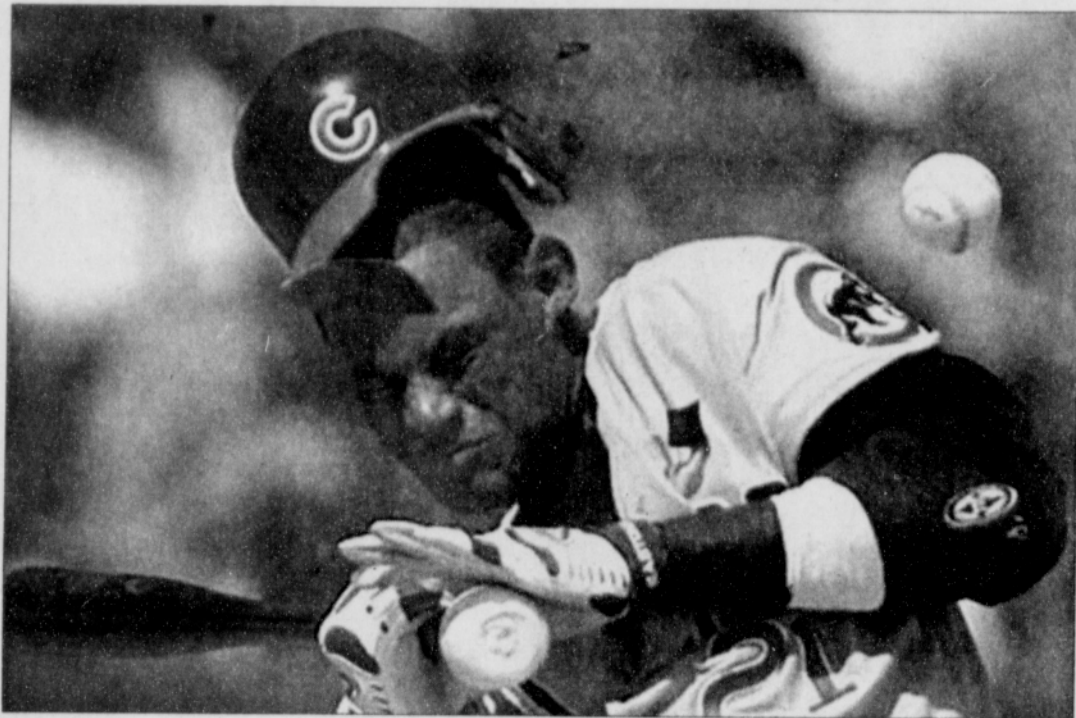


SPORTS

Fast Ball Impact!



Sammy Sosa of the Chicago Cubs recoils Sunday as a fastball from Saloman Torres of the Pittsburgh Pirates shatters his helmet. Sosa left the game, apparently okay. (AP photo)

Blazers Must Unlock Scoring Deficit

Davis says Dallas' defense shouldn't be a problem

(AP) — Statistics indicate the Dallas Mavericks have drastically improved on defense. Portland center Dale Davis thinks otherwise.

"Some of the things they do are a little different, but they're pretty much the same Dallas team," Davis said. "It shouldn't be a problem."

But the Mavericks' defense was a problem for the Trail Blazers in Game 1 of their first-round series. After scoring 31 points in the second quarter, Portland had just 34 in the second half, turning a 10-point lead into a 10-point loss as the Mavericks won 96-86 Saturday with game two of the best-of-seven series scheduled Wednesday night, also in Dallas.

To Davis, that only proves that the Blazers have some kinks in their offense to work out. Game 2 in the



Blazer Dale Davis

best-of-seven series is Wednesday night.

"We just have to move the ball and keep cutting on them," he said. "When we do that, we're usually

pretty good. When we stand around, we're not that good of a team. We have to move the ball and play together."

The Blazers know that breaking down Dallas' defense is the key to victory. They scored 73 and 88 in two regular-season losses to the Mavs and had 100 and 112 in two victories.

Game 1 followed that same pattern.

"I think they kind of buckled down a little more," Portland coach Maurice Cheeks said. "They made a concerted effort to try to defend and rebound the ball. When they stepped up their level, we didn't step up ours."

Nelson expects the Blazers to bounce back - hard.

"That's been their motto all along," he said. "That's fine by us. That's playoff basketball."

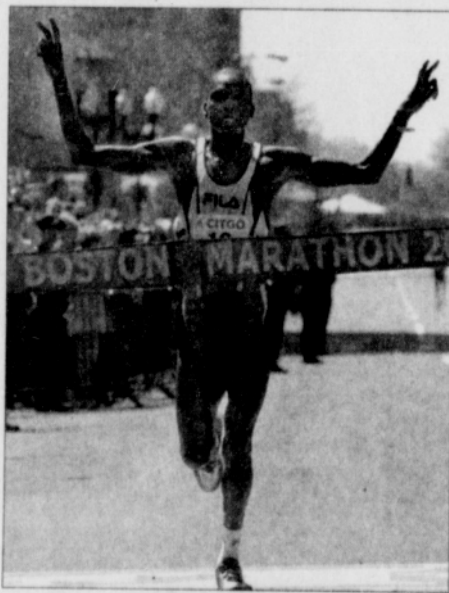
Kenya Rules Again in Boston Marathon

Robert Cheruiyot won the Boston Marathon by 23 seconds Monday to give Kenya its 12th victory in 13 years. Russia's Svetlana Zakharova won the women's race to prevent a second consecutive Kenyan sweep.

Cheruiyot (pronounced cheh-REE-yot) finished in 2 hours, 10 minutes, 11 seconds to earn \$80,000, an olive wreath and a bowl of beef stew. It was just his second career marathon, having won his debut in Milan in December.

In Milan, he finished with the same time as two others but was declared the winner by an edge. This time, he wasn't challenged over the final five miles to win by more than two city blocks.

"I was ready to face anything," said Cheruiyot, who felt he had a chance to win at about 15 1/2



Robert Cheruiyot of Kenya raises his arms as he crosses the finish line at the 107th running of the Boston Marathon in Boston Monday. (AP Photo)

miles. "I said, 'OK, I'll win this.'"

Cheruiyot is the eighth Kenyan to win Boston since his country began its domination in

1991. Kenyans swept the first five spots in the race, and eight of the top nine. Benjamin Kimutai was second, Martin Lel third.

All Star Football Clash Scheduled

An all star high school football game will take place in Vancouver this summer thanks to local sponsors.

The inaugural Southwest Washington All Star Football game will be held July 12 at 7:30 p.m. at Kiggins Bowl. The contest is being made possible with support from the Gateway Shrine Club, Vancouver School District, the Greater St. Helens and Trico League, local merchants and Masonic Lodges in the greater Vancouver area.

The player selection process has

already begun among the 2A, 3A and 4A schools. The West Team will be represented by players from Columbia River, Skyview, LaCenter, Battle Ground, Hudson's Bay, Fort Vancouver Ridgefield, and Woodland. The East Team will be represented by players from: Mountain View, Evergreen, Camas, Prairie, Washougal, Heritage, Stevenson and White Salmon.

The team rosters will be announced on May 15 and tickets will go on sale June 1.

For more information, call 360-574-6388.

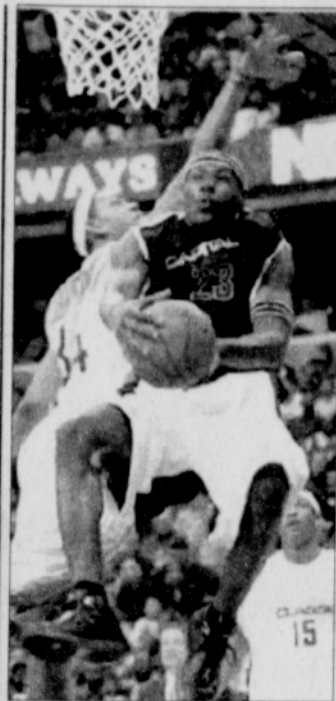
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High School Star Dazzles

High school all-star LeBron James makes his move to the basket during the Jordan Capital Classic in Washington, D.C. Thursday. James, selected the game's most valuable player, is expected to forego college and enter this June's NBA draft where he's projected to be the top pick. (AP photo)

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The 2003 Nissan Xterra



Price Tested: \$27014.00
Transmission: Automatic Engine: 3.3 liter SOHC 12-valve V6

The Nissan Xterra sports a rugged exterior with a thick tubular aluminum roof rack and step rails to match. The appearance of the vehicle is muscular with the sense of functionality including the first aid kit in the rear door. The interior offers plenty of room for front and back passengers. The front seats provide good lumbar support with a comfortable fit. The center console has a modified cockpit style, however the shifter is on the high side. My first impression of the vehicle was that it was ready for the off-road adventure. It offers the consumer functionality for those active in outdoors recreation but for the everyday driving it does not have the car-like handling. With the concern on safety in SUV's it surprises me that Nissan built the Xterra with high ground clearance. When turning corners I almost feel like it would tip over if the wind blew to hard. However it does have a quiet ride on the freeway. Surprisingly the Xterra exceeded the original expectations and hopes of Nissan. It has been a huge success since it's introduction in 2000.



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