

Playoffs: Blazers are Ready

by Bill Barber

"It is a great feeling, coming here, working hard in camp, making the team," says Pack. "Everything has just been getting better everyday. It feels good because right now my college season would have been over. Now it looks like I'm starting another season so I'm getting myself mentally and physically prepared to go into the playoffs. We have a lot of veterans here and I'm sure I'll be watching to see how they respond to the playoffs, and I hope it will rub off on me." Even after the loss to the Lakers last Saturday Pack says "The team came into the locker room saying 'Now it's time for the real stuff to start.' They were real positive, they put that game behind them, and we're ready to practice Monday in preparation for the playoffs. Winning the Division was good. It was an accomplishment, but now we have to move on towards the big champagne day. My folks are real pleased; they have been behind me all the way."

One man who has certainly paid his dues for the opportunity to play in the Big Show is Ennis Whatley.

A lot of fans have forgotten that he was taken as a sophomore (Alabama '83) in the draft as one of the top fifteen players in the country. In fact he was picked Number 13 that year, and another Trail Blazer was picked Number 14 (Clyde Drexler). Kansas City took him in the first round. He averaged eight assists a game. Then he went to Chicago. One night with the Bulls he had 22 assists! That record still stands. After a few years, he hit the skids with some personal problems and played

with Cleveland, Washington, San Antonio, Atlanta and the LA Clippers on a down hill slide towards the CBA. He even played in the Philippines for a while. After getting himself together (you will read more about him in an upcoming exclusive Portland Observer interview) the Portland Trail Blazers gave Ennis another shot at the NBA. "When I first came here, I was a surecast out not to make it. Now, all of a sudden, to be in the rotation is very exciting. I've definitely paid my dues, but one thing I've always believed in is my belief in God. Another thing was, I never stopped. I never gave up. I just continued to work hard, trust in him and wait on my time." For years Whatley struggled. Last year he was named the MVP of the CBA's Playoffs. "When you have been in the CBA, and you have seen some of the hard play there, and what the guys have to go through there, you begin to appreciate being on this level. Being with a team like the Trail Blazers, it really feels great!"

"I know some of the fans are already talking about us winning the Championship," said Terry Porter. "For us on the team we are taking it one series at a time, one game at a time. That's the approach you have to take. The first game of the first round is our most important game. After that the second game is THE most important game. You have to take it one game at a time. All games are equally important," concluded Porter.

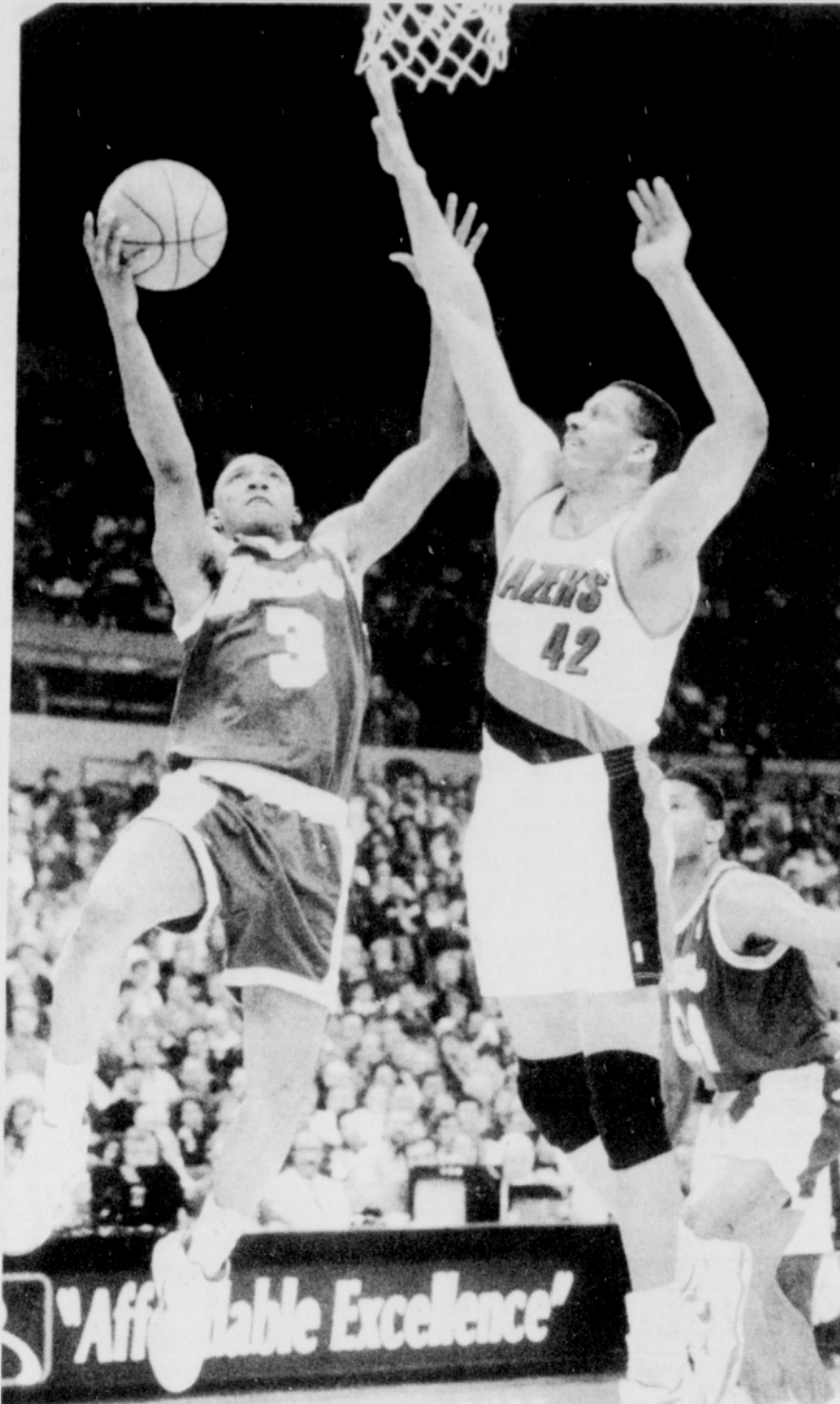
Mark Bryant, is another one of those players who is grateful for the opportunity he has been presented with. Bryant,

is known to be a man of few words, but people around the league are starting to take him more seriously when he says, "It's great to be on a contender but I'm still trying to be level headed about the playoffs... until we win it."

There was a rumor going around the country that the Lakers were going to activate Magic Johnson for the playoffs. Johnson wasn't on the Lakers roster submitted to the NBA on Monday, which means he will be ineligible to play in the playoffs. James Worthy who recently underwent arthroscopic knee surgery on March 20 will also not be playing in the playoffs this year. It was not a big surprise to see Sam Perkins re-activated after having been out with a painful shoulder injury. Portland coach Rick Adelman said "I'm not surprised they didn't activate Magic. But I wouldn't have been surprised if they had either." Adelman paused, and then with tongue in cheek remarked, "I expected Magic and Worthy, and I thought Kareem Abdul-Jabbar might be there, too." He made no mention of Jerry West coming out of his front office retirement to help the Lakers in their time of need. It is typical of coach Adelman to be more concerned with how his own players are doing rather than what is going on with the other team. Clyde Drexler and Jerome Kersey are back after missing the last three regular season games. Adelman concluded that "Clyde looked good and strong. He was running pretty freely." Drexler hasn't played since April 10th.

Clyde summed it up in two words; "I'm ready."

1st Round NBA Playoffs Lakers vs Blazers



The Blazers will face the Los Angeles Lakers in the first round of the playoffs. #3 Sedale Threatt of the Lakers hit a 15 foot jump shot Sunday Night against the Los Angeles Clippers to give his team a 109 to 108 overtime victory and a spot in the playoffs. The best of 5 series begins Thursday night in Portland at 7:30 pm.

Center for Community Mental Health Annual Meeting

The Center for Community Mental Health will hold their Annual Meeting of the Board of Directors on Tuesday, April 28, 1992 at 6:00 p.m. at Bethel A.M.E. Church located at 5828 N.E. 8th.

The evening's festivities include a keynote address by Dr. Darryl Tukufu, President and CEO of the Urban League of Portland, presentation of the annual Ocie Trotter Award to Rev. Rodney Page, Executive Director of Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon, and musical entertainment by talented singer Tracey Harris.

This event is open to the public. If you wish to attend, please RSVP by calling 289-1167 by Friday, April 24, 1992.

Vintage Trolley Car



The tremendous success of the Vintage Trolley line has underscored the need for an additional car. Lloyd Center has sponsored the operation of car #513, which will be brought into service amidst a day of celebration, learning, music and art on Thursday April 23rd.

As part of a curriculum section provided by Lloyd Center and Vintage Trolley, Invinton Grade School 3rd and 4th grade history classes will tour and ride the new car. A special art contest among students will be held.

Dedication ceremonies will be conducted at 12:20 pm, and prizes will be awarded to the winners of a student art contest.

Regular Vintage Trolley service is offered weekends and holidays from 10:00 am to 6:00 pm. A suggested fare of \$1.00 is requested. Vintage Trolley cars run on the MAX tracks from Lloyd Center to The Galleria.

Oregon Business Network Business After Hours Networking

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Time: 6:31 PM
Where: Travelodge Hotel - 1441 NE 2nd - Portland
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