

SPORTS

Blazers Fight Off Elimination Series back to San Antonio for game five

(AP) — Nicolas Batum had a simple question for his Portland teammates: "Why not us?"

No other team has come back from a 3-0 deficit to win a playoff series. But the Trail Blazers took the first step Monday night by beating the San Antonio Spurs 103-92 to stave off elimination and narrow the Western Conference semifinal series to 3-1.

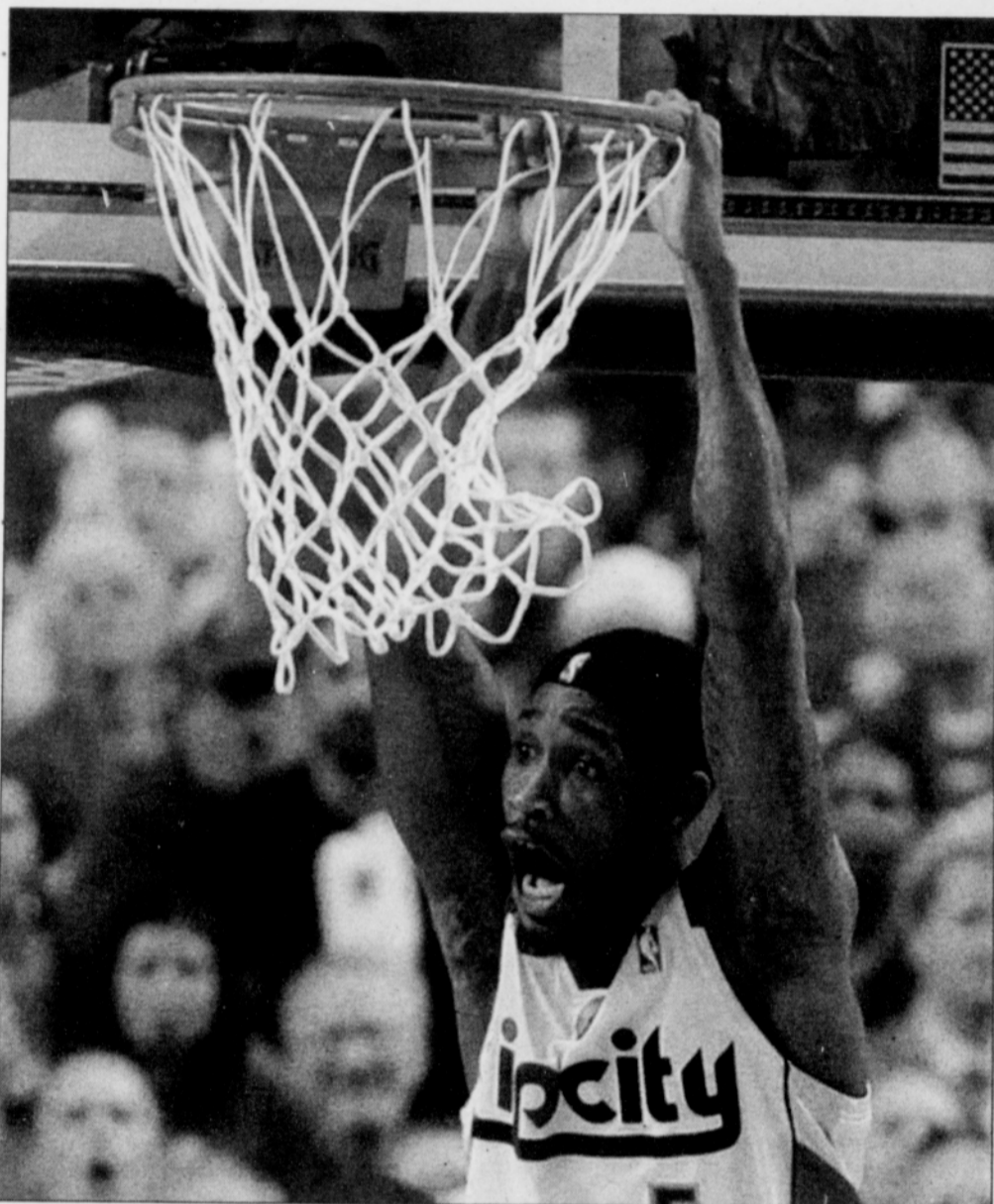
"Why not us? No, it's never been done before," Batum said. "We know it's going to be tough. It won't be easy, especially against this team."

The French forward had 14 points, 14 rebounds and eight assists and pestered fellow countryman Tony Parker all night. Damian Lillard had 25 points to lead the Blazers, who won their first second-round playoff game since a victory over Utah in the 2000 conference semifinals.

"We had nothing to lose tonight. We had no pressure. It was do or die," Batum said. "So we just go out there and play."

Portland held Parker to 14 points after he had scored 29 points or more in three of his last four playoff games. Coach Gregg Popovich sat Parker and Tim Duncan after Portland built a 20-point lead in the final quarter.

The Spurs are looking to advance to the conference finals for the third straight season. Game 5 is Wednes-



Trail Blazer Will Barton reacts after dunking the ball against the San Antonio Spurs in the fourth quarter during Game 4 of a Western Conference semifinal NBA basketball playoff series Monday. Portland won 103-124. (AP photo)

day night in San Antonio.

"The energy was weird tonight," Parker said. "You have to give a lot of credit to Portland. They played great. They came out of the gates and I thought Batum was great tonight. He gave them a big boost."

The Blazers were the last team to take a series to seven games after dropping the first three. Portland rebounded in the first round against Dallas in 2003, but ultimately lost the deciding game in the first-round series.

The Blazers have been hurt by the loss of backup point guard Mo Williams to a groin injury for the past two games. Williams provided both energy and points off the bench

all season in relief of Lillard.

Portland got just six points off the bench in Game 3, but Will Barton provided a spark with 17 points on Monday night.

Barton became the first Blazer with 17 points and six rebounds off the bench in a playoff game since Brian Grant in 2000 against Utah.

"Any time you get a boost off the bench it's always good for a momentum swing," San Antonio's Danny Green said. "When he comes in and gets the crowd into it, they pretty much get it going, and it helped them a lot."

Coach Terry Stotts promised that the Blazers would play with pride in Game 4 and they did from the start.

Sterling Faces Fresh Rebukes

(AP) -- An interview that was supposed to be an attempt at rehabilitation instead had Los Angeles Clippers owner Donald Sterling facing fresh rebukes as he went from apologizing for recent racist remarks to slamming Magic Johnson, repeatedly bringing up the ex-NBA star's HIV status and calling him an unfit role model for children.

"He's got AIDS!" Sterling said loudly at one point in the interview, cutting off CNN's Anderson Cooper as the interviewer attempted to cite Johnson's accomplishments after Sterling asked, "What has he done, big Magic Johnson, what has he done?"

The comments earned Sterling quick condemnation from the league that was already trying to rid itself of the owner.

Commissioner Adam Silver, who gave Sterling a lifetime ban and \$2.5 million fine two weeks ago, issued a statement saying, "while Magic Johnson doesn't need me to, I feel compelled on behalf of the NBA family to apologize to him that he continues to be dragged into this situation and be degraded by such a malicious and personal attack."

Johnson wrote on his Twitter account that "I'd rather be talking about these great NBA Playoffs than Donald Sterling's interview."

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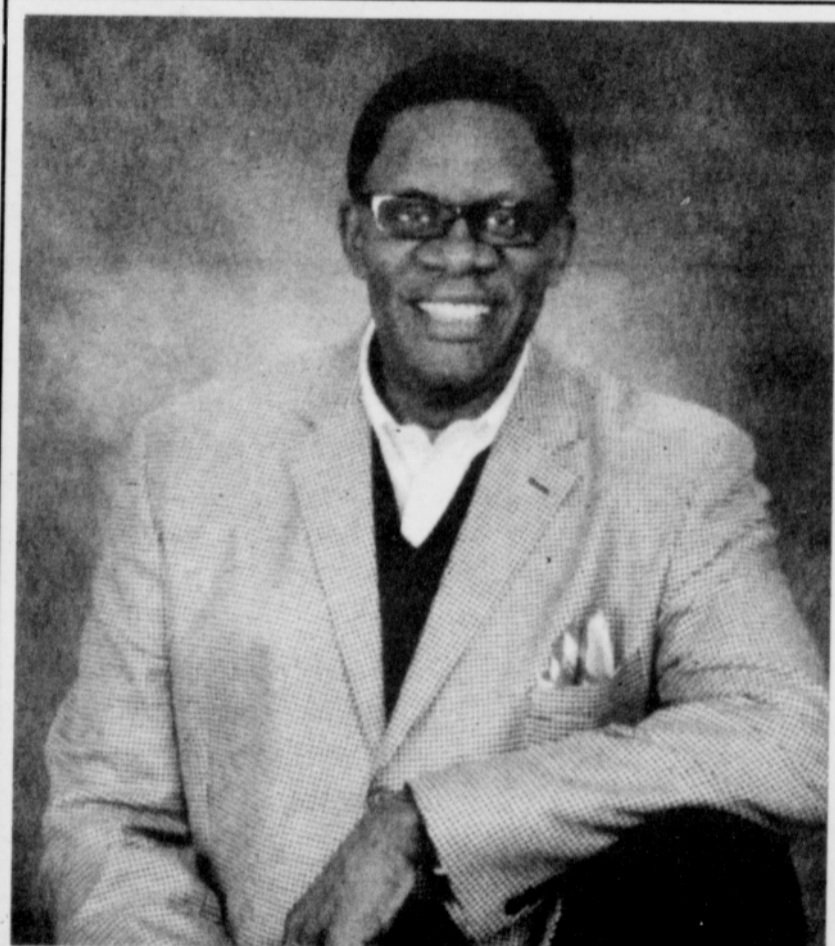
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A: You might have started to develop a "dowager's hump" or an abnormal outward curving of the vertebrae of the upper back. Bones become brittle with osteoporosis and the upper vertebrae can collapse on each other, causing a rounded appearance.

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loss:

- Develop good body mechanics through exercises to improve your posture.
- Eat a diet rich in calcium and vitamin D. Your doctor might prescribe a medication to help prevent further bone loss.

• Exercise regularly to help strengthen bones. Talk with a doctor to learn exercises you can safely perform.

Consult a chiropractor if the curvature of your upper back causes pain or discomfort.

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