

# SPORTS

## THE Greatest Playoff Game Ever

by Bill Barber

When Clyde Drexler is sitting on the plane that will take him to Barcelona Spain, with the rest of the dream team, he will no doubt take a moment to reflect on the game that took place on Monday, May 12th, 1992. That NBA history-making playoff game will be talked about for years. Before Monday, the most points ever scored by the Portland Trail Blazers in a playoff game was 138. Maybe you remember that game against San Antonio on May 15, 1990.

While Clyde is flying east, down the Columbia River flight path on his way to Spain, I would like to think he would look out his window and see Kevin Duckworth in his boat. There is Duck, doing what he likes best, fishing for sturgeon. Kevin is just below the Bonneville Dam, sitting in the summer sun, enjoying the quiet solitude, thinking about the game he called "The greatest game of my life." That train of thought, broken only by the almost inaudible whoosh of the lone passenger jet overhead. Maybe they would think of each other, for just a moment. They would think back to that momentous day when Duck got to play the heroes role one more time in his career; and Clyde would remember that he was asked to represent his country as one of the best it had to offer. Maybe one of the best to ever play the game.

Last week's Blazer column in the Portland Observer stated that the Blazers-Suns playoff series would be THE series. That was a mouthful, considering that Portland had set a new first half record of 75 points against L.A. In Monday's game with the Suns the records fell like trees in a clear cut forest. In all the history of the NBA no two teams had ever scored 304 points. The Blazers-Suns tilt shattered the previous mark of 285, set by San Antonio (152) and Denver (133) in 1983, and equaled by Boston (157) and New York (128) in 1990.

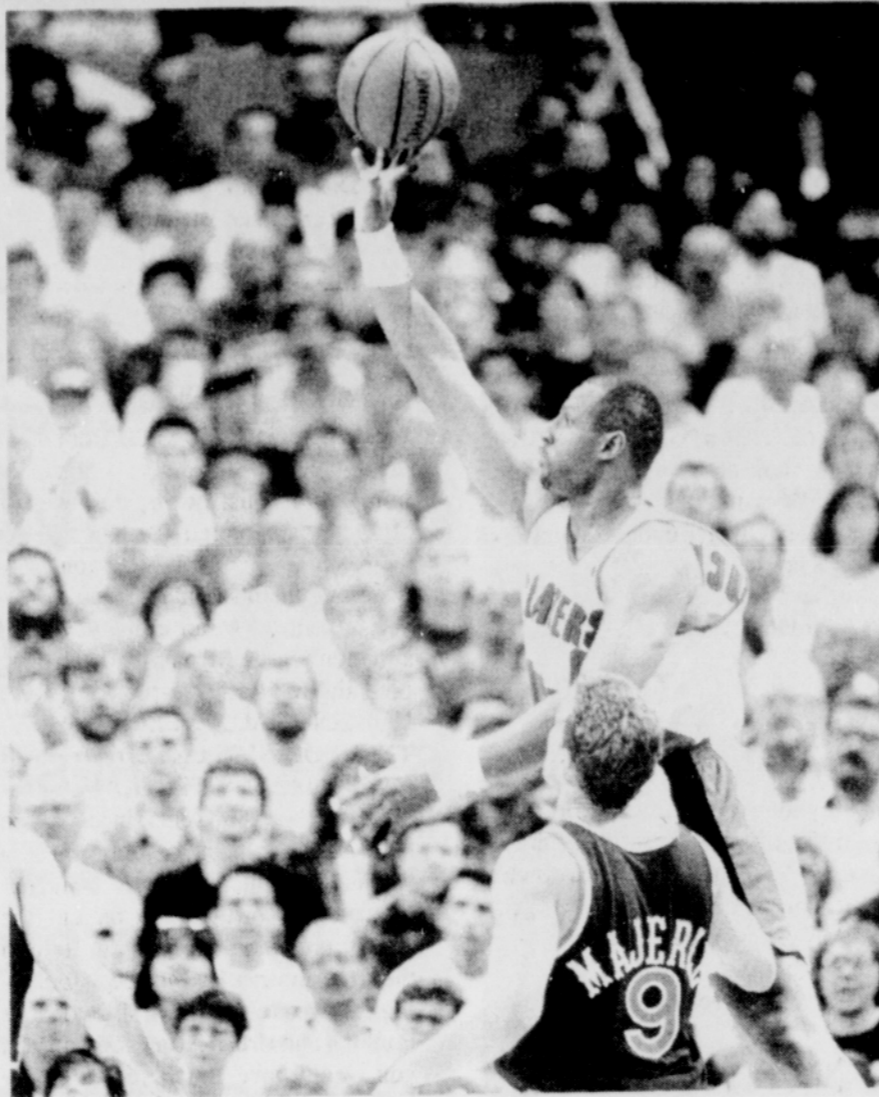
The Portland Trail Blazers record books will have to be altered big time after Monday's game. It was a trivia lover's delight. The old high scoring night of 138 points gained against San

Antonio on May 15th, 1990 was eclipsed by a ton when the Blazers combined for 153 points total. That was the same night in San Antonio that Portland scored 41 points in the first quarter. The new high water mark is now 42. The Sun's players and fans must still be in shock. Who ever heard of a team scoring 151 points and still losing the game. The previous mark was set by Dallas on April 18, 1985. Danny Ainge won't have to hold his ears shut when the Phoenix fans start yelling in Portland's Memorial Coliseum on Thursday night. It will be as quiet as Duckworth's fishing boat. Portland shot 53 free throws (the Suns had 50 themselves). On May 8th 1990, the Blazers only had 51.

The Trail Blazers were 39 of 53 from the charity stripe. Speaking of free throws, you can imagine Blazer announcer Bill "You've got to make your free throws" Schonely was going nuts when the perennial "Mr. Clutch" Terry Porter missed his fifth in a row. "I've never seen me miss five before, either," said Porter. "I've been in that situation before and never had that happen. A couple of them were short and the others I just missed. I felt good, my routine was pretty good. I just missed." Thank goodness it's a team sport. Kersey and Ainge were hot. Duck was a savior by making the free throws that Terry was missing. Duckworth had to quiet a lot of detractors after that game. It takes a lot of heart and confidence to throw up a left hand jump shot at crunch-time. American humorist Will Rogers used to say "I'd give my right arm to be ambidextrous."

As time goes by, this game will be remembered as one of the greatest playoff games ever played. Most of us will forget that the home-town team hit on over 58% of their shots. We probably will not remember that we were out-rebounded 64 to 59. Portland coach Rick Adelman said "You've got to be lucky as well as good to win a game like this."

It is a safe bet that Clyde won't be thinking about the Olympics for a while. I doubt if Duck is ready to break out his fishing gear yet either.

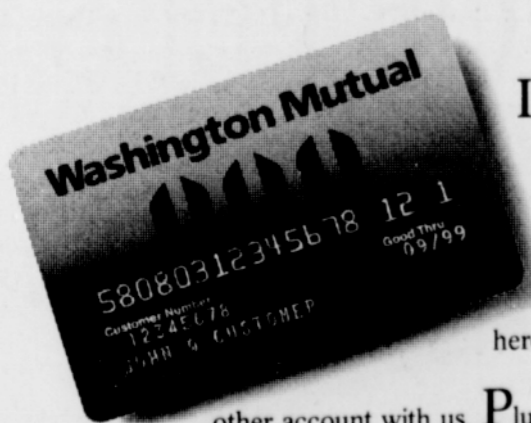


Kevin Duckworth was one of the heroes Monday night. He scored 8 points in the second overtime to help Portland beat Phoenix 153-151. Game 4 of this Western Conference semi-final was the highest scoring game in playoff history. Duckworth and the Trail Blazers can wrap up the series with a win Thursday night in Portland. Game time is 7:30pm.

## Blazers VS Suns

The Blazers Face Phoenix In Game 5 In The Best Of 7 Series

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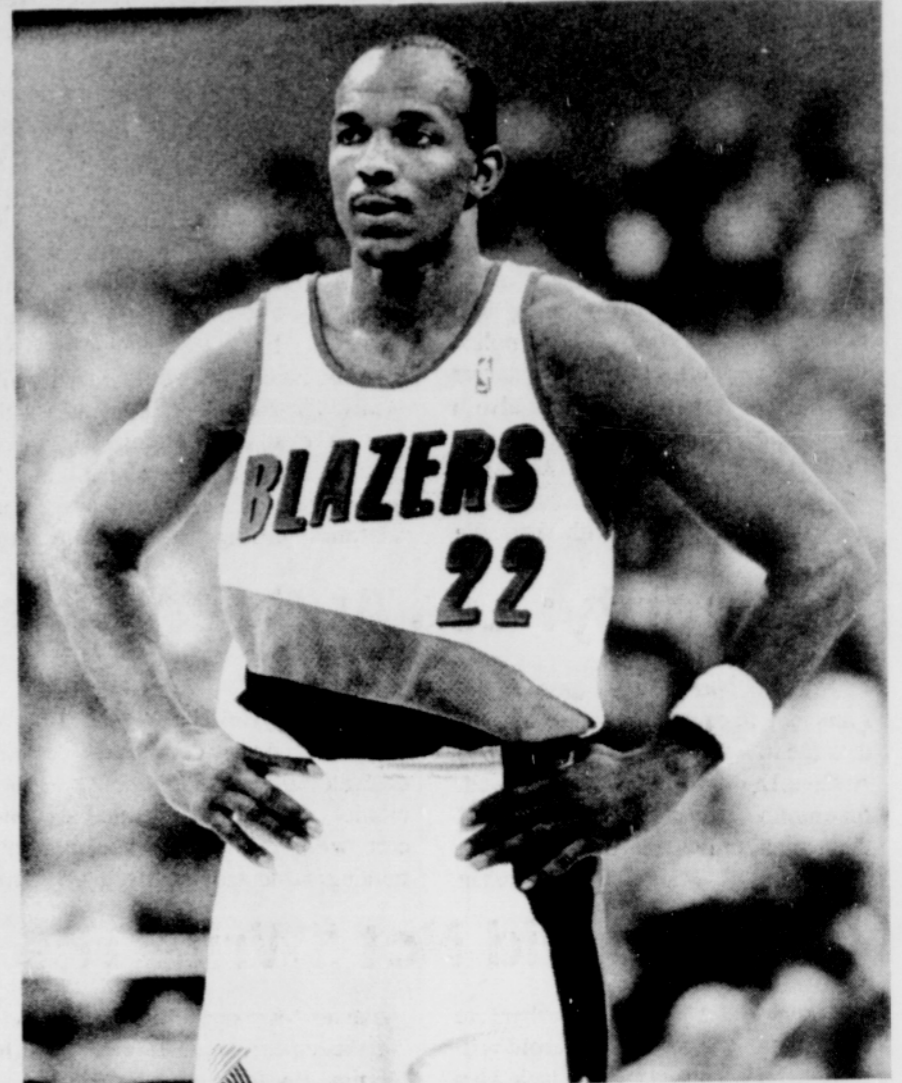
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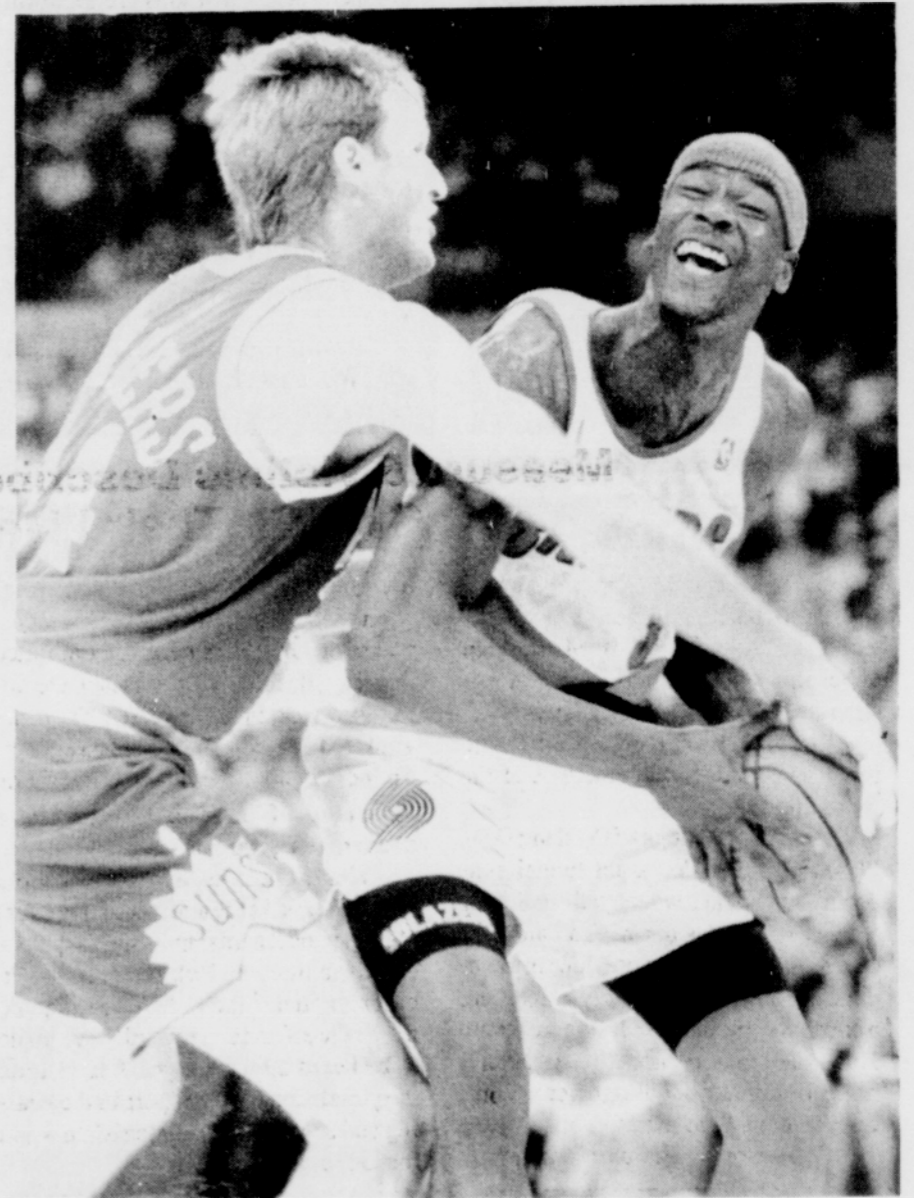
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## Clyde Will Join The USA Basketball Olympic Team In Barcelona Spain

Blazer Photos By Veronic Green



Clyde Drexler makes the Olympic team. Congratulations, Clyde!



Cliff Robinson scored 16 points in 20 minutes of play to help the Blazers win in double overtime over Phoenix Monday Night. The Blazers will need another solid performance by Robinson on Thursday.

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