

How Do You Motivate A Millionaire?

(Part two) - by Bill Barber

Last week the coaching staff of the Portland Trail Blazers was asked about how they motivated the team. This week it's the players' turn to tell what motivates them.

Quite a few fans would probably guess the best way to motivate a player would be with money. For average people who work a 40 hour week that is usually a rather good incentive. It may not be an effective way to get the attention of the 324 young men who play NBA basketball. After all, if their salaries are added together, they would make more money than most third world countries.

Alaa Abdelnaby said his most memorable pep talk was during his senior year at Duke University. Warmth is not the long suit of Head Coach Mike Krzyzewski, who is well known for his strictly-business approach to the game. "The last home game of my senior year, Coach 'K' came up to me to say he really appreciated what I'd done for the last four years and that he really loved me. It was kind of a warm and touching moment. In my four years at Duke, I

had good and bad times, but I had never seen the coach in that light before. We ended up losing that game anyway, Alaa laughed looking back.

Terry Porter said "Coaches sometimes have something to say at half-time, but if it's a big enough game, the players are 'pumped' already."

Cliff Robinson's most memorable pep talks were during his AAU League days back in Buffalo, NY. "We had a coach who always told us we were the underdogs. He would remind us that we were the players who were not recognized. He'd talk about how (opponent) Mark Bryant was going to kill me because he was one of the top forwards in the country. I ended up fouling out but I played really well that day."

Buck Williams remembered a time during the latter part of his New Jersey days when injuries had sent them into the game shorthanded. "The coach told us about a battle that was won by the side that was outnumbered two to one. It was very appropriate at the time. We went out and won the ballgame."

Clyde Drexler says the most reoc-

curing theme during his years in the game has been "stand up ... do the best you can do ... don't quit ... and give 110% effort. I can live with effort everytime, but don't be a quitter. That is what coach Guy Lewis always used to say." Then Drexler said something that may have been THE answer to the original question of "How do you motivate a Millionaire?" "Coaches like to appeal to your sense of pride. Nobody likes to lose." That sounds down to earth logical. It must not be the money, because no one ever tells a story of an NBA coach calling a time out in the last seconds of a tight game to offer the star player \$100.00 if he will only make a basket to win the game.

"Appeal to their sense of pride," said Clyde. That must be the answer.

Whatever the coaches are saying to the players must be working. Or maybe it is what the players are saying amongst themselves at their team meetings. In any event, the Blazer's certainly do a good job of being motivated considering that they have one of the best records in the NBA.

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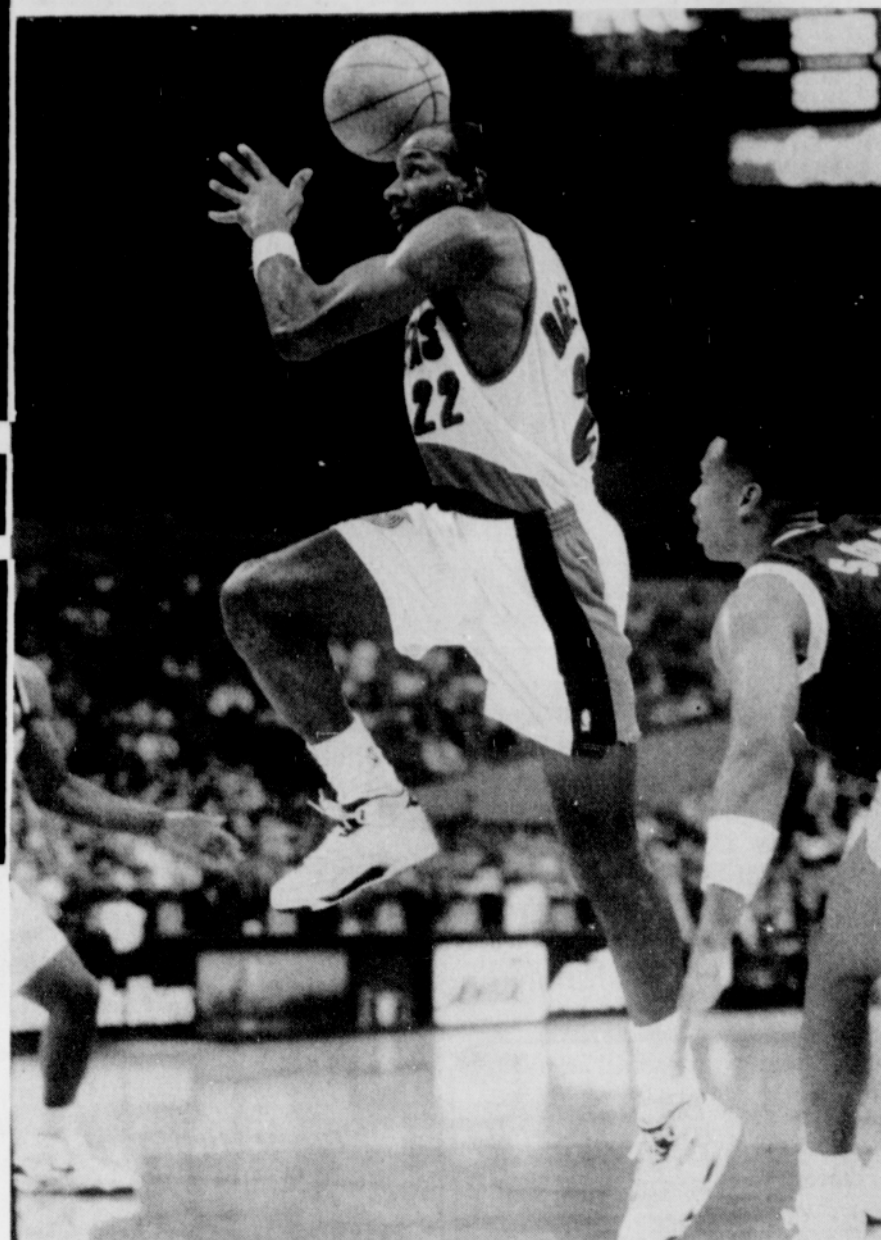
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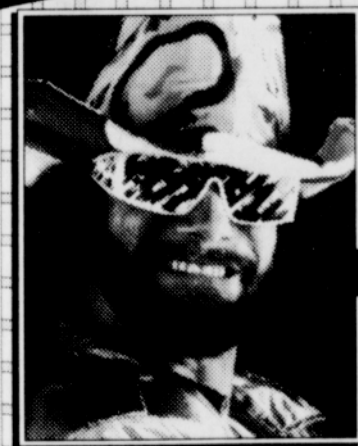
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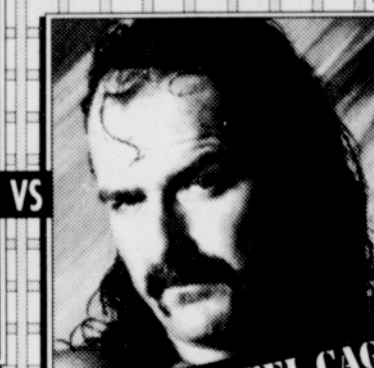
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