

**Metro/Sports**

# Lakers Championship Brings Talk of Dynasty

(AP) - Talk quickly turned to the possibility of a dynasty-in-the-making after the Lakers beat the Philadelphia 76ers 108-96 Friday night in Game 5 of the NBA Finals.

Los Angeles finished with a record of 15-1 in the playoffs, the best postseason winning percentage in league history.

With two perennial All-Stars in Shaquille O'Neal and Kobe Bryant and a coach, Phil Jackson, who has won eight titles in 10 years, the Lakers have a foundation that could lead to many more titles over the next several seasons.

"The first championship was just to get the monkey off my back," O'Neal said. "The ones I get from now on will be to try to stamp my name in history."

O'Neal, a nine-year veteran, three-time finalist and two-time champion, is cementing his spot as one of the most dominant big men in the history of the game, along with Wilt Chamberlain, Bill Russell, Kareem Abdul-Jabbar and George Mikan.

Jackson credited O'Neal with be-

coming more of a team leader this season, which was no small feat con-



The Lakers celebrate victory and a world championship trophy.

Bryant eventually went to former Lakers president Jerry West's house

for a spaghetti dinner that turned into a long, involved discussion about basketball, relationships and winning championships. Bryant left vowing to do his part to repair the discordant dynamic that had infected the team.

"Right now, it's a thing of the past," Bryant said. "Next year, when people see us talking aggressively it's not going to be a thing of the past. Someone's going to blow it out of proportion

considering how fractured the team was during most of the regular season.

The relationships between O'Neal and Bryant and Jackson and Bryant had deteriorated to the point where both players approached management and discussed the possibility of being traded.

until we win another championship, and it's going to happen again. It's a cycle. But hopefully we won't have to go through what we went through this year."

The Lakers' season took a sharp turn for the better after they lost to the New York Knicks April 1.

They finished the season with eight straight victories, then rolled through the Western Conference playoffs with sweeps of the Portland Trail Blazers, Sacramento Kings and San Antonio Spurs.

The Lakers lost Game 1 of the finals to the 76ers before winning the final four games — the final two decisively — to make history.

"Shaquille came out with a lot of energy after the All-Star break and said, 'Now it's time to start going,'" Jackson said. "He kept motivating the team, he kept conditioning and re-conditioning himself, taking a lot of time with free throw shots and all the things that are the weak points of his

game that he wanted to improve. He truly was a great leader."

O'Neal's free throw shooting improved over the latter half of the season, although he remains as likely to miss any given foul shot as he is to make it. Case in point: His final free throw of the postseason was an airball with 3:41 left in Game 5.

Any other player would have been mortified by such an egregious miss in such a big game, but O'Neal has learned how to take every moment in stride and enjoy himself. His reaction to the airball was a smile.

O'Neal provided a daily dose of comic relief as the finals unfolded,

calling himself "quotacious" and relishing his role as The Big Jokester.

His first words upon entering the post-game interview room Friday night were: "I'm drunk."

After giving his thanks to his teammates and his family and discussing the way the Lakers soap opera unfolded through the season, he explained why he appeared so stoic and emotionless when the final buzzer sounded and the title was secured.

"I think I'm happy," O'Neal said. "It may not seem like I'm happy on my face, but I'm also greedy."

"And I'm not done."

## Freshman Goes to Scholar-Athlete Games



PHOTO BY DAN BROOD/TIGARD TIMES  
Camille Guyton of Tigard High School practices her swing.

Camille Guyton of Tigard will participate in the World Scholar-Athlete Games beginning Friday in Rhode Island.

She earned a \$275 scholarship to pay half of the program fees based on her leadership qualities, scholastic

record and extracurricular accomplishments. Donations were sought to help cover the remaining costs.

Guyton, who just completed her freshman year at Tigard High School, is the daughter of Harvey Garnett and Lissa Guyton.

## Possible Jordan Return Sidelined

Michael Jordan's possible return to the NBA suffered a setback when he broke two ribs this week in a pickup game.

Jordan said he was injured last week while playing with some NBA players in a gym in Chicago and that he is expected to be sidelined from any physical activity for the next 6-to-8 weeks.

"It's been common knowledge that I have been working out for the past few months as I contemplate the possibility of a return to the NBA," Jordan said in a statement. "Since I won't be able to continue my workouts for the next month or two, I will have to postpone any decisions concerning my return."

Doug Collins, whom Jordan hired as coach of the Washington Wizards last month, told NBC and The Washington Post on Friday about the injury to Jordan, the team's part owner and president of basketball operations.

The 38-year-old Jordan was injured while trying to post up a defender and when he tried to make a quick turn, the defender grabbed him, causing the ribs to crack. Collins said Jordan is sore, but also feeling better. He said there is no

significant cartilage damage, which could have prolonged the prognosis and made the injury more painful.

According to Collins' projections, the earliest Jordan would be able to begin working out would be at the beginning of August, giving him 2 1/2 months to get in shape before training camp begins in mid-October.



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