement last week that bullets, not shoes, kill kids, and that books, not sneakers, provide opportunity. That is why we are currently running a \$5-million Equal Opportunity advertising campaign urging kids to stay in school and stay off drugs. We are certain PUSH can help us make

that campaign even more meaningful to the minority community."

Among the facts that Nike shared with PUSH were:

The company has a total of 3,500 domestic employees, of which 14.4 percent are minorities.

The company is in a rapid growth phase and has hired 1,039 employees since January 1990. Of that total, 21 percent are minorities.

The company has an aggressive minority recruiting effort that includes listing all jobs with minority recruiting firms, sponsoring job fairs, and recruiting at black colleges, sororities and fraternities.

The company is the largest advertiser using minority spokespeople in the country.

The company spends 75 percent of its philanthropic dollars on minority-oriented projects.

Nike used the meeting to correct some popular misapprehensions about the athletic shoe business. Nike has an extremely diverse business selling athletic shoes, clothes and accessories in 17 different sports categories with equal distribution across the U.S. Contrary to statements which attribute large percentages of Nike's sales of higher-priced shoes to urban minority youth, the correct figures are:

13.6 percent of Nike's business is to

non-white consumers, not 30-40 percent as previously cited.

Only 20 percent of Nike's business is in cities with populations exceeding 2.5 million.

According to industry research, blacks aged 13-24 are no more likely to buy or own athletic shoes than 13-24-year-olds in general. They own an average of 3.1 pairs of athletic shoes out of 9.8 total pairs of shoes.

15 percent of Nike's basketball show sales are to minority consumers.

The average price of a pair of Nike athletic shoes is \$60.

The two best selling shoes at Nike are the Quantum Force basketball shoe at \$58 and the Air Cross Trainer at \$62.

"The fact that only 13 percent of our business is with the minority community does not decrease our commitment to that community. That is why 14.4 percent of our workforce is minority and 75 percent of our philanthropic dollars are directed to minority programs. We welcome PUSH's help in making those programs as meaningful as possible," Donahue said.

"Nike looks forward to sharing many of our ideas with PUSH and working out plans that will help both organizations serve the interest of the minority community. Both organizations do that very well even now," said Nike's Donahue.

Green's role earns him All-Star year

By Aaron Fentress

The Lakers had just defeated the Boston Celtics in 1985 for the NBA championship when they drafted Green. Then came the drive to be the first team to repeat since the Celtics of the late sixties.

The Lakers were swiftly bounced out of the 1986 Western Conference playoffs by the Houston Rockets and the twin towers. Many "experts" started writing the Lakers off.

Although the Lakers as a team fell on some hard times in 1986 for Green the year was a success. It took him only a short time to push Kurt Rambis out of the starting Power forward spot and become a full-time starter. Green said he never looked at it as a competition between him and Rambis but as a competition with himself.

"I didn't try to compete with anybody, I just tried to play hard and be my best," said Green. "When you first get there you must feel that you can play at that level." According to Green it took him only a month to realize he could play at the NBA level.

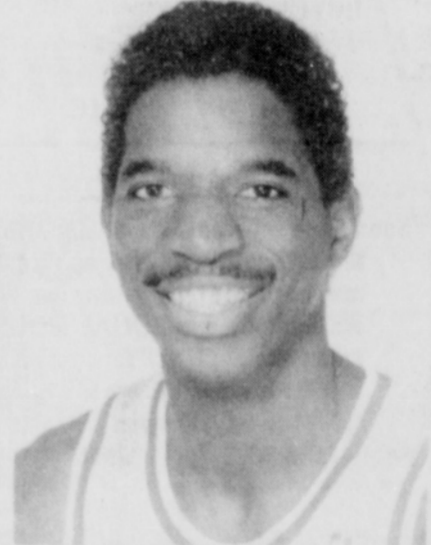
The Lakers bounced back during the 1986-87 season storming through the season and capturing the NBA title from the Boston Celtics. Green averaged nine points and five rebounds during that series. For Magic and company it was their fourth ring. For Green it was his first.

In 1988 the Lakers again were trying to become the first team to repeat in 19 years. This time they accomplished that goal by defeating the Detroit Pistons in seven games. Green upped his performance from the previous year to 10 points and eight rebounds per game, including a 21 point, eight rebound performance in game three.

By this time Green was becoming recognized as a star around the league. Being on a team that possessed such stars as Magic, Worthy and Kareem, definitely casted

a shadow over Green, but he slowly built his own reputation as a hustler and rebounder. Although Green didn't shoot the ball much he made good on his few attempts by consistently hitting around 55% of his shots.

For years scoring has been the statistic for which All-Star players are measured, now that has changed. Magic Johnson and Larry Bird made the assists fashionable during the 80's and players like Green and Dennis Rodman, are making it fashionable to rebound. For Green and Detroit's Rodman, rebounding and defense has landed them in the 1990 NBA All-Star game.



A.C. GREEN

"I think players like Rodman and I have shown that you can do other things besides score and be successful," said Green. "I could want to score more but I understand that you have to be a team and there are different rolls to be played. Certain players do certain things better. To help us win, I rebound. Now players are being appreciated and awarded for something other than being high scorers."

Green was voted to the NBA All-Star team in 1990. An honor bestowed upon NBA players by popular votes from the fans. Although he had nothing to do with it Green found himself in the center

of controversy when he was voted in as a starter ahead of Karl Malone. Although Green received some negative fan reaction to the selection he did not let it spoil his time in the sun.

"I wasn't going to let anything ruin the moment for me," he said. "It was something I had worked so hard for and nothing was going to come between the enjoyment of it for me or my family."

Along with Green, Magic, and Worthy also started for the West in the 1990 All-Star game. Despite three all-stars and the best record in basketball the Lakers bowed out of the playoffs in the second round being dethroned by the Phoenix Suns in only five games.

Despite persistence by "experts" that the Lakers are done, Green doesn't feel they have anything to prove. "The only thing we will try to do is be the best we can be. Best as a team and best as individuals. We won't worry about what other people say or think because it really doesn't matter. We feel no pressure because Detroit is king of the hill now. They have the championship."

For the first time in Green's career he returned to Portland with the Blazers having a more successful season than the Lakers. "They did a very good job," said Green. "I was proud of Portland, I'm from here and I was happy to see them do so well."

When asked if he'd like to finish out his career in Portland Green said he didn't see it in his future. "I haven't thought about it. I'm just now getting used to L.A." He said.

Green did say that he has no plans to coach after he retires unless it's in a church league or a boys club.

One thing Green does plan to pursue after basketball is his own business and the ministry.

"Working in the ministry is my love and desire. It is my favorite thing to do and I'd like to do more of it when more of my time becomes available."

For more information call: 223-WALK

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