

# SPORTS

## Congratulations Southridge Girls

Southridge High School of Beaverton is 4A State Girls Basketball Champions. The Skyhawks went undefeated on the season and beat Central Catholic, 56-45, in the championship game Saturday at the Chiles Center.

# Benson, Jefferson Advance to Elite Eight

Benson and Jefferson High Schools have both advanced to the Elite 8, the final eight teams in the Oregon Class 4A State Boys Basketball Tournament.

Jefferson beat Beaverton Saturday, 57-45, in a home playoff game to make it into the main tournament beginning Thursday in Eugene.

The victory was a sweet return to state title hopes for the second-ranked Democrats (23-3) who lost the chance to make the final eight a year ago when they were defeated by Sunset.

Jefferson faces McNary Thursday at 8:15 p.m. at Mac Court in Eugene.

In the other sub tournament games involving teams from the Portland Interscholastic League, Benson scored a 62-50 victory Saturday against Hermiston.

The Techman (20-6), playing on the road, snapped Hermiston's 18-game winning streak in advancing to the semi-finals.

Next up for Benson is Westview Thursday at 1:30 p.m., also at Mac Court.

The only other PIL contender, Lincoln lost its tournament hopes Saturday when Lake Oswego scored a 92-71 win.

After Thursday's schedule, the tournament moves into the quarterfinals on Friday and finals Saturday at Mac Court.

## 4A Tournament Cool

PHOTO BY MARK WASHINGTON/THE PORTLAND OBSERVER



The cheerleading squads of both Benson and Oregon City join forces to bring fun and excitement to the 4A State Boys Basketball Tournament at Benson High School. The Techmen beat the Pioneers last Wednesday at home and scored a victory against Hermiston Saturday on the road to make the final tournament pairings beginning Thursday at Mac Court in Eugene.

# 'Mo' Cheeks Era Comes to End



Maurice Cheeks

With losses on the court mounting, the Portland Trail Blazers relieved Maurice Cheeks of his coaching duties last week and named Director of Player Personnel Kevin Pritchard interim head coach.

"We made this change in order to evaluate the entire roster and to put the franchise in the best position as we head towards the draft and free agency," Trail Blazers General Manager John Nash said. "We appreciate all of Maurice's efforts during a difficult time and wish him well in the future."

The 37-year-old Pritchard is in his first season with the Trail Blazers. He spent a year and a half as a scout with the San Antonio Spurs.

Prior to that, he was with the Kansas City Knights of the American Basketball Association where he served as the team's general manager, head coach and director of player personnel. In 2001-02, he led the Knights to the ABA Championship.

Cheeks was named the Trail Blazers 10th head coach on June 27, 2001, after serving seven seasons as an assistant coach at Philadelphia. In his three-plus seasons with the Trail Blazers, Cheeks led the club to the NBA playoffs twice. His 2002-03 team finished tied for second place in the Pacific Division with a 50-32 record.



Kevin Pritchard

All the current assistant coaches will remain on the bench with Pritchard with a search for a head coach beginning immediately, the Blazers said.

# Congress Honors Jackie Robinson

Congressional medal awarded to majors' first black player

(AP) — Jackie Robinson was posthumously awarded a Congressional Gold Medal on March 2, more than half a century after breaking baseball's color barrier.

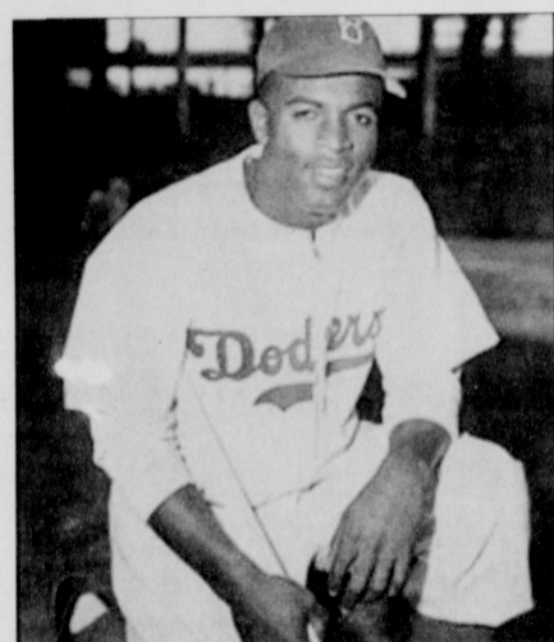
President Bush gave Congress' highest honor to Robinson's widow, Rachel Robinson, in a stately ceremony in the Capitol Rotunda. The Democratic and Republican leaders of the House and Senate and the commissioner of major league baseball looked on.

"His story is one that shows what one person can do to hold America to account to its founding promise of freedom and equality," Bush said. "It's a lesson for people coming up to see. One person can make a big difference in setting the tone of this country."

When Robinson joined the Brooklyn Dodgers in 1947, professional baseball was segregated. He died in 1972 and his No. 42 was retired throughout baseball in 1997.

"This medal confirms what we know," Rachel Robinson said. "Jackie Robinson stands as a heroic role model for all Americans who believe in justice and equality."

Speakers extolled Robinson as a courageous athlete who suffered taunts and slurs from fans and fellow players, ignoring them as he



Baseball was segregated when Jackie Robinson broke the color barrier by joining the Brooklyn Dodgers in 1947.

proved both a brilliant ballplayer and a civil rights hero. The latter role wasn't one he sought but it became inevitable after Dodgers owner Branch Rickey bucked much of popular opinion and signed him.

"He knew he was a symbol and a barrier-breaker, and that staying the course would have consequences for millions of people to come," said Rep. Mel Watt, D-N.C., chairman of the Congressional Black Caucus.

Robinson was rookie of the year in 1947, and was voted the league's Most Valuable Player in 1949 when he batted .342 and drove in 124 runs. He played 10 seasons with the Brooklyn Dodgers, often at second base.

He was elected to baseball's Hall of Fame in 1962.

Born in Cairo, Ga., Robinson was raised in Pasadena, Calif. and was a

four-sport letterman at UCLA.

The legislation to give him the medal was sponsored by Sen. John Kerry, D-Mass., and Rep. Richard Neal, D-Mass. It was awarded on the same day Bush honored the Boston Red Sox at the White House for winning the World Series last year.

The Red Sox, the last major league team to integrate, gave Robinson a tryout before he signed with the Dodgers, but chose not to sign him.

The Congressional Gold Medal is the highest honor the legislative branch can bestow on a civilian and must be co-sponsored by two-thirds of members in the House and the Senate.

## Basketball Fans to Apologize

Lake Oswego Principal has apologized for his school and has ordered his students to apologize for chants deemed racist at Saturday's playoff game against Lincoln High School. When Lincoln Senior Omar Leary went to the free throw line, a group of Lake Oswego students seemed to put down the academic quality of Portland students by chanting "You can't read" and "Sixth-year senior." Lincoln students shouted back, "You are racist. And 'That's racist.'" Leary is a fourth year senior and one of five black starters on Lincoln's team.

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