



# THE LOCKER ROOM

BY ULLYSSES TUCKER, JR.

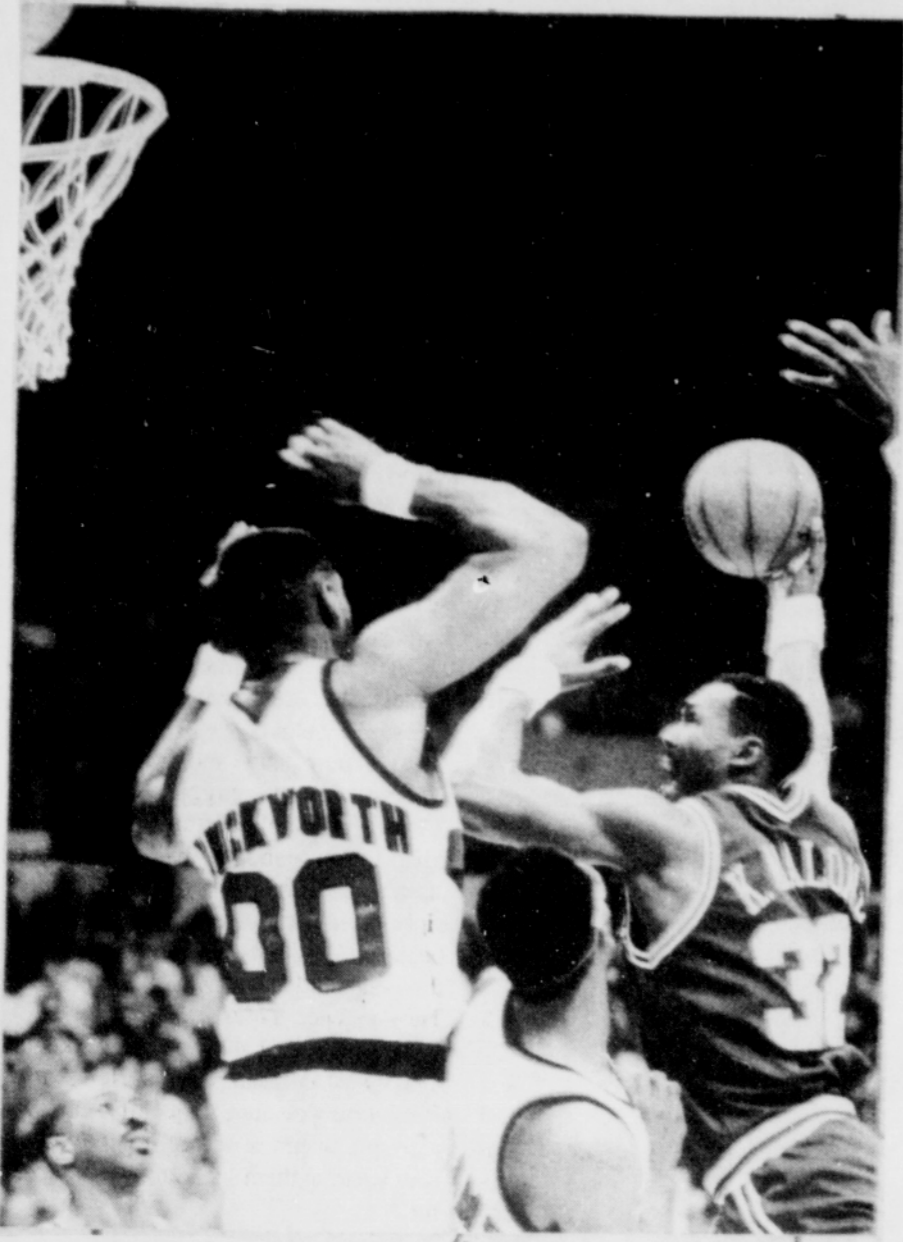


Photo by Veronica Green

**NBA all-star Karl Malone of the Utah Jazz was in town Friday night to lead his team against the Portland Trail Blazers. Malone scored 30 points and grabbed 11 rebounds to beat the Jazz 117 to 105.**

## Couch Kids

American children are fatter and less fit than a generation ago. They're not eating more, but what they are eating is higher in fat; and they're exercising less. As a result, doctors see increasing numbers of children-as young as five years old-with risk factors for heart disease like high blood pressure and elevated cholesterol levels. Why are our children so out of shape?

The adult fitness boom of the past twenty years seems to have passed our youngsters by. Television is one of the culprits. The average American child spends 25-35 hours per week in front of the set. Plus, kids today have other seductive, sedentary diversions: video games and computers. Busy families with two-career marriages leave kids to fend for themselves more than ever, resulting in unsupervised, high fat, fast food snacking. At school, physical education is often treated as an extra-not a priority. And an overemphasis on competitive sports in school can dull a child's interest in participating in athletics just for the fun and health of it.

What's to blame for the increased numbers of obese children? In important is the example set by parents? Should schools provide more physical & health education? How can we raise healthier kids? **Join Jack Faust and his guests for this timely debate on Thursday, February 28th from 8:00-9:00 p.m. For seat reservations, please call Frank Mungeam, Alison Highberger or Liza McQuade at 231-4620. Guests should arrive at KATU studios (21st & NE Sandy Blvd) between 7:00-7:15 p.m.** The public is welcome, but reservations are required. This program will be broadcast on Sunday, March 3rd from 6:00-7:00 p.m.

## Sir Charles Barkley: A Competitor

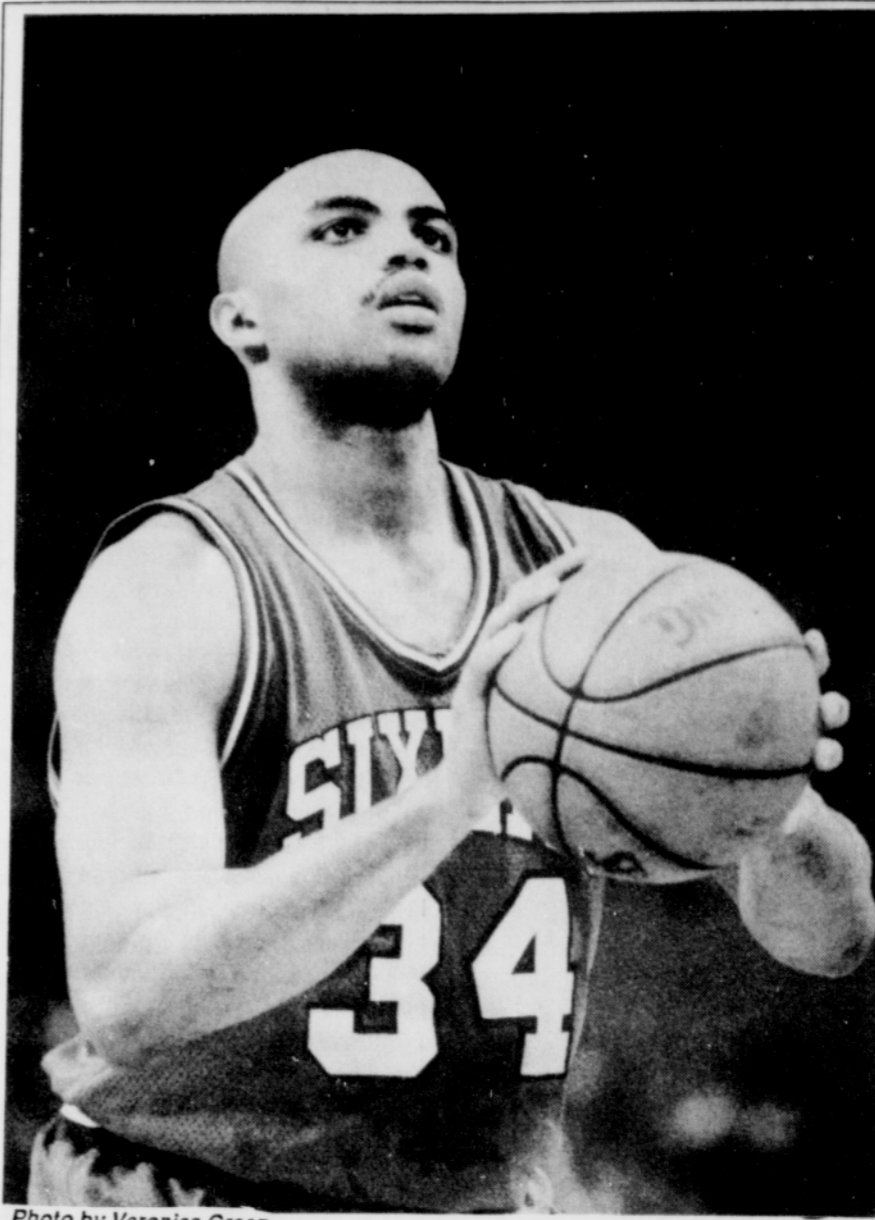
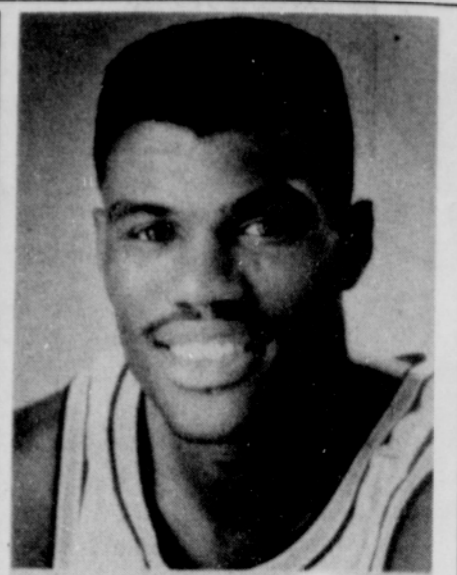


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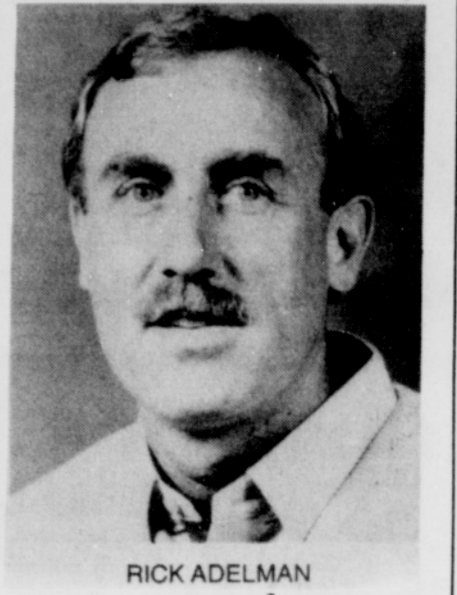
Charles Barkley has been racking up some impressive stats since he won the MVP award in Charlotte a few weekends ago, but the Philadelphia 76er's have been fading fast in the Atlantic Division. Road woes, trades, and the loss of guard *Johnny Dawkins* have all contributed to their demise. Currently, Barkley is averaging over thirty-points per contest and ten rebounds. He is also among (third) the NBA leaders in field goal percentage. Big numbers and being an All-Star is fine with Bar-

kley, but he would trade it all away for the best record in the league and some consistent team play. Barkley says his team needs to concentrate on finishing strong down the stretch and securing home court advantage for the playoffs.

"We've had our share of ups and downs," said Barkley. "We can't worry about catching Boston if we can catch them, it would be fine and if not, our goal should be to finish in the best possible position. You always have a



DAVID ROBINSON




RICK ADELMAN

chance in this league if you play hard sometimes, the best team does not always win. That's why it's very important to be competitive every night and stay mentally prepared. We'll be alright. Philadelphia is coming off a brutal west coast swing where they lost to Portland Golden State, and Sacramento.

**Now It Can Be Told Department** Portland Trail Blazers players had varying reactions to their coach earning th **All-Star assignment. Rick Adelman,**

**Continued to page 7**

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## Cunningham could become best ever

by Aaron Fantress

How they could do it I will never know. To vote San Francisco quarterback Joe Montana the NFL's Most Valuable Player should put a stain on the Associated Press' respectability for football seasons to come. But it won't. Because Montana is a darling of sorts. Whisked away through an enviable ride as the NFL's prized superstar. But luckily not everyone agrees with AP. They were the only ones to vote Montana the MVP.

In January of this year the AP sports writers voted Montana the MVP for the second consecutive year. Without a doubt Montana deserved it last year as he compiled a 118.2 quarterback rating. But to receive the award for his 1991 performance is nothing short of a travesty. His 89.0 rating simply did not deserve it. Randall Cunningham, Warren Moon and Jerry Rice all had better years. Montana shouldn't have been in the top three.

As a football fan who watches every season unfold as carefully as I can with the handicap of not living in the NFL city, I can surely cast an educated vote as to who should have been MVP. And although the sports writers of AP (who may be the most prestigious when it comes to voting for MVP) may disagree with me, I at least have the comfort of knowing that the United Press International, Sports Illustrated, The Sporting News, and the NFL players do agree with me. They all voted for either Cunningham, Moon or Rice.

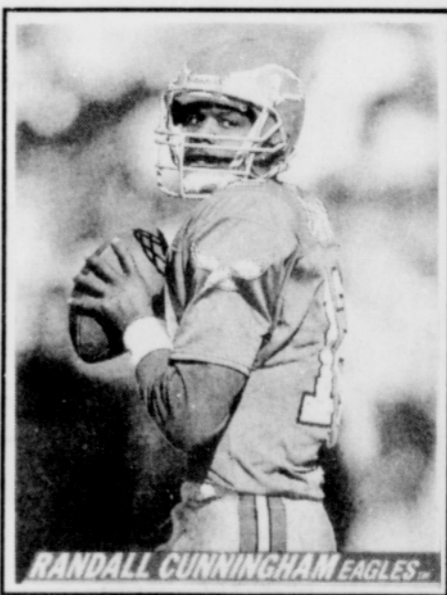
My pick is without a doubt Cunningham. The next great superstar of professional football. The next great quarterback. The next Graham, Unitas, Namath, Starr, Bradshaw, Staubach, Tarkenton, Stabler, Marino and Montana. The first black quarterback to even be spoken in such context.

He passed for 30 touchdown passes, more than Montana (26), 13 interceptions, less than Montana (16), and over 3,400 yards. Although Montana passed for over 3,900 yards he did so with more attempts and with less effective results as his touchdown to interception ratio and rating shows. Cunningham rated out at 92.0.

If that wasn't enough Cunningham took the quarterback position to another level. He did so with his rushing.

Last season Cunningham did the unthinkable for an NFL quarterback. He led his team in rushing finishing fifth in the NFC with 946 yards and five touchdowns. Unprecedented. No one has ever passed for over 3,000 yards and rushed for over 900 yards. He's simply the best in the game today. Someday the press will have to give him that credit. So far his peers have.

In voting that was reported last



RANDALL CUNNINGHAM EAGLES

week in the USA Today Cunningham was voted the NFC offensive MVP. The award was voted for by the players themselves. There was no award for overall MVP but the fact that Montana plays offense in the NFC shows which player the NFL players thought was more valuable.

But how long will it take for Cunningham to get the national respect he deserves, primarily from the media. CBS analysis and former NFL superstar Terry Bradshaw stated that Cunningham was not a great quarterback but a great athlete. Is that just like saying Michael Jordan is a great athlete but Larry Bird is a great basketball player who uses his superior white intellect to overcome his athletic ability? I hope not. In fact I think not but what is Bradshaw's point.


Upon hearing of Bradshaw's comments Cunningham and several of his teammates confronted Bradshaw before a game. Cunningham asked Bradshaw, "Why do you keep dogging me?". Bradshaw simply stated that he, "was an analyst and I'm going to say what I'm going to say." So what is Bradshaw trying to say?

First off lets understand that to be a quarterback in the NFL is not to be real athletic. Try and think of one "great" quarterback in NFL history who ran a 4.5 forty. I'm stumped. Now try to think of a past NFL "great" quarterback who jumps several feet in the air when he dives into the end-zone. I'm stumped again. Now try and think of a "great" NFL quarterback who possessed the athletic skills to succeed at running back, receiver or even defensive back if he so desired. Try and imagine Graham, Unitas, Starr, Namath, Bradshaw, Stabler, Tarkenton, Marino or Montana doing anything else except throwing the football. Unimaginable isn't it?

Cunningham's handicap which keeps him from being great, at least what seems to be his handicap in the eyes of Bradshaw and other analysis, is that he is twice the athlete that his predecessors were. He doesn't always stay in the pocket, read the defense and take what's there. Sometimes Cunningham drops back, sees that nothing is developing, says screw it and improvises. But despite the results that's what makes Cunningham a great athlete, not a great quarterback. Quarterbacks aren't supposed to do those kind of things. Quarterbacks aren't supposed to avoid three tacklers in his own end-zone, duck from the grasp of a defensive end then throw a 95 yard touchdown like Cunningham did against Buffalo this season. Quarterbacks are supposed to be smart, stay in the pocket, fall down and take the safety to avoid fumbling. Or they are supposed to dump it off to the tight end for an 8-yard gain. That's what the great quarterbacks do under pressure in their own end-zone. Will that was in the past. There's a new Sheriff in quarterback town. And his name is Randall Cunningham.

"I enjoy running the ball," says Cunningham. "I have the ability to make something out of nothing and when I see those opportunities I use that ability to make something happen and it's usually good."

Cunningham has more ability than any quarterback in NFL history. And before his career is over his place in history will undoubtedly be right there amongst the other great quarterbacks of all time. Who of which will all look in envy at a man who did what they once did. And much more.



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