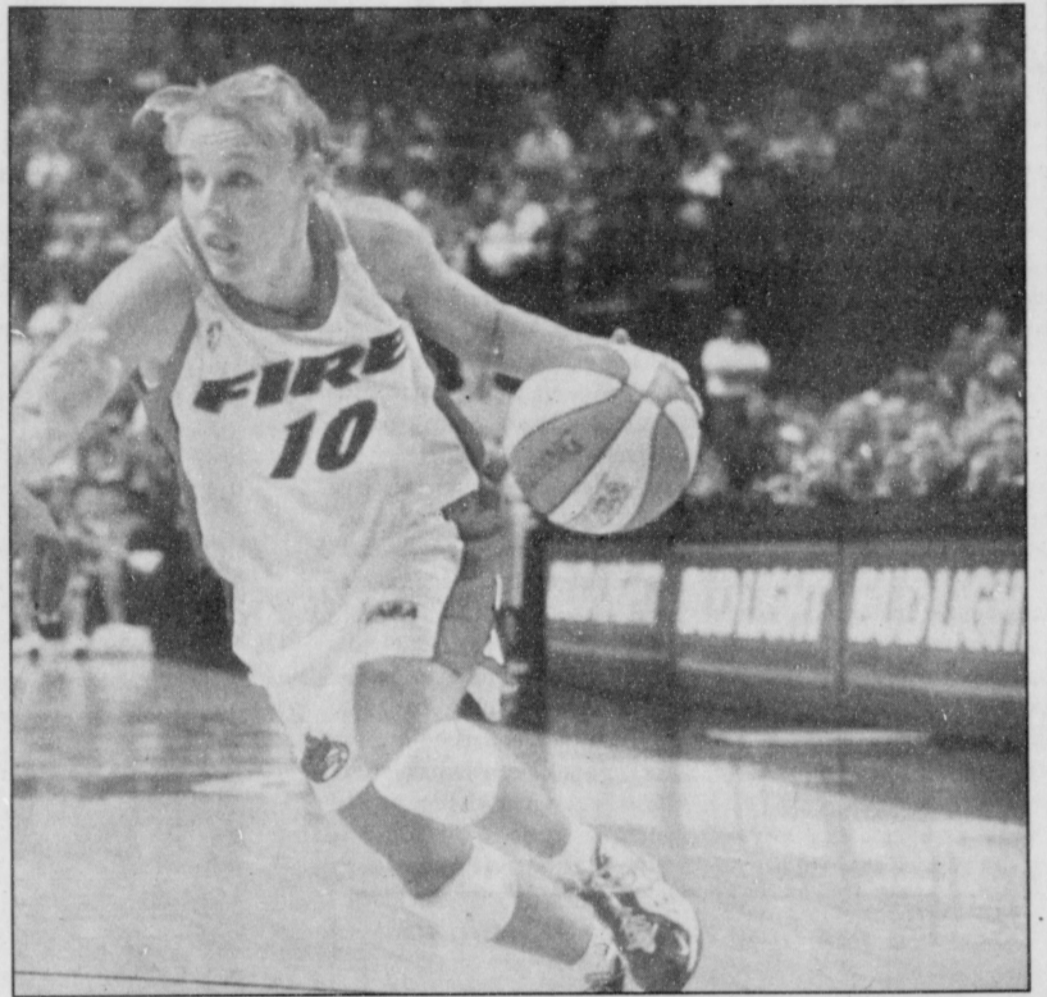


Portland Observer **Metro/Sports**

Portland Fire Fizzles



Coach Linda Hargrove (left) can't find a solution to the Fire's losing streak in a 64-58 loss Sunday to the Sacramento Monarchs in front of 8,582 fans at the Rose Garden. Guard Jackie Stiles (right) will finish her rookie season in the Fire's last game of the year against Los Angeles. Stiles made Fire history by her selection to the WNBA All-Star team.



PHOTOS BY DAVE GIEZYNG
THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

Sports Briefs

Bryant Causes a Stir in China

BEIJING—Kobe Bryant called his basketball-playing trip to the Great Wall of China one of the most memorable events of his life. But some Chinese felt otherwise: When traffic and surging crowds prevented the NBA star from showing up for an appearance in the city, they got mad. Some hurled bottles at organizers, pushed at barricades and criticized Adidas, the sponsor. Police dragged off one offender by his hair and quickly dispersed the crowd of about 1,500, though it wasn't immediately clear if anyone was detained. The event was abruptly canceled — apparently because the fanfare caused so much congestion that authorities wouldn't allow Bryant's car to enter.

McGwire Homers Again; Cards Sweep Mets

NEW YORK—Mark McGwire hit his 575th career home run, his 11th straight hit to clear the fence, and the St. Louis Cardinals beat the New York Mets 4-1 for a three-game sweep. McGwire's two-run homer highlighted a three-run first inning. His 21st home run was his second in two days. Big Mac's last hit that was not a homer was a first-inning single at Houston on July 18. His streak is the longest of its kind in at least 25 years — research beyond that does not exist. Darryl Kile (13-7) won his third straight start, holding the Mets to three hits over six innings.

Rose Gambling

Allegations Resurface

CINCINNATI — Twelve years after Pete Rose was banned from baseball, another accuser has come forward to say the hit king bet on the national pastime. In the September issue of *Vanity Fair* magazine, Tommy Gioiosa, a former confidant of Rose, said Rose bet on baseball games involving various teams, including the Cincinnati Reds. Among Gioiosa's other claims: That Rose used a corked bat during his pursuit of Ty Cobb's all-time hits record in 1985; that Rose had Gioiosa forge Rose's signature on memorabilia; and that Rose invested money in a cocaine deal because of its potential for financial return. Rose declined to be interviewed for the magazine's story.

Sports Illustrated Likes the Beavers Best

(AP) Sports Illustrated has rated Oregon State the top team in the nation in its annual College Football Preview issue.

The Beavers, not so long ago the doormat lining the bottom of the Pac-10, have been ranked high in other polls, but generally trail rival Oregon in the estimation of sports writers and analysts.

Sports Illustrated put both Ken Simonton, Oregon State's star tailback, and Joey Harrington, the senior Oregon quarterback, on the cover of the preview issue.

"Everybody has an opinion," Simonton said, when asked about the magazine's ranking at a news conference that kicked off the Heisman Trophy campaign OSU is mounting for him.

Oregon State, which beat Notre Dame 41-9 in the Fiesta Bowl last season, is ranked 12th in the USA Today/ESPN poll this year. Sports Illustrated has a questionable track record for



picking national champions.

For example, it picked Nebraska No. 1 last year and left Oklahoma at No. 23. But the Sooners whipped Nebraska, went 13-0 and defeated Florida State for the national title.

In 1999 and 1997, the magazine ranked Penn State No. 1, and in 1998 it chose Ohio State as the top team in the nation. Neither won the title those years.

Former NBA Star Hosts Free Basketball Clinic

Terrell Brandon, the local favorite of the NBA's Minnesota Timberwolves is providing inner-city youth with an opportunity to learn some of the basics of basketball and the importance of education and good sportsmanship.

The first 300 youth, boys and girls ages 7-18, will have an opportunity to participate. Parental/guardian signature required. The 10th annual free Basket-

ball Clinic will be held on Saturday, Sept. 1 at Irving Park, located at N.E. 7th and Fremont, from 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. Registration forms are available at Tee Bee's Place and Terrell Brandon's Barber Shop. For more information, call Brenda K. Calvin at 503/460-0349.

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