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# SPORTS

## Blazers Lead Series, 3-1

(AP) — There was some shouting going on in the Trail Blazers' locker room after they fell behind by 10 points at halftime to the Rockets.

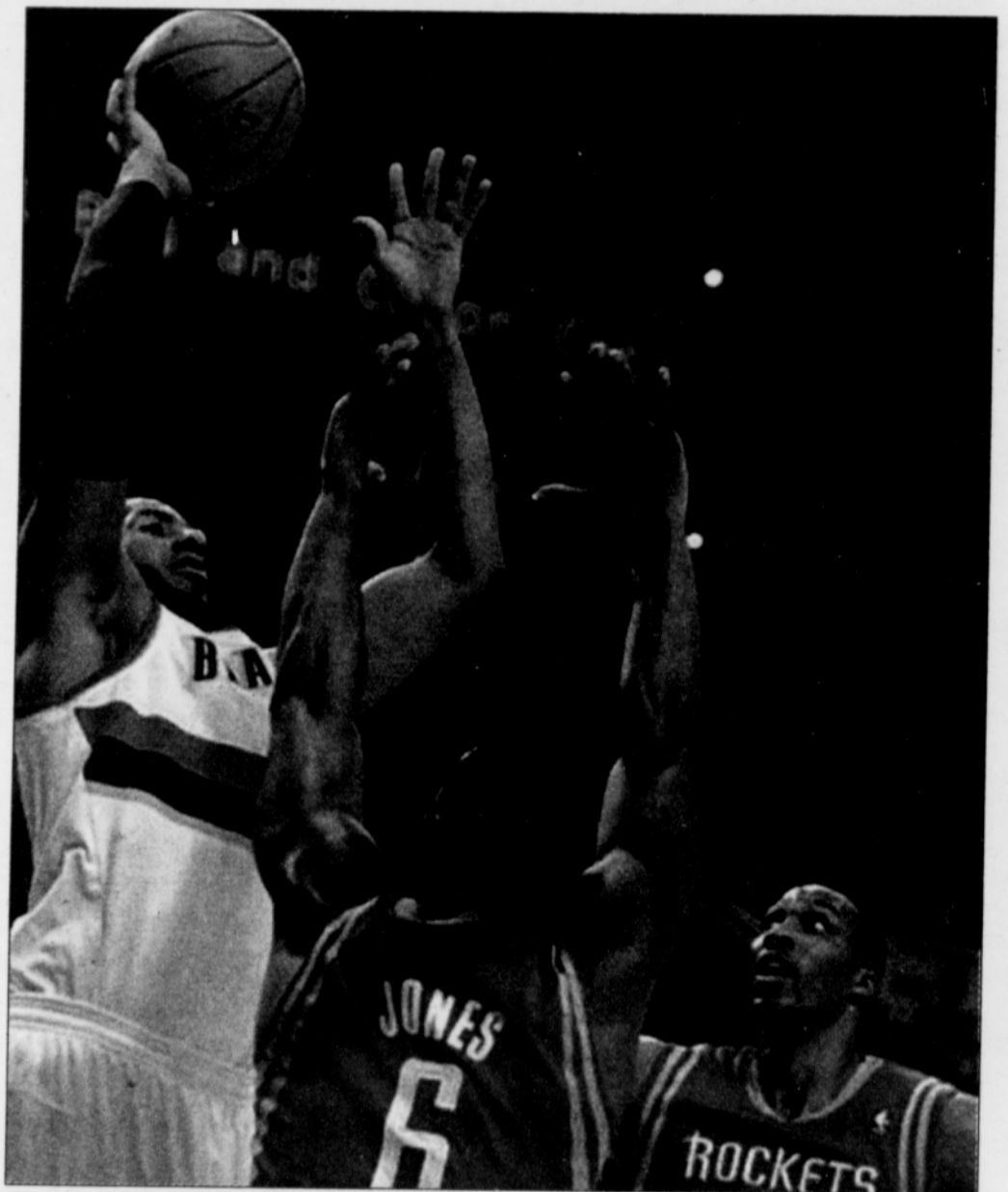
Up 2-1 in their first playoff series since 2011, the Blazers didn't want to mess up Game 4, especially in front of their hometown fans.

"In the words of Chuck — Charles Barkley — we were playing like wussies," Portland guard Wesley Matthews said. "That was the message to each other."

Whatever was said, the Trail Blazers pulled out of their funk and went on to defeat the Rockets 123-120 in overtime Sunday night to take a 3-1 advantage in the series that moves to Houston on Wednesday.

LaMarcus Aldridge had 29 points and 10 rebounds in the first win for the home team in the series, while Nicolas Batum added 25 points. It was the third game in the series decided in overtime.

The Blazers haven't advanced out of the first round since 2000. Portland also hasn't held a 3-1 advantage in a series since the 2000 Western Conference semifinals against Utah, which the Blazers won 4-1.



Portland's LaMarcus Aldridge shoots against Houston's Terrence Jones (6) and Dwight Howard (12) during Sunday's first-round playoff series. The Trail Blazers beat the Rockets 123-120 in overtime. (AP photo)

James Harden had 28 points and Dwight Howard added 25 points and 14 rebounds for the Rockets.

Portland trailed by as many as 11 points, but rallied in the fourth quarter. Mo Williams' 3-pointer put the Blazers in front 105-104 with 18.9 seconds left. Dorell Wright missed the first of two free throws, making it 106-104 with 8.3 seconds to go.

Howard dunked off a feed from

Harden with 3.6 seconds left to tie it and Williams missed a 3 at the buzzer to send the game into overtime.

Aldridge opened Portland's return to the playoffs with a franchise postseason-best 46 points in the Blazers' 122-120 overtime victory in Game 1, then followed it up with 43 points in the 112-105 win. The Rockets won the third, 121-116 in overtime on Friday night at the Moda Center.

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