



# Sports/METRO

## SPORTS briefs

### Spurs Streak to Ninth Straight

SAN ANTONIO—Tim Duncan had 26 points and 12 rebounds as the San Antonio Spurs extended their winning streak to nine games with a 97-79 victory over Portland. The Spurs are off to a franchise-best start at 19-4 and matched the Los Angeles Lakers for the longest winning streak of the season. David Robinson had 11 points and a season-high 16 rebounds for the Spurs. Steve Smith added 14 points. Ruben Patterson led the Trail Blazers with 18 points.

### Buhner Says He's 'Done' with Baseball

SEATTLE—Jay Buhner, the Seattle Mariners' right fielder for 14 years, plans to retire at age 37 because of a series of injuries, the "Seattle Times" reported. Buhner, the 10th player in major league history to hit 40 or more home runs in three consecutive seasons, said: "I'm done. I need surgery just to retire, on my left shoulder, which froze up on me, and on my left knee." Buhner hit .255—rising to .310 in postseason play—with 310 home runs and 965 RBI for his career.

### Three NFL Stadiums Ban Bottles

Plastic bottles will be taken out of the hands of fans at Giants Stadium and the Georgia Dome for NFL games. In St. Louis, beer also will be poured for fans, although bottled water will still be sold. Stadium officials made the moves recently after watching rowdy fans in Cleveland and New Orleans disrupt games by tossing bottles onto the field to protest officials' calls. The Pittsburgh Steelers, Minnesota Vikings and Green Bay Packers said they are still reviewing their security policies and may announce something soon.

### Bonds to Stay with Giants

NEW YORK—Barry Bonds will stay with the San Francisco Giants, deciding to accept the team's offer of salary arbitration. Bonds, who became a free agent after hitting a record 73 home runs, could wind up with a one-year contract worth at least \$20 million. He would prefer to sign a multiyear deal, said his agent, Scott Boras. "Barry will continue to work toward that," Boras said. Bonds, 37, faced a deadline to accept the Giants' offer of salary.

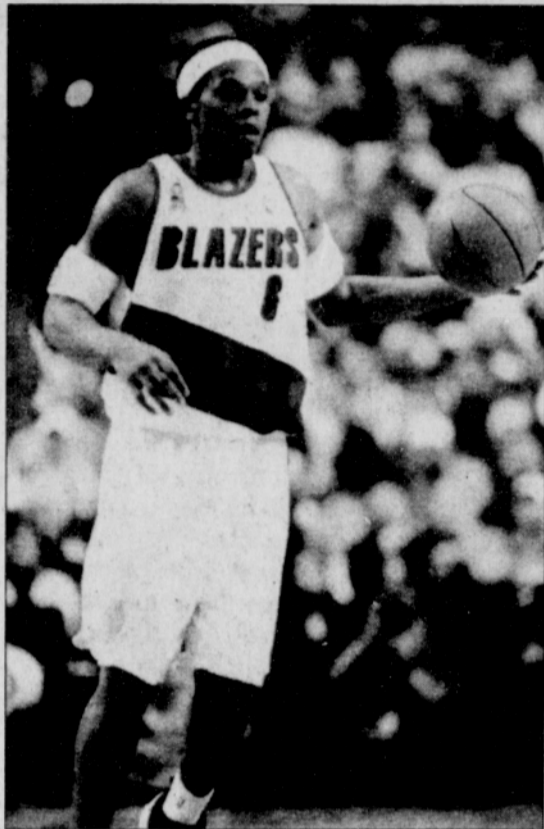
### Marshall Tops East Carolina in a Thriller

MOBILE, Ala.—In the highest-scoring bowl game in history, Marshall rallied past East Carolina 64-61 in double overtime to win the GMAC Bowl behind Byron Leftwich's 576 yards passing. Leftwich capped his performance with an 8-yard touchdown toss to Josh Davis to end it. The Thundering Herd (11-2) stormed back from a 38-8 halftime deficit, tying it at 51 in the final seconds of the fourth quarter.

### Grant Hill to Have Season-Ending Surgery

ORLANDO—Five-time All-Star Grant Hill will miss the rest of the season after undergoing a third operation on his left ankle. The Orlando Magic forward played in 14 games this season after missing all but four games last year. He signed a seven-year, \$93 million contract with Orlando in August 2000. "I'm disappointed for the fans and my teammates," Hill said in a statement. "Hopefully, this will lead me down the road to recovery."

# Bonzi Wells Opens Mouth, Inserts Foot



Premiere Forward Bonzi Wells of the Portland Blazers has always had the support of his local fans; but told Sports Illustrated "The fans don't matter."

BY ABE ESTIMADA  
KGW.COM STAFF

A Sports Illustrated magazine article in this month's issue examined how the poor behavior of some team members has quickly alienated fans.

What may be particularly infuriating for fans is a quote from Blazers' guard Bonzi Wells, who told the article's author, L. Jon Wertheim, "We're not really going to worry about what the hell (the fans) think about us."

"They really don't matter to us," Wells said. "They can boo us every day, but they're still going to ask for our autographs

if they can see us on the street. That's why they're fans, and we're NBA players."

"Sports Illustrated" enlarged Wells' quote and placed it in the middle of the first page of the story, titled "Losing Their Grip."

The Blazers attempted damage control by releasing a statement of apology from Wells to the fans, the organization and the team.

Wells, who had been cited by police earlier this fall after refusing to leave the scene of a fight in downtown Portland, said he made the remarks after the Blazers lost a game in which he performed poorly.

The magazine makes reference to a Blazers television ad where Wallace and Wells sneak into a court to play a game of one-on-one after the janitor has left.

"The running joke in Portland, however, is that the way things are going, all the Blazers may soon be playing in an empty gym," the article said. "As the team is fast learning, selling your soul is one thing. Finding willing buyers is quite another."

The article asserts that "the Blazers have been a civic treasure for three decades, the NBA's answer to the Green Bay Packers."

## Statement of Apology to Blazer Fans

The Portland Trailblazers have released the following statement on behalf of Bonzi Wells in response to the recent "Sports Illustrated" article:

"I want to sincerely apologize to the fans of the NBA and especially to the fans of the Portland Trailblazers for my insensitive remarks. I should not have said them and

there is no excuse. I am a professional and should of kept my chin up and not let my emotions take over. We had just lost an important game and I was discouraged about my performance. I took out my frustrations on the very fans that have supported me throughout my career.

"The fans are the most im-

portant part of this game and without them, I wouldn't be where I am today. The fans of the Portland Trail Blazers continue to be the best in the NBA and the team has appreciated their support since 1970.

"I would also like to apologize to the Trail Blazers organization, the coaches and my teammates for my remarks."

## Woods, Doyle, Campbell Take Top Honors

PONTE VEDRA BEACH, Fla. (AP)—Tiger Woods, Allen Doyle and Chad Campbell have won golf's Players of the Year honors for the PGA Tour, Senior Tour and Buy.com Tour.

For Woods, the selection as Player of the Year is his third in a row and fourth in five full seasons on the Tour. He beat out David Duval, Phil Mickelson and David Tom.

Woods, who turns 26 on Dec. 30, won five tournaments in 2001

and led the Tour for the third consecutive season with \$5,687,777. His Masters victory made him the first player to hold all four professional major championships at once.

Doyle, 53, won twice and posted 25 top-10 finishes in 34 starts. He led the Senior Tour in earnings with \$2,553,582.

Campbell, a rookie on the Buy.com Tour, won three times and earned an automatic promotion to the PGA Tour.



Tiger Woods comes out on top again as golf's Player of the Year with five tournament wins this year.

## Martial Arts Invitational at Chinook Winds Casino

The 2002 West Coast Martial Arts Kick Off, "The 2002 Battle of the Belt," will take place at Chinook Winds Casino & Convention Center in Lincoln City on Feb. 2. Sponsored by The White Wolf Martial Arts Academy, the competition is open to all ages.

Registration will begin at 7:30 a.m. on Saturday, Feb. 2, and the tournament will run from 9:30 a.m.—4:30 p.m. The Showcase Event will begin at 6:30 p.m. and conclude at 9 p.m.

Daytime Tickets are available thru Frankie Rosenweig. Night-time Showcase Tickets are available thru all Fastixx outlets.

For additional information, call 503-560-0316 or go online to [BattleOfTheBelt.com](http://BattleOfTheBelt.com).

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## The Bridge Builders Fifth Annual Kwanzaa Gala And Gentlemen's Ball *Sign of the Times*

**Saturday, December 29, 2001**

**Arlene Schnitzer Concert Hall**  
Downtown Portland, Southwest Broadway and Main, 7:30 PM

Tickets for the ceremony are available only through TicketMaster  
At 503.224.4400, or the Portland Center for the Performing Arts

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**Post Celebration Gala\***  
The Governor Hotel, 611 Southwest Tenth Avenue, 10:00 PM to 2:00 AM

For tickets and more information call 503.306.2960, extension 3.  
\*Open to high school graduates, 18 years & older.