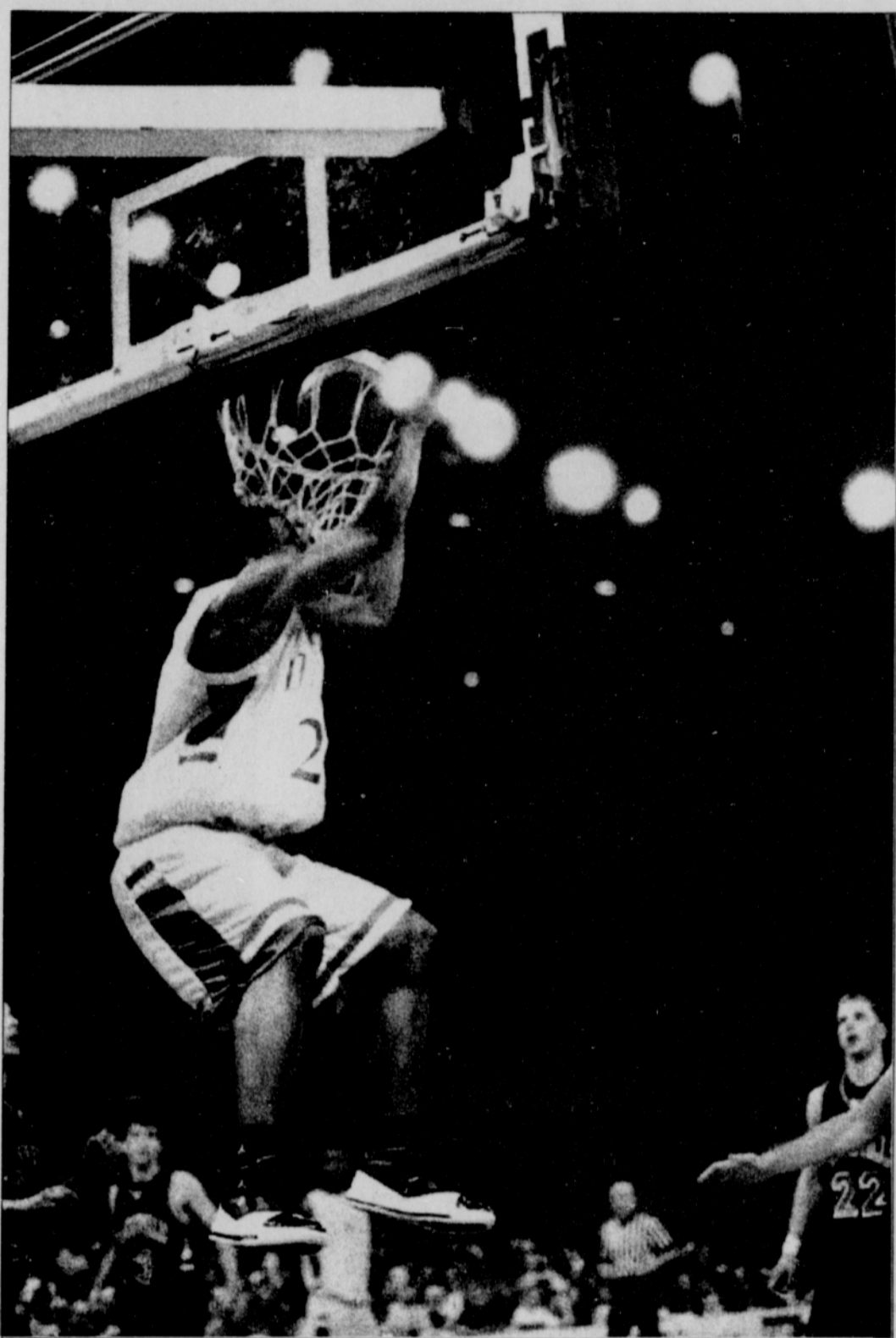


Portland **Metro/Sports** Observer

# Four-A Tournament is an Oregon Showcase



Jefferson High School's Michael Lee leaves no doubt about it with a slam dunk in the opening game of the state 4A Tournament (PHOTO BY DAVID GIEZYNG/PORTLAND OBSERVER)

BY BILLY MOORE  
FOR THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

The State Four-A Basketball Tournament got under way this past week and on display was the leading scorer in state 4-A history, Salim Stoudamire.

The Lake Oswego senior eclipsed the record set by college "Player of the Year" and our state's highest pro-draft choice to date, UCLA and All-American, Richard Washington.

Salim put on a performance in game one against Benson that was if not the finest high school basketball game I ever witnessed, it was a thing of beauty as he passed, drove and shot his way into our hearts. He scored 38 points in a 62-61 loss and displayed a floor game that warranted him being selected into the McDonald's All-American Team, oops they made a mistake and left him off the team. Well, duh, it really doesn't matter at this point anyway, he's set to attend University of Arizona on a full basketball scholarship and the way has been paved by his first cousin, Damon Stoudamire. (You remember him don't you?)

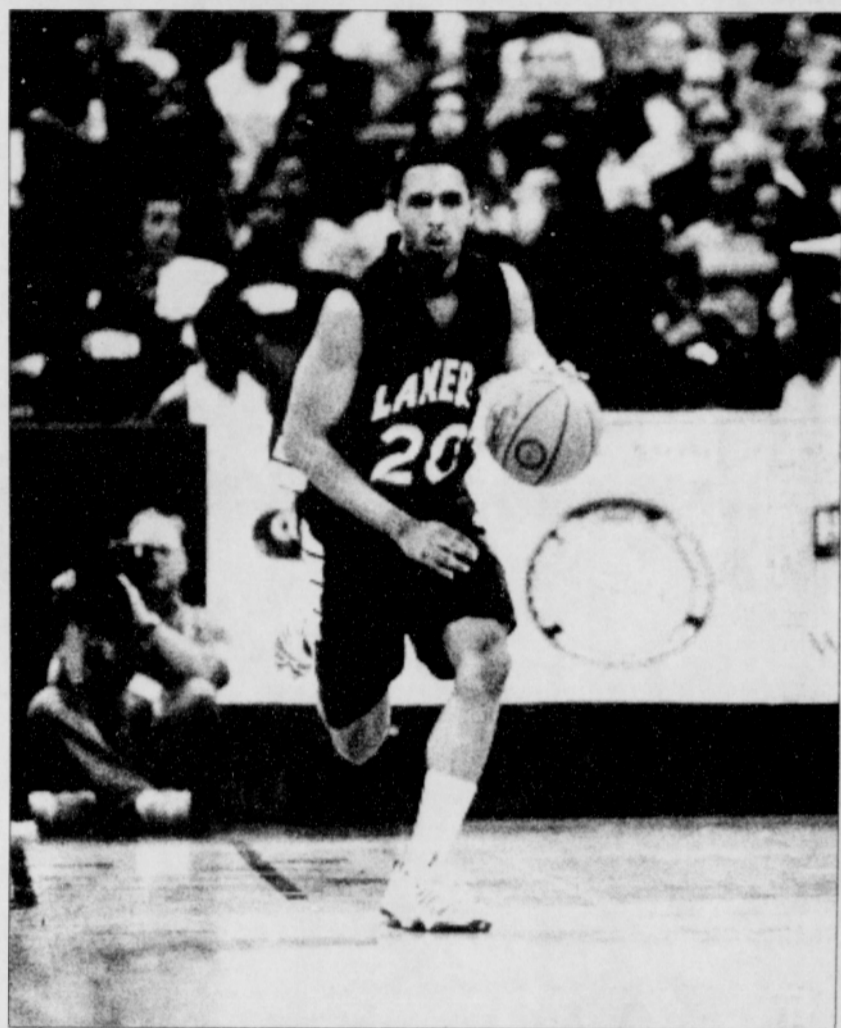
Jefferson, the defending champions, could not do the expected repeat as a Four-A championship in a much anticipated rubber match with Benson Tech.

The Demos fell 83-72 ending a 51 in-state winning streak and proving to everyone that it's awful hard to beat a good basketball team three times in a row, even with a McDonalds All-American. Benson led for most of the game and proved to everyone that you can eat at McDonald's but it doesn't mean they have the best burgers every night.

On this night, Darren Cooper, who grew up on the same block as Aaron Miles, outplayed the Kansas-bound guard. He played like an All-American outscoring Aaron Miles 26-21. Don't forget Benson was a very talented basketball team as well. Let's face it, the P.I.L. was not as strong as we hoped.

Benson was shot down and outplayed in all aspects of the state title game in their 78-46 loss to a very fine Churchill basketball team.

Can we blame the O.S.A.A. and its institutional racism in the bracketing for the loss of a coveted



Salim Stoudamire led his Lake Oswego team in the state tournament and finishes his high school career as Oregon's all-time leading scorer. (PHOTO BY DAVID GIEZYNG/PORTLAND OBSERVER)

back-to-back state title? I think not. In this case, Jefferson, who could not get past Benson, surely would've had its hands and feet and legs full with a Churchill team that has size and ability. Benson was no match and not even a McDonald All-American could have made a difference. Did somebody say McDonalds?

The Democrats bounced back to take home the 3<sup>rd</sup> place trophy, 84-60 against Grants Pass. Aaron Miles set a tournament record with 27 steals.

Coach Marshall Haskins said, "I think we had a remarkable run, our goal was to do something special at Jefferson which I felt we accomplished."

So the Aaron Miles/Michael Lee basketball era comes to an end at Jefferson, both players are Kansas bound. We wish them well and good luck.

## Dunleavy: The Blazers Are Moving in Right Direction

(AP)—The Portland Trail Blazers, mired in a season-long three-game losing streak, took a step in the right direction with a meeting and a practice praised by coach Mike Dunleavy as the best he could remember.

Portland (42-21) lost to Vancouver twice during a four-day span last week, with a defeat to the San Antonio Spurs sandwiched in between.

"It would really disappoint me if we are not out there energy-wise, playing aggressively and defending," Dunleavy said. Dunleavy said that during the meeting before Sunday's practice, he talked mostly about changing the team's mental state.

"If you want to be a champion, you have to forget about making excuses,"

Dunleavy said. "You have to be in position to say, 'You know what? Whatever it is that I have to do to right the ship, I've got to do it. I can't worry about everybody else.'"

After practice, Dunleavy huddled with team leader Scottie Pippen for about 10 minutes. "I was just talking about what a good practice it was, and he was agreeing," Dunleavy said. "We thought there was a lot of energy. It was a very positive step forward."

Despite the losing streak, which has further strained a team already troubled by players grumbling about playing time, Dunleavy said he still has the players' respect. "As far as how the players and I are getting along, and whether I have authority, is an abso-

lute yes," he said. "Whether I have respect for my players, that's an absolute yes. And as far as our guys quitting on the season, that's an absolute no." Damon Stoudamire said the losing streak has made the season feel too much like work, and that the team needs to start having fun again.

"Over the course of the last week, I haven't seen anybody smile on the court, I haven't seen any high-fives, I haven't seen any chest-bumping," he said. "It's become more like a job for us. This shouldn't be considered a job, and we have to approach it like that. We've got to start having fun. Because when we have fun, we are moving the ball around and everybody is enjoying it."

March 17, 2001

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