

# NBA Boiling Over With Talk, Look For Surprises

By Joe Cross

Here it is the middle of the pro football exhibition season and the tail end of summer so nobody's thinking about basketball. Right?

Hardly. The National Basketball Association's Hot Stove League is boiling over with talk — and get ready for some surprises this winter, if one Los Angeles-based radio and television broadcaster knows what he's talking about.

Well, not everything will be a surprise this winter, according to Tom Hawkins, broadcaster who not only was once on the NBA network games but also was part of the team that telecast eight of the Los Angeles Summer League games this year.

"If Kareem-Abdul Jabbar is healthy, a soundness at forward and another year for Magic Johnson like last season, and there is no reason why the (Los Angeles) Lakers can't repeat," said Hawkins when he was in Las Vegas recently to coach the Notre Dame alumni

team in its game against the University of Nevada, Las Vegas grads.

"It's a standpat team. With a young, innovative coaching staff like the Lakers have, the team will again be outstanding.

"On the other hand, the team that fans should keep an eye on for surprises this year is Detroit," he said.

While the Pistons were as bad as anyone in the league last winter, Hawkins said that off the team's showing in the LA summer program — which has become a major summer basketball league, especially for rookies and players trying to get another look-see by the pros — Detroit is on the way back.

"Detroit has some fine young people," Hawkins said of the team that surprised everyone by not only winning the regular summer season but also capturing the playoff championship as well.

"Detroit will be strictly in a rebuilding year but in terms of having the platform to rebuild,

well, they (the Pistons) are on the right track. Their new coach, Scotty Robinson, has touched all the bases in his career."

Hawkins feels, in fact, that coaches like Robinson may be the way of the future.

"He's coached at all levels from high school to college and the pros," Hawkins said in explaining "touching all the bases."

"More and more for new coaches in the NBA to succeed, they've got to have worked with players from the high school level up in order to understand the young men of today.

"You can know everything about strategy and technique but unless you understand the players of today — who are most certainly a different breed of cat — then a coach could have a real problems."

From the standpoint of individual stars during the summer league, Hawkins said a former UNLV player, Jackie Robinson, who has had a couple of previous

"shots," including an impressive stint with Seattle a couple of seasons ago, was the standout player in the league.

"He really looked good," Hawkins said of Robinson who, incidentally, will be trying out with that up and coming Detroit club this season.

"If he can't stick I don't know why. In the final game of the playoffs Robinson was unbelievable. He had been knocked cold a couple of nights earlier and the doctors said he had a concussion and while he could play, he probably shouldn't.

"Well, he went ahead and played and scored around 35 points."

The Detroit club also had a couple of others who caught Hawkins' eye. One was a forward named Tony Fuller and another was Brad Davis, "who had a shot with the Lakers and a couple of other teams."



AUTOGRAPHS — Los Angeles Laker basketball star Jamaal Wilkes took time to sign autographs for young customers recently at the Athletic Shoe Factory, 4620 Meadows Lane.

## Softball Teams Invited To Play

Mens and womens "B" and "C" class softball teams are invited to participate in the 1980 Mayor's Softball Tournament to be played at the Cheyenne Sports Complex on the Cheyenne campus of Clark County Community College October 24, 25 and 26.

The competitive tournament is one of the events to be held during

the fourth annual North Las Vegas Fairshow.

Teams will compete for first, second and third place sponsor trophies and first place individual tourney M. V. P. award. Deadline for entries for the double elimination tournament is October 10. Contact the North Las Vegas Chamber of Commerce office for information and entry blanks. 642-9595.

Sunday, Sept. 14 — 8 p.m. until???

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