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PHOTO BY MARK WASHINGTON/THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

Bound for Nationals in Florida

The Portland Disciples celebrate qualifying for the national AAU (Amateur Athletic Union) basketball tournament. The 8th grade team from Portland and Vancouver won the Oregon AAU championship April 25 in Eugene and will travel to Virginia Beach, Fla. for the national tournament.



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The Kid Grows Up

Kevin Garnett voted league MVP



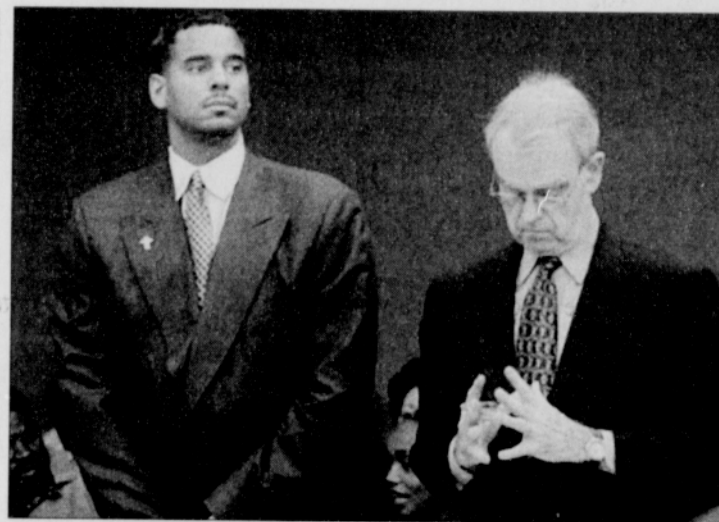
Minnesota Timberwolves forward Kevin Garnett with the NBA Most Valuable Player award Monday. Garnett easily beat two-time winner Tim Duncan and Jermaine O'Neal in the MVP voting by sports writers and broadcasters. (AP photo)

(AP) — The Kid is all grown up, and he has an NBA MVP award to prove it. Kevin Garnett got 120 of 123 first-place votes to beat two-time winner Tim Duncan

for the honor Monday. Garnett's teammates attended a packed news conference at the Timberwolves' arena, and he praised them repeatedly. "I wouldn't be nothing without those knuckleheads, believe me," Garnett said. "It's a team game, and I've always kept that perspective."

He has played at an MVP level for years, but this was a breakthrough season for the Wolves. They earned the top seeding in the Western Conference playoffs with a franchise-best 58-24 record, then ended a string of seven straight first-round exits from the postseason by beating the Denver Nuggets.

"This is best situation I could ever think of, or dream of," Garnett said. Playing everywhere from center to point guard, the 7-footer averaged 24.2 points, a league-leading 13.9 rebounds and 5.0 assists this season - and his playoff stats are even better.



Jayson Williams (left) and his attorney stand as the jury enters the courtroom Friday for his acquittal on manslaughter charges in the accidental shooting death of his limousine driver. He was convicted of tampering with evidence and trying to cover up the crime. (AP Photo).

Former NBA Star Acquitted

(AP) — TV sports announcer and former NBA star Jayson Williams was acquitted Friday of the most serious charge against him, aggravated manslaughter. The jury said it could not agree on the charge of reckless manslaughter.

Williams, 36, was convicted on four of the six lesser charges, related to tampering with evidence and attempting to cover up the

shooting death of limousine driver Costas "Gus" Christofi, 55. Collectively, the charges carry a maximum penalty of 13 years in prison.

The defense argued that the shooting was accidental, saying a malfunction in the gun's firing mechanism caused the weapon to go off. Prosecutors contended Williams was handling the shotgun so recklessly that it amounted to a crime.

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