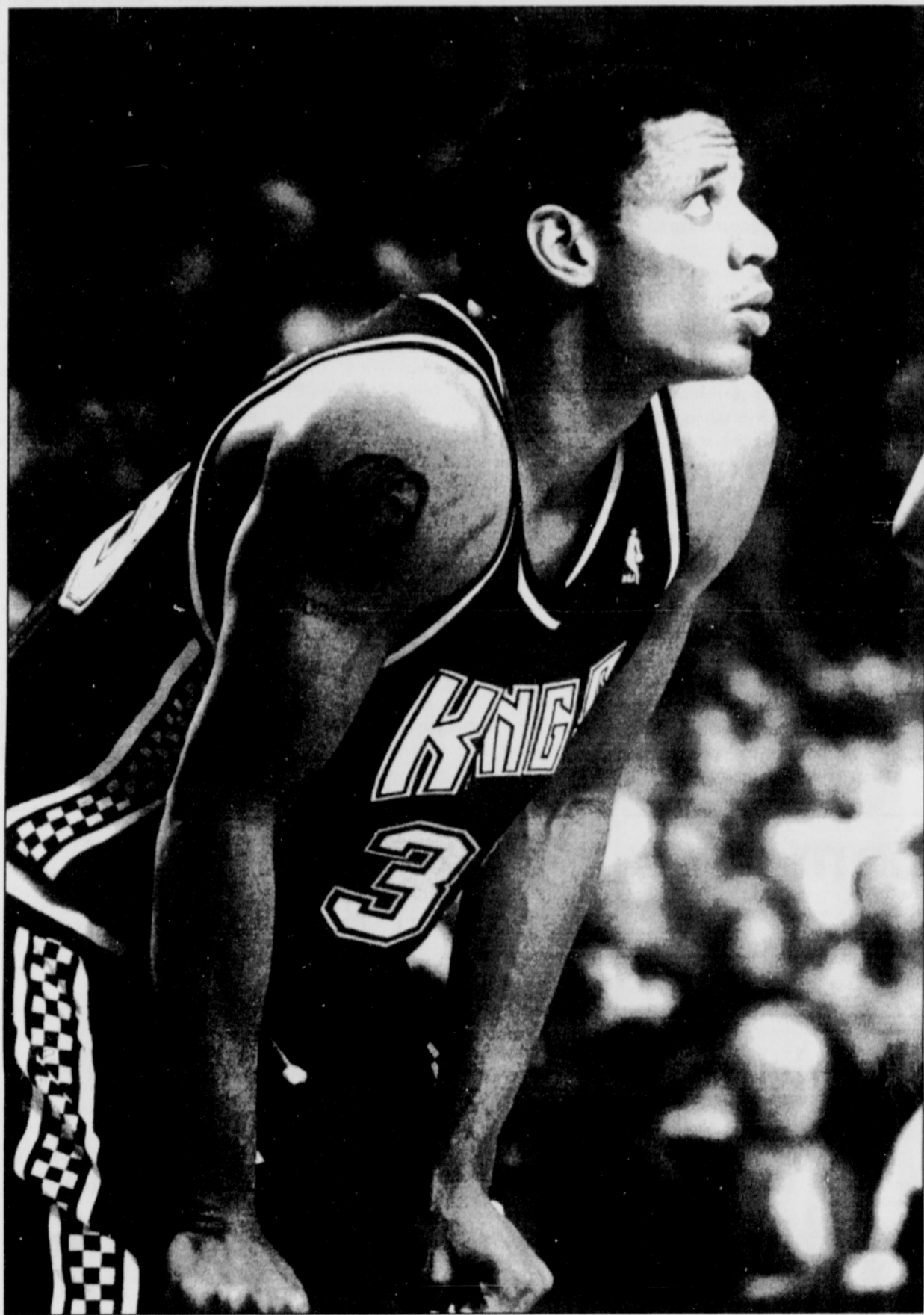


SPORTS

Grant brings Blazers youth; Robinson bid farewell



Brian Grant, the Blazers' most recent addition, in his old Sacramento Kings uniform. (Photo by Michael Halle)

The Portland Trail Blazers, hoping another set of young, athletic legs will carry them past the first round of the playoffs, signed free agent forward Brian Grant to a seven-year, \$63 million contract on Saturday.

The Blazers also re-signed center Chris Dudley to a one-year deal.

To clear salary-cap room, the Blazers renounced their rights to veteran forward Clifford Robinson and guards Rumeal Robinson, Mitchell Butler and Marcus Brown.

Grant, who played only 24 games last season because of a shoulder injury, turned down a seven-year, \$48 million deal from the Kings.

Grant's contract, which makes him the highest paid player on the team, also includes an opt-out clause after the third year, agent Mark Bartelstein said.

The 6-foot-9 Grant was the eighth overall pick in the 1994 NBA draft. His best season was 1995-96 as he averaged 14.4 points and 7.0 rebounds while the Kings made the playoffs for the first time since the franchise moved from Kansas City to Sacramento in 1985-86.

Grant said he had received a more lucrative offer from another team, but chose Portland because owner Paul Allen and president Bob Whitsitt showed a strong commitment to winning.

Grant also likes the potential of the Blazers' younger players.

"When you have people like Rasheed Wallace, Kenny Anderson, Arvydas Sabonis, J.R. Rider and young people like Jermaine O'Neal you can grow along with for the next seven or 10 years, you really can't pass up an opportunity like that," Grant said.

Dudley averaged 3.9 points and 7.3 rebounds last season and then decided to opt out of the final three years of his contract. There had been speculation in recent days that the Trail Blazers would re-sign Dudley, then trade him to an Eastern Conference team.

In renouncing Clifford Robinson, the Blazers lost their last link to the

teams that made the NBA Finals in 1990 and 1992.

Robinson, who had spent his entire eight-year NBA career in Portland, averaged 15.1 points and 4.0 rebounds last season - his lowest numbers in five years. Robinson was seeking \$5 million to \$6 million a year, but poor performances during the playoffs the past few years dropped his stock.

Portland has been knocked out of the playoffs in the first round each of the past five years. Grant said the Blazers should be contenders in the Western Conference despite their lack of experience.

"I don't even want to say how good they could be," Grant said. "They're a hungry team and I'm definitely proud to be a part of that."

Grant, 25, joins a team that now has only two players over the age of 30 - Sabonis and Dudley, both 32.

New Blazers coach Mike Dunleavy, who had previously met Grant only once - at the NBA rookie All-Star Game in 1995 when Dunleavy coached the Bucks - said he and Whitsitt felt Grant was the best free agent available.

"He really makes things happen on the basketball court," Dunleavy said.

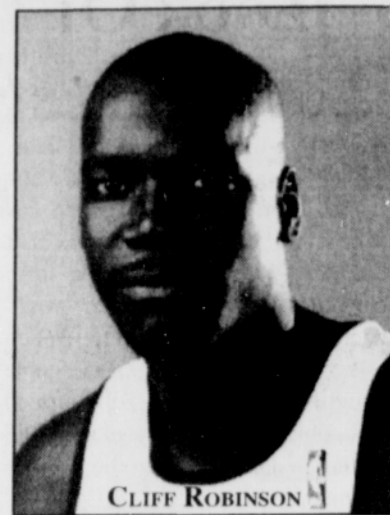
"He'll be an integral part of the Blazers' foundation of young and athletic players for many years to come."

Grant could start at small forward for the Blazers, or at power forward beside Wallace, who emerged as a star in his second pro season last year.

"That kid's gonna be an All-Star. I definitely want to play alongside him wherever I can," Grant said.

Grant averaged 10.5 points, 5.9 rebounds, 1.2 assists and just over one blocked shot per game last season. During his three years in Sacramento, he averaged 13.4 points and 7.1 rebounds.

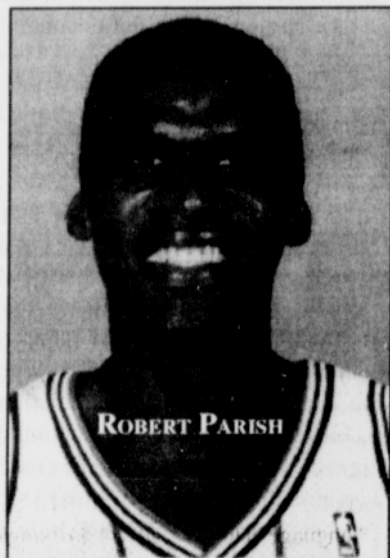
He averaged 14.7 points and 9.2 boards in four years at Xavier. He's sixth on the Musketeers' career scoring list (1,179) and third in rebounding (1,080).



CLIFF ROBINSON

Cliff Robinson, who spent eight years with the Portland Trail Blazers before being renounced Saturday, did not waste any time finding a new team, signing a one-year, \$1 million deal Monday with the Phoenix Suns.

The 30-year-old Robinson averaged 15.1 points per game for the Trail Blazers after leading the club in scoring in each of the two previous seasons. He was renounced with three others when the Blazers signed free-agent forward Brian Grant.



ROBERT PARISH

NBA's chief calls it quits at 44

Chicago Bulls center Robert Parish, who won three championships with the Boston Celtics and appeared in more NBA games than any other player, has decided to retire after winning another title with the Chicago Bulls last season.

Kids N' Tennis Place Second at Nationals!

Kids N' Tennis of Portland, Oregon took second place in the Team Tennis Competition at this year's AAU National Junior Olympics. This week long event ran from Aug. 4th - 9th and was held at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte. The KN'T players were representing the USTA's Pacific Northwest Section and competed in the 18 & Under Non-Ranked Division.

Thirteen teams were divided into two pools with KN'T going undefeated in their pool and finishing with a 5-0 record.

KN'T beat teams from New Jersey, Florida, Indiana, North Carolina, and Texas, to qualify for the Gold Medal Match against defending champion Hawaii Pacific.

Hawaii winner of FLIGHT #1 with a 5-1 record only lost was to PAYDTA of New Jersey.

Hawaii used its experience to beat KN'T 4-1, with "Kids" losing two tie-breakers in the Girls Doubles and Mixed Doubles. Jana Jusupovic was one of three players to finish the competition undefeated.

Jana was described by KN'T Coach Johnson, as "the team's stabilizer, we got to the point where we knew that she would win all of her matches." This was the second



CONGRATULATIONS SILVER MEDALIST

Pictured from left to right: Coach Ed Song, Asst. Coach John Paik, Antony Derkach, Joe Dang, Jana Jusupovic, Keara Duke-Johnson, Lisa Bessman, Bill Phanthonghpay, Coach Don Johnson; kneeling and holding USTA Junior Team Tennis Banner, Marus Phanthonghpay and Koren Paik.

time that KN'T has represented the Pacific Northwest Section at this National Event. In 1995 the team traveled to Des Moines, Iowa and Drake University to compete in the 14 & Under Competition.

Kids N' Tennis finished in fourth place and vowed to do better if they got another opportunity.

The only returning player from that team was Keara Duke-Johnson. She clearly remembered watching the Medalist receive their awards from the Tournament Director. "Our mission was incomplete, we knew that we could compete with these teams.

If not for a few mistakes, we could

have a medal. Maybe next time." Coach John Paik was also a team member at Iowa. "To get so close as a player and not to win a medal was a unpleasant experience. Although I was too old to compete this time, I'm glad that I choose to help coach this team, this is awesome."

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