

SPORTS

Joyce Washington All Stars Pile Up Points

Event brings community together

BY PATRICK GRUHLER
THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

Jefferson High School senior Johnathan Scott won Most Valuable Player honors at the second annual Joyce Washington All-Star Classic Saturday leading all scorers with 28 points and bringing down at least 10 rebounds as the visiting team beat the home team 94-91 in front of a packed gym at Self Enhancement, Inc.

Jefferson's Nysha Sims scored 22 points, including several three pointers in a blowout third quarter as the home team trounced the visiting team 76-59 later in the afternoon, winning the MVP in the girls game.

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The classic featured the best guys and girls from Portland area high schools, mainly coming from Portland Interscholastic League. It was sponsored by the Portland Observer, in memory of its late publisher.

Each game also featured several players who are used to playing on the same team squared off from opposing benches/

The home team in the boys game was coached by Paul Kelly, coach at Jefferson High School. The visiting team was coached by Michael Holton, former Trailblazer and former University of Portland men's basketball coach.

"We don't really have a strategy," Holton said before the game. "I just want to make sure that these kids have a positive experience."

"We haven't had time to set up plays and we probably won't do much trapping. I just want the play hard and unselfish, and hopefully we can have a fun afternoon."

The boys' game was a high paced game that featured a lot of quick three pointers and fast break points, everything that is standard in an all star game, making it a fun afternoon for the fans and for the players.



PHOTO BY NIA DING/THE PORTLAND OBSERVER
Coach Floyd Hall (from left) Most Valuable Player Nysha Sims and Coach of the Year Michael Bontemps at Saturday's Portland Observer Joyce Washington All Star Classic.

Scott came out firing early, scoring nine points, grabbing several rebounds and getting two huge blocks in the first quarter, leading his team to an early 19-13 lead.

When Scott went to the bench it was Jefferson teammates Herschal Slaughter and Tyrone White who took the scoring load. Slaughter used his size to get a variety of close to bucket layups, and White hit several jumpers to pace the visiting team to a 44-37 halftime lead. White ended with 21 points and Slaughter finished with 17 points.

The home team was led by Richard Townsend-Gant, also from Jefferson. David McNair from Franklin, chipped in 11 points.

In the second half, Scott scored eight straight points, several of them on tip-ins and rebounds to quickly give the visiting team a 57-42 point lead.

"I just took advantage of the height

advantage I had," Scott said. "I tried to get as many rebounds as possible."

The visiting team lead 70-59 at the end of the third quarter, but the fourth quarter is when Townsend-Gant started to take over.

He started the quarter quickly taking the ball to the hoop and hitting a spinning lay-up going around several defenders. Slaughter and Scott kept hitting buckets for the visiting team, keeping up with Gants ten points in the first four buckets in the quarter.

The visiting team cooled off and Gants teammates started to chip in. Isiah Johnson finished the game with 9 points, 7 in the fourth. And Antwon Wooten of Jefferson knocked down a few huge threes late in the quarter, bringing the home team within five points with one minute left.

The home team fouled White several times in the last minute and he knocked

down all four free throws.

"I knew he was going to make them," Jefferson teammate Scott said. "He was doing that all year."

With seven seconds left the home team took the ball out 94-91. Gant had a shot to tie but it was just off.

"I didn't think it was going to go in," Townsend-Gant said. "I got the ball too late."

"I was worried," Scott said. "I was pretty sure he would make it."

The game was big from the community standpoint. Most of the players and coaches grew up in northeast and north Portland and were very familiar with each other.

"It was a fun experience," Townsend-Gant said. "I'm used to playing with a lot of the guys, but I have played against so many of these people for years, it was like a pickup game."

"It was nice to see everybody," Scott said. "It was a whole community gathering."

The girls' game started out to be very competitive in the first half as the visiting team led 38-34 at halftime.

The home team was coached by Floyd Hall, and the visiting team was coached by former trailblazer and Riverdale High School coach Michael Harper. Harper also helped run the event, announcing the boys' game, and setting up a free throw competition for kids in attendance during halftime of the girls' game.

In the first half the scoring was balanced for both teams, as May Bates-Patten of Benson had 6 points and 5 assists. She ended the game with six points and had at least 10 assists. Tara Cook came out firing scoring all 12 of her points in the first half, nailing three pointers. Tryisha Blake scored consistently throughout the game and led the visiting team with 16 points.

But in the second half coach Hall came out with defensive pressure that the visiting team was not ready for. They threw out all kinds of traps that forced several turnovers and only allowed four points in the quarter. The home team had no trouble scoring, with Sims catching fire in the second half, capped off the a three pointer at the end of the third quarter giving the home team a 54-42 lead.

The visiting team played tough the whole fourth quarter with Patten collecting several more assists, but couldn't keep up with Sims and her three-point shooting. The home team won 76-59.

Micaela Pin and Kara Kasch, both of Franklin, ended the game with 10 points a piece as the other players on the home team with double digit scoring.

Josephine Young, of Grant, ended with 13 for the visiting team, as Blake, Young and Cook were the only players in double digit scoring for the visiting team.

With several hundred people packing into SEI to watch the two games, the Joyce Washington Classic proved to be very successful in its second year.

"It was a fun day," Harper said. "Overall, I was excited by the number of supporters who came out for our young athletes. It was good for the athletes to show the supporters that they have a future with athletics in their lives."

"Anytime we acknowledge the youth," Holton says, "then we have done good for the community."

Sports Commentary

Should Barry Bonds enter the Hall of Fame?

BY PATRICK GRUHLER
THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

This weekend reports came out that San Francisco Giant's outfielder Barry Bonds many not share some of his record mementos with the Baseball Hall of Fame.

Bonds, as most people know, is 10 home runs shy of breaking Hank Aaron's career home run record of 755, which Aaron has held for over three decades.

Bonds', as most people also know, has been tied up in a steroids controversy. What keeps Bonds separate from other superstars who have been tied up in the steroids mess- such as Sammy Sosa, Juan Gonzales and Jeremy Giambi- is that Barry had a Hall of Fame resume before his head grew several sizes.

Hall of Fame voters and fans who want to have an educated opinion on Bonds have to look at two bodies of work.

Barry won his first NL MVP in 1990 when he played for the Pittsburgh Pirates. At the time, he was a home run threat, a threat to steal any base and was a golden-glove outfielder. His body was about half the mass of its current state.

That 1990 season he hit 33 home runs, had 114 hits, 53 stolen bases and had an impressive .301 batting average. Those are stats to be marveled at. It was the first of 7 MVP seasons for Bonds, the first of 13 all star appearances and the first of eight golden glove awards.

Bonds also led the league in on-base percentage 16 times, batting average six times, once posting a season average of .370 and .362 in a separate season. Those statistics take my breath away.

Since 1990, Bonds seemingly transformed his game when he became the powerful slugger who hit 73 home runs in one season.

Barry has been tied up in Balco steroids investigations since they started five or so years ago. He has had leaked grand jury testimony that has linked him to steroids. His former trainer is the first one to get caught up in the investigation, seemingly tying Barry to steroid use.

His head and feet both seem to have grown, not just a little bit, but several sizes since grown men should have stopped growing.

All the evidence points the Bonds using steroids, even though there is no definitive proof that Bonds did actually use steroids.

To make matters worse Barry has always been terrible to the media. It's not like voters are looking for a nice guy. Bond's has turned himself into public enemy number one.

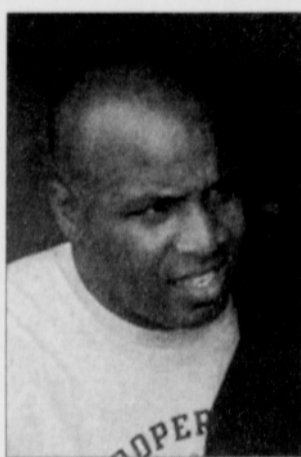
So, with both of those resumes, the baseball one and the steroid one, the question remains: Should Bonds be elected into the Hall of Fame?

The answer is yes.

I don't see any possible way that you can just ignore the baseball resume. Bonds is the greatest player of my generation. I don't think we will come close to seeing somebody be able to hit like he did, as consistently, accurately and powerfully, and also be as good at defense and as much of a threat on the bases.

In an era now where sluggers like David Ortiz and Manny Ramirez are defensive liabilities, and are useless on the base path if they don't hit a home run, you can not overlook how Bonds' had it all.

Barry Bonds' deserves to be in the Hall of Fame, even if the hat he wore on the Pirates is too small.



Barry Bonds

Sports Review

BY PATRICK GRUHLER/
THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

NFL's Hill Drowns

The body of New England Patriots defensive end Marquise Hill was found Monday, according to Louisiana state officials. Hill was reported missing Sunday after a jet-ski accident on Lake Pontchartrain in New Orleans. Hill, 24, played on LSU's 2003 national championship team and was a second round draft pick for the Patriots in 2004.



NBA Playoffs

The San Antonio Spurs beat the Utah Jazz Monday in Salt Lake City to take a 3-1 lead in the Western Conference series. After getting the game within two points with about six minutes left, they Jazz struggled to make a field goal the rest of the way and the Spurs 91-79, seizing control of the Series. Tuesday night the Detroit Pistons play the Cleveland Cavaliers in Cleveland. Detroit leads the series 2-1. Cleveland won game three after a 32 point, 9 rebound, 9 assist game from LeBron James, silencing the critics after not scoring 20 points in the first two games.

Mariners Hot

The Seattle Mariners have been hot lately, winning four in a row after sweeping the Kansas City Royals in Kansas City over the weekend, and taking game 1 in their series with division leading LA Angels Monday night. The series will play pivotal in the Mariners quest for first place in the AL West. They are currently 3.5 games behind the Angels.

College Baseball

The defending champion Oregon State Beavers (38-17) hope to repeat in the NCAA baseball tournament. They are in the Charlottesville Regional with Rutgers (41-19), Lafayette (33-18) and No. 8 Virginia (43-14). They open up play against Big East Champion Rutgers on Friday. It would take three straight victories for the Beavers to with the regional and move on to the Super Regional.

Prep Sports

The semifinals of the state high school baseball and softball championships took place on Tuesday, with the finals set for Saturday. In 6A baseball, West Linn is at Westview and North Medford is at Tualatin. In 5A, Crater is at Pendleton and Churchill is at Ashland. In 6A softball, Jesuit is at Central Catholic and Westview is at Forest Grove. In 5A, Corvallis is at Crater and Eagle Point is at Glencoe.

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