

Lettin' 'the boys' PlayBUT WAIT 'TIL APRIL

By W.G. Ramirez

While 'the boys' fiddle around in New Orleans this weekend and finish up their season Monday night, 'the men' are eagerly awaiting the spotlight as March Madness ceases.

The NBA has remained in the shadows of the collegiate basketball season, but come Tuesday April 6, the NBA will officially be back on as crunch time commences.

Six playoff spots have been filled, there may be a new power in the East, there is tremendous power in the West, and there are a few young teams that will taste post-season play.

Last season the Miami Heat became the first of the NBA's

four recent expansion clubs to get into the NBA Playoffs last spring. The Heat are hoping to get there once again this spring.

Two of the Heat's expansion buddies, the Charlotte Hornets and the Orlando Magic, are anxiously pursuing initial postseason berths with one month remaining in the 1992-93.

The Minnesota Timberwolves, the fourth of the recent expansion squads, have fallen out of playoff contention in the Western Conference.

While Charlotte (35-34) maintains the seventh seed in the Eastern Conference Orlando (32-34) and Miami (30-37) are chasing the eighth and final

berth. Through Wednesday evening, Orlando held a 1/2 game advantage over Indiana, who held a 2 game lead over Miami, for the #8 seed.

With the additions of centers Alonzo Mourning and Shaquille O'Neal, Charlotte and Orlando have come on strong this season, and will be able to showcase both rookie sensations tonight from the Orlando Arena. TNT Sports will televise the third and fourth meetings of the season between the two from Orlando this evening and the Charlotte Coliseum Wednesday, April 7. Charlotte has won the previous two outings 112-108 and 116-107.

As of Wednesday night, the

New York Knicks held a 1/2 game lead over the Chicago Bulls for the Eastern Conference's #1 seed. The two teams will square off on the final day of the regular season, Sunday April 25, on national television.

Obviously, the game could determine who will get home court advantage through the conference playoffs.

In the Western Conference, the Phoenix Suns are on their way to home court advantage through the NBA Playoffs. The Suns continued their winning ways this past Tuesday when they toppled the Bulls 113-109, in Chicago Stadium. Winning their fifth straight, while snapping Chicago's six-game win-

ning streak, Phoenix improved to 23-11 on the road, best in the NBA.

The Houston Rockets, who are 9-1/2 games behind the Suns, need to worry about the San Antonio Spurs and Utah Jazz in the Midwest, 1 and 4 games back, respectively.

Since dismissing Jerry Tarkanian, the Spurs have gone 34-14 under the direction of John Lucas. Lucas revitalized the courage in the Spurs to make them a top contender. The Jazz continue to play hot-and-cold, playing at their potential only some of the time.

Last season's Western Conference champion, Portland, has fallen off of the pedestal and

remain in the #5 position for the playoffs. The Trailblazers still have two dates with Utah and one each with San Antonio and Phoenix, not to mention the L.A. Lakers, who have already knocked off Portland big, earlier in the season.

The darkhorse in the Western Conference is the Seattle SuperSonics. Behind the strong play of Shawn Kemp, Seattle holds the #2 seed for the playoffs, while sitting seven games out of first, behind Phoenix, in the Pacific Division. Friday April 16, the Suns will meet the Sonics in Phoenix.

Well the Final Four is upon us, but come April 6th..... watch out!!!

Doolittle Youth Basketball League

CHAMPIONSHIP TOURNAMENT RESULTS

2nd & 3rd Grade Division

The Sixers snapped the undefeated season of the Rebels in an exciting game. Paced by Eric Ashley's 10 points, the Sixers topped the Rebels by a score of 25-22. Alex Jones had 10 points, while Frank Brown totaled 11 points.

4th & 5th Grade Division

The Rebels continued the upset trend by breaking the undefeated streak of the Hoyas in a one-sided 40-23 victory. Leading scorers for the Rebels were Donnell Thomas with 17 points, while Jackie Thomas tossed in 10 points. Dillon Sherfield led the Hoyas with 9 points.

6th and 7th Grade Division

In an old fashioned dog fight to the end, the Bulls and Hornets created their own brand of excitement battling every minute. The Bulls escaped with a 51-48 victory. Down by one point with :17 seconds remaining, Mario Finley calmly backed the ball out, picked his spot, and drove to the basket scoring over the much taller opponents. Seconds later Jermaine Lewis iced the victory with two free throws. The Bulls were led in scoring by Finley with 16 points, Jamar Gasper had 14 and Ronnie Jones had 10. Chris Newell for the Hornets topped all scorers with 26 points.

8th Grade Division

Displaying the balance of the Doolittle Community Center Youth Basketball League, two undefeated league champions tasted the bitter nectar of defeat. Would the third undefeated league champion fall also? Embellishing their reputation as an outstanding youth basketball team, the Hawks, the final undefeated league champion, raced off to a first half 23-10 advantage. The Hawks went on to crush the courageous Malcom X Dog Catchers 53-30. Top scorers for the Hawks were Shane Christensin with 17 points, while Manuel Terry chipped in 14 points. The Dog Catchers' balanced scorers were Jeff Cook-7 points; Laron Young-6 points; Rodell Dew-6 points; and, D. Thomas-6 points.

SUPER SUMMER BASKETBALL LEAGUE

The City of Las Vegas Municipal Sports Unit is now organizing the Chunk Minker Super Summer Basketball League. Early-bird registration begins May 3 at the Chunk Minker Sports Complex, 275 N. Mojave Rd, at a cost of \$300 per team. Teams registering after May 14 will be charged \$350. Registration continues through May 21.

The adult-oriented league begins play June 21. Games will be played each Monday and Wednesday thereafter, beginning at 6:30 pm. A \$40 rebate will be offered to teams who do not forfeit a game during the regular season. Call 229-2089 or 378-4790 for further information and a complete play schedule.

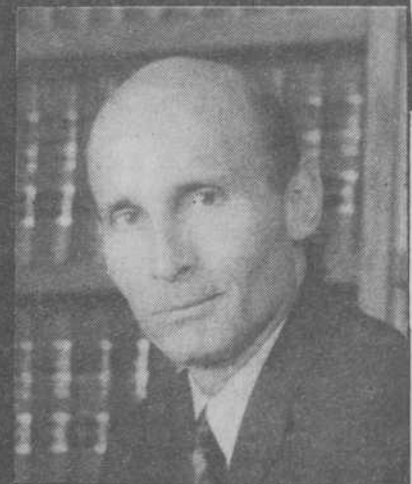
Minker is a former employee of the City's Department of Parks and Leisure Activities who passed away early last year from a rare form of cancer. During his employment, Minker was responsible for organizing and implementing various sports programs for the city.

Please send all league notices, league results or any other activity announcements addressed to:
L.V. Sentinel Voice Sports Department
1201 S. Eastern Ave.
Las Vegas, Nevada 89104.

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