

A Big Win for The Portland Disciples



Portland Disciples defeated PAC select in overtime 87 to 83 to win Memorial Day Championship

Basketball Legend Bill Walton Passes Away at 71

Beloved Broadcaster Leaves Behind a Legacy

(AP) Larger than life, only in part because of his nearly 7-foot frame, Walton was a two-time NCAA champion at UCLA, a two-time champion in the NBA, a Basketball Hall of Fame inductee, an on-court icon in every sense of the word. And off the court, Walton was a chronic fun-seeker, a broadcaster who adhered to no conventional norms and took great joy in that, a man with a deeply serious side about the causes that mattered most to him.

Walton died May 27th at the age of 71 after a prolonged fight with cancer, the league announced on behalf of his family. He was the NBA's MVP in the 1977-78 season, the league's sixth man of the year in 1985-86 and a member of the league's 50th anniversary and 75th anniversary teams. That followed a college career in which he blossomed while playing under coach John Wooden at UCLA, becoming a three-time national player of the year.

Walton, who entered the Hall of Fame in 1993, was one of the game's most celebrated figures. His NBA career — disrupted by chronic foot injuries — lasted only 468 games combined with the Portland Trail Blazers, the San Diego/Los Angeles Clippers and the Celtics. He averaged 13.3 points and 10.5 rebounds in those games, neither of those numbers exactly record-setting.

Walton's most famous game was the 1973 NCAA title game,



Television analyst Bill Walton stretches before the first half of an NCAA college basketball game between Oregon and Colorado, Jan. 2, 2020, in Boulder, Colo. Walton, who starred for John Wooden's UCLA Bruins before becoming a Basketball Hall of Famer and one of the biggest stars of basketball broadcasting, died Monday, May 27, 2024, the league announced on behalf of this family. He was 71. (AP Photo/David Zalubowski, File)

UCLA against Memphis, in which he shot 21 for 22 from the field and led the Bruins to another national championship.

When Walton retired from the NBA he turned to broadcasting, something he never thought he could be good at — and an av-

enue he sometimes wondered would be possible for him, because he had a pronounced stutter at times in his life.

The last part of that was just Walton hyperbole. He was known for his on-air tangents and sometimes appeared on-air in Grateful

Dead T-shirts; Walton was a huge fan of the band and referenced it often, even sometimes recording satellite radio specials celebrating what it meant to be a "Deadhead."

And the Pac-12 Conference, which has basically evaporated in many ways now because of college realignment, was another of his many loves. He always referred to it as the "Conference of Champions" and sang its praises all the way to the end.

Walton was involved in the broadcasts of college and NBA games for CBS, NBC and ABC/ESPN in his career, along with stints working for the Clippers and Sacramento Kings as an analyst. He returned to ESPN and the Pac-12 Network, further touting the roots of his league, in 2012.

Walton led Portland to the 1977 NBA title, then got his second championship with Boston in 1986.

"Bill Walton was an icon," said Jody Allen, the chair of the Trail Blazers. "His leadership and tenacity on the court were key to bringing a championship to our

fans and defined one of the most magical moments in franchise history. We will always treasure what he brought to our community and the sport of basketball."

Walton was the No. 1 pick by Portland in the 1974 draft. He said Bill Russell was his favorite player and referred to Bird as the toughest and best he played with, so it was appropriate that his playing career ended as a member of the Celtics. "Playing basketball with Larry Bird," Walton once said, "is like singing with Jerry Garcia," referencing the co-founder of the Grateful Dead.

In his final years, Walton spoke out about issues that mattered most to him, such as the problem of homelessness in his native San Diego, urging city leaders to take action and create shelter space to help those in need.

Walton died surrounded by his loved ones, his family said. He is survived by wife Lori and sons Adam, Nate, Chris and Luke — a NBA championship-winning player and now a coach.



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Happy Fathers Day