

Drawing Support after Coming Out

Jason Collins hopes to make path easier for others

(AP) -- Jason Collins said he has gotten "incredible" support since coming out as the first openly gay player in one of the four major U.S. pro sports leagues, and hopes he may have made the path easier for others to follow.

Collins sat down for an interview that was aired by ABC's "Good Morning America" on Tuesday, one day after the veteran NBA center revealed his sexuality in a first-person story posted on Sports Illustrated's website.

"I think, I know, in my personal life, I'm ready and I think the country is ready for supporting an openly gay basketball player," Collins told ABC's George Stephanopoulos.

ABC aired the interview in two segments, with Stephanopoulos asking Collins in the second portion if he hoped that other players will follow his example.

"I hope that every player makes a decision that leads to their own happiness, whatever happiness that is in life," Collins responded. "I know that I, right now, am the happiest that I've ever been in my life."

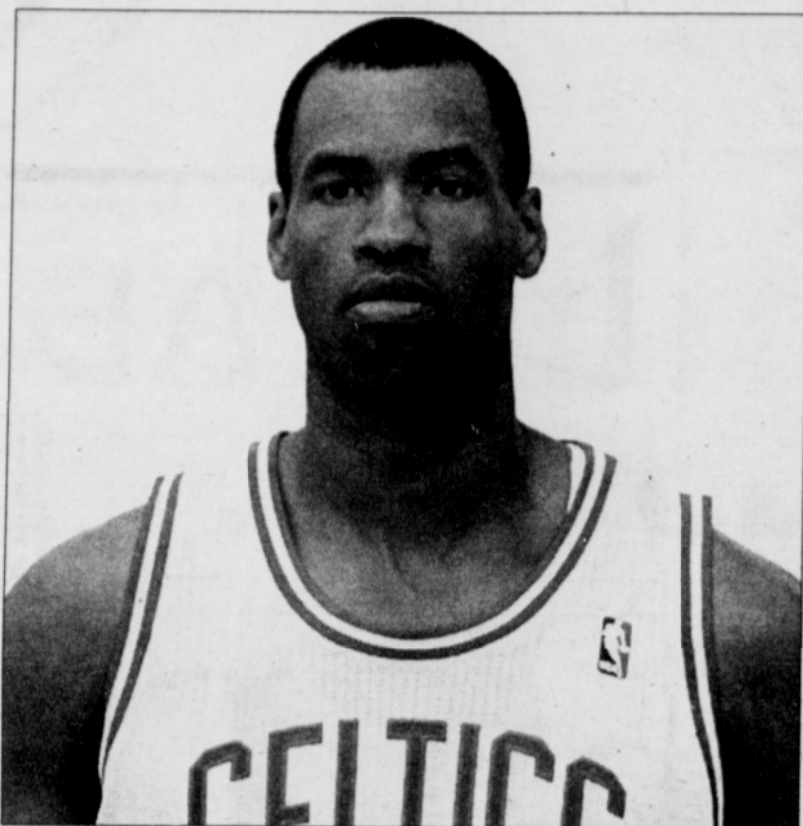
Collins said he went through something akin to a 12-step program while deciding to come out, dealing with emotions such as anger and denial.

"But when you finally get to that point of acceptance, there's nothing more beautiful than just allowing yourself to really be happy and be comfortable in your own skin," Collins said.

Dozens of NBA players sent messages to Collins after the story was posted Monday, many doing so through social media. The support didn't stop there, with President Barack Obama also calling to offer his support.

"It's incredible. Just try to live an honest, genuine life and the next thing you know you have the president calling you," Collins said. "He was incredibly supportive and he was proud of me, said this not only affected my life but others going forward."

Collins said he does not know of any other gay NBA



NBA veteran Jason Collins became the first active male player in the four major American professional sports to come out as gay.

players. He also told ABC that he was overwhelmed by the reaction of tennis legend Martina Navratilova, who came out in 1981 and called him a pioneer after he went public with his story.

"I look at her as one of my heroes, the dignity and class that she's lived her life and all that she's achieved in her career," Collins said. "She is my role model. Hopefully going forward I can be someone else's role model."

Asked by Stephanopoulos what his story could mean to youth who play basketball and are worried about their futures because they are gay, Collins offered a simple piece of advice.

"It doesn't matter that you're gay. The key thing is that it's about basketball," Collins said. "It's about working hard, it's about sacrificing for your team. It's all about dedication. That's what you should focus on."



The Portland chapter of The Links donate jeans to homeless youth.

Enriching Lives with Public Service

A public service campaign by the Portland chapter of The Links has brought new and slightly used jeans to the Janus Youth Programs for needy and homeless people.

The Links an international not-for-profit corporation, one of the nation's oldest and largest volunteer service organization of women who are committed to enriching, sustaining and ensuring the culture and economic survival of African Americans and other persons of African ancestry.

Last weekend, the chapter held their major fundraiser of the year at the Sheraton Airport Hotel to support student scholarships and club programs.

The Week in Review

Mayor Budgets Layoffs

Calling for the city to get "back to basics" to deal with a \$21.5 million budget deficit, Mayor Charlie Hales announced his first proposed budget Tuesday. It eliminates 182 full-time positions, including 55 from the police bureau and 41 from the fire bureau, but largely safeguards patrol officers, gang enforcement and neighborhood response team positions.



Rose Garden Workers Lose Jobs; Must Re-Apply

AEG Facilities, the company losing a contract to manage food and beverage service at the Rose Garden arena has notified state officials it will lay off 900 employees. Officials said the workers can reapply for jobs under a new management agreement between the Trail Blazers and Levy Restaurants of Chicago.

Worker Dies In Accident at Meat Plant

A contract employee was killed over the weekend while cleaning equipment at Interstate Meat Distributors, a meat packaging plant in Clackamas. The Clackamas County Sheriff's office said Hugo Avalos Chanon, 41, fell into a large blender while it was running. Another worker hit an emergency switch to stop the machinery, but it was too late.

NBA Panel Rejects Kings to Seattle Move

A National Basketball Association panel voted unanimously on Monday to recommend that a proposal to move the Sacramento Kings to Seattle be denied. The full NBA Board of Governors will meet the week of May 13 to issue a final vote on whether the team should be moved.

Transportation Chief Nominated by Obama

President Barack Obama nominated the mayor of Charlotte, N.C. to head his Department of Transportation Monday. Obama said he wants Mayor Anthony Foxx to get Americans back to work rebuilding roads and other infrastructure.



TriMet Community Workshop

Join us at a Q & A workshop with TriMet's General Manager Neil McFarlane. Get information on the state of TriMet and updates on the budget.

TriMet Community Workshop

6-7:30 p.m.

Tuesday, May 7, 2013

North Portland Library

512 N Killingsworth St.

Community Room

For more information about the state of TriMet, visit trimet.org/annualreport

TriMet will provide an interpreter for anyone who requests it at least 48 hours before the meeting by calling 503-962-4831 or TTY 7-1-1 Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

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