



Sports/METRO

Blazers Celebrate Read to Achieve Week

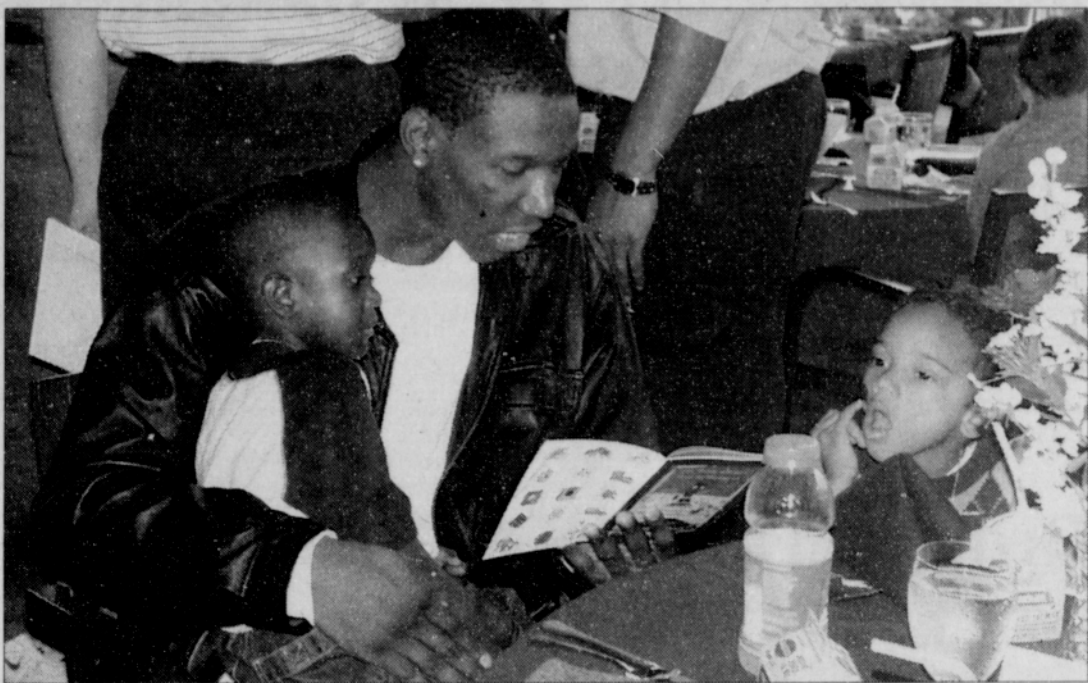


PHOTO BY DAVID GIEZYNG/THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

Johnny Paylor of the Trailblazers team takes a break to read a children's story to two Albina Head Start students.

Members of the Trailblazers participated in the NBA's Read to Achieve Week, a community outreach reading event that was held at the Rose Room in the Rose Garden on Monday.

Reaching an estimated 50 million children a year, Read to Achieve is the most extensive educational outreach initiative in the history of professional sports.

Throughout the week, the NBA's 29 teams will host local reading events, which are designed to help promote the importance of reading and education in local youth and their families.

SPORTS briefs

Sooners No. 1 in BCS Ratings

Defending national champion Oklahoma tops the first edition of the Bowl Championship Series standings. The 7-0 Sooners are followed by Nebraska and UCLA. Miami — No. 1 in the USA TODAY/ESPN poll — stands fourth in the BCS.

Earnhardt Jr. Scores Rousing Talladega Victory

TALLADEGA, Ala. — Dale Earnhardt Jr. headed off a late challenge from Tony Stewart and stayed in front of huge last-lap wreck to win the EA Sports 500 at Talladega Superspeedway. Earnhardt passed Bobby Labonte, Stewart's teammate, entering the first turn of the last lap to take command. Earnhardt, who claimed a \$1 million bonus, scored his third victory of the season. Stewart finished second and Jeff Burton third.

Kwan to Skate Alone

ARLINGTON, Va. — Michelle Kwan, the five-time national champion, four-time world champion figure skater, has split with her coach of 10 years, Frank Carroll over the direction of her career. The move means Kwan will work alone in the upcoming Winter Olympics.

Lions' Moore Out for Season

PONTIAC, Mich. — The Detroit Lions place Herman Moore, the most productive receiver in team history, on injured reserve with a hip injury, meaning that he will miss the rest of the 2001 season. Moore, who is in his 11th season, injured his hip in the second quarter of Detroit's 31-26 loss at Minnesota.

No. 1 Capriati Struggles to Win Over Qualifier

ZURICH, Switzerland — Jennifer Capriati made an unconvincing start to her reign as the No. 1 player, needing three sets to beat Russian wild card Nadia Petrova at the Swisscom Challenge. This was her first singles match since she overtook Martina Hingis for the top ranking. She showed little intensity against Petrova, winning 6-3, 3-6, 6-2 in the second round.

Big Unit, D'backs Finish Off Braves in NLCS

BY MIKE LOPRESI
GANETT NEWS SERVICE

ATLANTA — Four years old, and the Arizona Diamondbacks are going to the World Series. Behold the power of pitching. Two pitchers, especially. One of them Randy Johnson, whose long wait for a World Series trip ended not with all-conquering dominance but the mighty will of holding back an entire team, even when the magic had left his left arm. The 3-2 victory that resulted closed out the Atlanta Braves in the National League Championship Series 4-1. The Diamondbacks now await the start of the World Series at home Saturday.

The Diamondbacks, a creation of the 1990s, were pushed by many hands. Sunday, it was a home run

from the unlikely bat of Erubiel Durazo, a fifth-inning two-run shot that shook Turner Field and doomed Tom Glavine. And spectacular relief from Byung-Hyun Kim. Second baseman Craig Counsell, huge in early games, was named series MVP.

But in the end, the Braves were done in most of all by the Big Two. Arizona needed four games in this series. Johnson and Curt Schilling won three. In 25 innings, they gave up three runs, struck out 31.

Most of the time, they blew through the Braves. But Sunday, with so much at stake and the World Series so close, Johnson had to grind with everything he had. Especially in the seventh inning, when his location left him.



Keenan Howry (left) outpaces Simba Hodari of the Stanford Cardinals for his second touchdown catch of the day.



Brian Allen slips away (right) from Duck defender Wesley Mallard as the Cardinals find a way to "dodge the bullet" to defeat the Ducks 49-42 in Saturday's Oct. thriller.
PHOTOS BY DAVID GIEZYNG/THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

Ducks Shine, But Cardinals Slip Away

Oregon sparked Saturday, then fizzled as they allowed turnovers, a surprise outside kick and two blocked punts to dash their hopes of a victory and end a 23-game home winning streak.

Oregon, sporting a 14-point fourth quarter lead, allowed unthinkable and what proved to be unforgivable oversights and mistakes to keep them from putting any points on the board when they needed them most — the fourth quarter.

The Ducks watched the game, a home winning streak and possibly a national championship sneak out the back door in their 49-42 loss to Stanford (4-1, 3-1 in the Pac 10 Conference).

Even with Keenan Howry's school record in all-purpose yards 338, the Ducks couldn't find a way to put any 4th quarter points on the board.

As the Ducks look at their next contest with Pac 10 leader Washington State, one would only hope that the Ducks are clear that thou shall not think a lot of small things will not make a memorable big thing.

kmhd for the love of jazz

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