

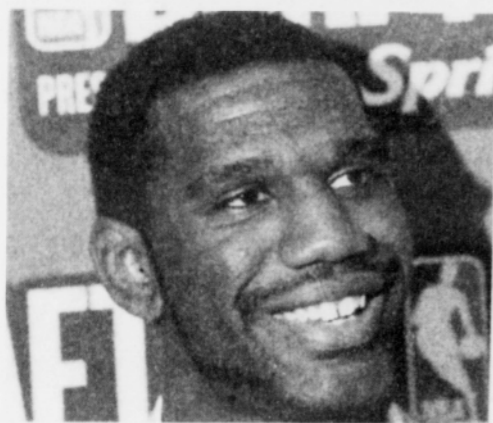
SPORTS

Delayed NBA Season to Start Dec. 25

Blazers consider GM Post and Oden's future

(AP) -- Now that NBA owners and players have reached a tentative labor agreement, the Portland Trail Blazers need to resume their search for a general manager.

If the lockout-ending deal struck early Saturday in New York is formally approved by both sides, the



Greg Oden

league will play a 66-game season beginning Dec. 25. Training camps and free agency would open on Dec. 9.



The Rose Garden Arena will once again come to life for Portland Trail Blazers games. A tentative labor agreement between NBA owners and players has the league beginning a 66-game season on Dec. 25.

"Glad to be back!" Blazers forward LaMarcus Aldridge, the team's player representative, tweeted Saturday morning.

When it appeared that the lockout was dragging on, the team had suspended the search for a new GM to replace Rich Cho, who had served less than a year on the job when he was abruptly dismissed in May.

College scouting director Chad

Buchanan was named interim general manager, and he led a team of front-office staff in conducting the team's draft in June. However, he has been ruled out as Cho's permanent successor.

With the opening of free agency, the Blazers should also get a better idea of center Greg Oden's future with the team. Portland offered the former No. 1 draft pick an \$8.8 million

qualifying offer to stay in Portland back on June 29.

That means the often-injured 7-foot center is a restricted free agent. The Blazers can match any offers that other teams make for him.

The 23-year-old Oden didn't play last season after microfracture surgery on his left knee. He missed his rookie season in 2007-08 after microfracture surgery on his right

knee. Two seasons ago he broke his left kneecap.

Because of his injuries, the former Ohio State star has played in only 82 games over parts of two seasons, averaging 9.4 points and 7.3 rebounds.

Before anything can be done from a personnel standpoint, a majority on each side must approve the labor agreement. The NBA, which owns the New Orleans Hornets, needs votes from 15 of 29 owners, while the union needs a simple majority of its 430-plus members.

That process became a bit more complicated after the players dissolved the union on Nov. 14. Now, they must drop their antitrust lawsuit in Minnesota and reform the union before voting on the deal.

Because the union disbanded, a new collective bargaining agreement can only be completed once the union has reformed. Drug testing and other issues still must be negotiated between the players and the league, which also must drop the lawsuit it filed in New York.

Ducks Host Pac-12 Final

(AP) -- The Oregon Ducks don't get the breather they've had in years past after the regular-season finale against rival Oregon State.

On Sunday morning they were

back on the practice field to prepare for the inaugural Pac-12 conference championship game against UCLA.

The No. 8 Ducks and the Bruins (6-6, 5-4) have a short week to get ready

for Friday evening's game at Autzen Stadium. The conference title game is new this season after the league expanded to 12 teams.

Oregon (10-2, 8-1) clinched the new North Division with a 49-21 victory over the Beavers in the 115th Civil War.

Kelly Hired at De La Salle

De La Salle North Catholic High School has hired the well-known Paul "Duper" Kelly to lead its boys' basketball team.

Kelly is a native of Portland, a graduate of Grant High and a former assistant coach for Jefferson High's basketball team where he won three state championships.

Ryan Slider has been hired as Coach of the girls' basketball team. Slider, also a native of Portland,

graduated from Tigard High and is a former assistant men's basketball coach at Rex Putnam.

De La Salle North recently also hired J.D. Taylor as an Associate Director of Student Success in the Corporate Internship Program; he will also be the Head Wrestling Coach. He brings extensive experience as a wrestling coach, most recently at Benson High School.

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