

# SPORTS BRIEFS

## Real Sports with Bryant Gumbel

Nominated for six 1998 Sports Emmy Awards — more than any other scheduled series — presents more provocative stories when it returns with a new edition TUESDAY, APRIL 20 (10:00-11:00 P.M. ET/PT), exclusively on HBO.

Other play dates: April 22 (7:30 p.m.), 24 (1:30 p.m.), 26 (6:00 a.m.), 27 (10:00 a.m., 5:00 p.m.) and 30 (12:30 p.m.), and May 2 (10:00 a.m.). All times ET/PT.

### Segments include:

**Counterfeit Clubs.** The U.S. Customs Department estimates that up to \$4 billion worth of golf equipment in this country is either counterfeit or "knockoff," meaning that companies are selling equipment under a false name, or copying company's design. While seriously affecting the bottom line of legitimate manufacturers, this unregulated equipment also raises quality issues. REAL SPORTS' investigative team heads to Taiwan to examine the factories pumping out fake equipment, test the performance of these products, and trace their route to the American consumer.

Producer: Sydney Trattner.

## Lakers waive Dennis Rodman

The Los Angeles Lakers finally had enough of Dennis Rodman and his bizarre behavior, waiving him Thursday night.

Rodman showed up late again for the team's morning practice at Los Angeles Southwest College, and was slow getting ready because he couldn't find his socks and shoes.

That apparently turned out to be the last straw.

Lakers coach Kurt Rambis told Rodman to go home, and said the team was through with its special treatment of the eccentric forward, who led the NBA in rebounding in each of the last seven seasons.

"At this time we feel it's in the best interests of the Lakers to end the relationship," Lakers vice president Jerry West said in a statement issued Thursday night. "This obviously didn't work out like we had hoped, but we would like to thank Dennis for the contributions he did make to the team and wish him the best of luck in the future."

Rodman said he is a scapegoat for the team's performance.

"They have to have a fall guy and I'm basically the fall guy," he told Fox Sports late Thursday night.

"I wanted to play and ... the Lakers are cowards not to take the fall for some of the things that have happened this year. I hope I'm still loved by people here in the state of California," he said.

## Nielsen Knocks Out Witherspoon

Unbeaten IBO heavyweight champion Brian Nielsen of Denmark knocked out former WBA and WBC world champion Tim Witherspoon in the fourth round of a non-title fight Friday night.

The 240-pound Nielsen landed a good series of blows in the fourth round, sending the 240-pound Witherspoon to his knees and the 41-year-old never got up.

Nielsen, 34, improved to 49-0 with 33 knockouts, equaling Rocky Marciano's 44-year-old record for consecutive victories at the start of a career. However, Nielsen has been widely criticized for choosing mediocre opponents and his run at the record has received little attention.

Witherspoon, 41, never seemed to get back into the fight after taking a clean right in the first round. His record dropped to 46-9 with 31 knockouts.

# SPORTS

## Gretzky Nominated to Hockey Hall of Fame

TORONTO, April 19 (Reuters) — One day after playing his final game, Wayne Gretzky has been nominated for election to the Hockey Hall of Fame.

The Hall of Fame's selection committee nominated Gretzky on Monday and said a vote will be held April 29 to determine if the customary three-year waiting period for selection will be waived.

"Wayne Gretzky's achievements, both on and off the ice, are unparalleled in the sport of hockey," committee chairman Jim Gregory said.

Gretzky needs to receive an affirmative vote from at least three-quarters of the 18 committee members for the matter to be presented to the Hall of Fame's board of directors for consideration.

Gretzky, owner of 61 NHL records and winner of four Stanley Cups, could become the 10th Hall of Fame member to bypass the waiting period, joining Mario Lemieux, Bobby Orr, Gordie Howe, Jean Beliveau, Terry Sawchuk, Leonard Kelly, Ted Lindsay, Maurice Richard and Aubrey Clapper.

Lemieux entered six months after he retired in 1997. This year's honorees — Peter Stastny, Michael Goulet and four others — will be inducted November 22.

Gretzky, who played his last three seasons with the New York Rangers, ended his 20-year career Sunday. The centre retired with an NHL-record 2,857 points — 894 goals and



Wayne Gretzky

1,963 assists with the Rangers, St. Louis Blues, Los Angeles Kings and Edmonton Oilers.

Gretzky also holds playoff highs with 122 goals, 260 assists and 382 points.

The Great One won nine Hart Trophies as the league's most valuable player, was an All-Star 18 times and led the league in scoring 10 times and in assists 14 times.

## Blazers Take on Denver to Hold Top Spot in the West

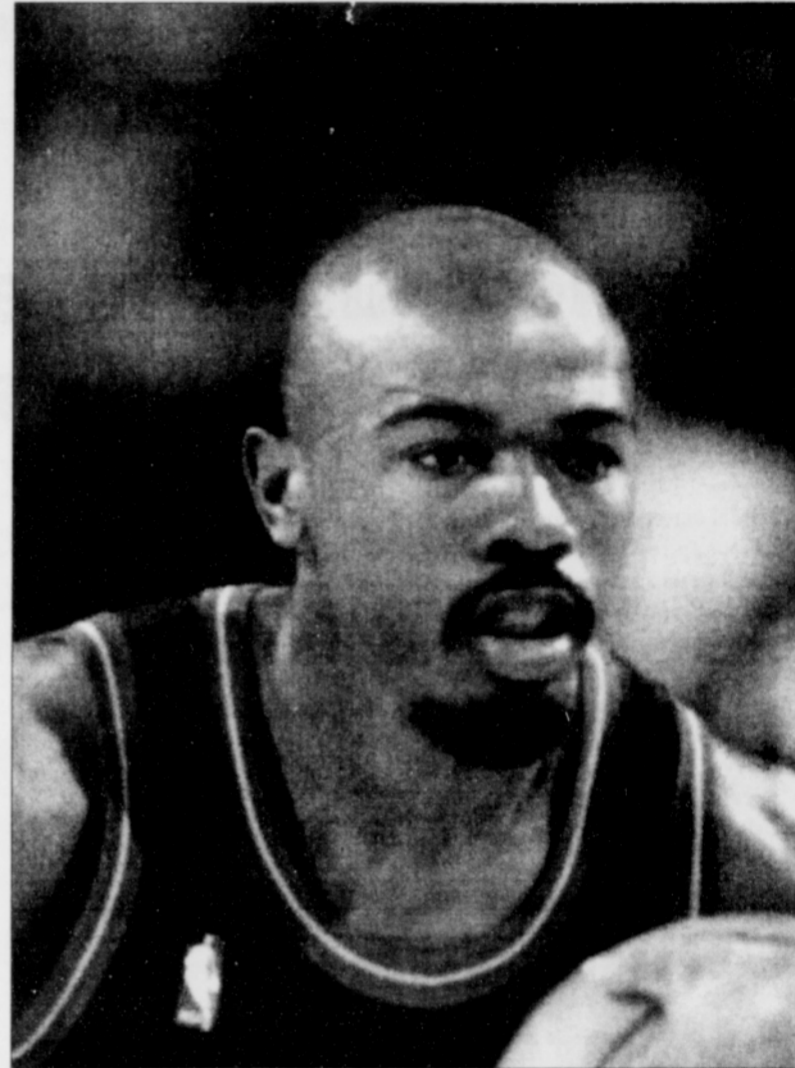
### Portland Trail Blazers (30-10) at Denver Nuggets (13-29).

With the regular season quickly coming to a close, the Portland Trail Blazers, looking to catch the Utah Jazz for the league's best record, will look to avoid a let-down when they take on the Denver Nuggets.

Portland sits two games behind the Jazz with 10 games remaining. The two teams will meet in what could prove to be a crucial matchup Friday. Their season series is currently tied at one.

Despite its dismal record, Denver plays tough at McNichols Arena, where it's over .500. Antonio McDyess has developed into one of the NBA's more dominant players, Nick Van Exel is playing some of the best basketball of his career and Danny Fortson has come into his own since replacing injured rookie Raef LaFrentz in the starting lineup.

The game will cap the Blazers' four-game road trip, on which they are 1-2 so far. They will return to the Rose Garden to host the Los Angeles Lakers on Wednesday in a Pacific Division showdown before traveling to Utah.



Greg Anthony is a major factor off the bench.

## 1999 NFL Draft Selections

© The Associated Press  
NEW YORK (AP) — Selections from the 1999 NFL draft with team, player, projected position and college (x-supplemental selection; y-compensatory selection):

### First Round

1. Cleveland, Tim Couch, qb, Kentucky.
2. Philadelphia, Donovan McNabb, qb, Syracuse.
3. Cincinnati, Akili Smith, qb, Oregon.
4. Indianapolis, Edgerrin James, rb, Miami.
5. New Orleans (from Carolina through Washington), Ricky Williams, rb, Texas.

6. St. Louis, Torry Holt, WR, North Carolina State.
7. Washington (from Chicago), Champ Bailey, db, Georgia.
8. Arizona (from San Diego), David Boston, wr, Ohio State.
9. Detroit, Chris Claiborne, lb, Southern California.
10. Baltimore, Chris McAlister, db, Arizona.
11. Minnesota (from Washington), Daunte Culpepper, qb, Central Florida.
12. Chicago (from New Orleans through Washington), Cade McNown, qb, UCLA.

13. Pittsburgh, Troy Edwards, wr, Louisiana Tech.
14. Kansas City, John Tait, ot, Brigham Young.
15. Tampa Bay, Anthony McFarland, dt, LSU.

16. Tennessee, Jevon Kearse, lb, Florida.
17. New England (from Seattle), Damien Woody, c, Boston College.
18. Oakland, Matt Stinchcomb, ot, Georgia.
19. New York Giants, Luke Petitgout, ot, Notre Dame.
20. Dallas (from New England through Seattle), Ebenezer Ekuban, de, North Carolina.

## Lett Faces Suspension Over Drugs

By JAIME ARON

© The Associated Press  
IRVING, Texas (AP) — For the fourth time in five years, the Dallas Cowboys must prepare to play without Pro Bowl defensive tackle Leon Lett — and this time, it could be for good.

Lett is facing a punishment of at least a year after failing an NFL drug test for the third time, a league source who requested anonymity told The Associated Press on Friday. The violation also could carry a lifetime ban.

Lett has been enrolled in the NFL's substance-abuse program since 1995. He was suspended four games that season, then was suspended for the last three games of 1996 and the first 13 of 1997.

This past year was his first complete one since 1994. Like that season, he made the Pro Bowl.

Lett, who seldom speaks to the media, has not commented. The team said it could not comment, citing league confidentiality rules.

Agent Jim Steiner, who refused to confirm or deny the reports, said the 30-year-old Lett has been

hit hard by the news stories. Lett, who underwent elbow surgery two weeks ago, would not be eligible to apply for reinstatement until 60 days before the one-year anniversary of his suspension.

The 6-foot-6, 300-pound Lett was a seventh-round draft pick from Emporia State in 1991.

He had 51 tackles, four sacks, 20 quarterback pressures and a team-high seven tackles for losses last season.

He's also known for two on-field gaffes.

In the 1993 Super Bowl, Lett set a record for returning a fumble 64 yards — but he needed 65 for a touchdown. Thinking he'd score easily, Lett was raising the ball in celebration when Buffalo's Don Beebe swatted it away at the goal line.

That November, on a snowy Thanksgiving Day game against the Miami Dolphins, Lett mistakenly tried picking up a missed field goal instead of letting it become a dead ball. He ended up knocking it to a Dolphin, setting up Miami's successful second chance kick for the victory.

Step up to the plate!

# Home Run DEALS

When you're looking for chicken *slammin' with flavor*, only Popeyes will do! Only Popeyes offers New Orleans Spicy™ or Louisiana Mild™ chicken. Take Popeyes out to the old ballgame or savor the *tastiest fried chicken* at your own home plate today!

SAVING THE WORLD FROM BLAND CHICKEN  
REDD & ZEKE  
ON A MISSION  
from POPEYES

FLAVOR SEEKERS! Hit Homers With These Coupons!

# 8 Piece Box

(Legs & Thighs)

One Large Side Order & Four Biscuits **\$9.99**

Good At: 3120 NE MLK Jr. Blvd. 5949 NE MLK Jr. Blvd.  
Coupon Expires 7-15-99