



# SPORTS

## HAWKS NAME LENNY WILKENS AS THEIR NEW HEAD COACH

Atlanta, Ga — The Atlanta Hawks announced the hiring of Lenny Wilkens as their new head coach at a press conference Tuesday afternoon at the Omni press room. Wilkens becomes the seventh full-time coach in Atlanta history.

"We are thrilled to have a man of Lenny's class and credentials join our franchise, said Hawks President Stan Kasten.

"We have the utmost confidence that he is the perfect man to lead us to great heights in the future.

Wilkens comes to the Hawks from the Cleveland Cavaliers, where he guided the Cavs to 50+ wins on three occasions over a seven-year tenure, including a record of 54-28 (.659) this past season. He resigned his head coaching job on May 24, one week after the Cavs were eliminated from the Eastern Conference Semi-Finals by the Chicago Bulls.

Under Wilkens, the Cavs recorded one of the greatest resurgences in NBA history. He took a franchise that won 29 games in 1985-86 and transformed it into a veteran team with three All-stars that posted



LENNY WILKENS

50+ wins in three of the last five seasons, including a franchise record of 57 wins in 1988-89 and 1991-92. In addition, Cleveland qualified for the playoffs in five of the last six seasons, while ascending to the 1992 Eastern Conference Finals.

This past season, on March 26, Wilkens became the winningest coach in Cleveland history, notching win #305, in Philadelphia, surpassing Bill Fitch. Wilkens ended his career with the Cavs with a 316-258 record.

After serving as General Manager for the Seattle SuperSonics during the 1985-86 season, Wilkens joined Cleveland

in June '86. A 15-year veteran as a head coach in the NBA, Wilkens ranks fifth on the all-time list with 1,618 games coached in the regular season.

On March 15, 1992 v.s. Denver, he joined Red Auerbach, Jack Ramsay, Dick Motta and Fitch as one of five NBA coaches to win 800 games. Wilkens comes to Atlanta with an 869-749 (.537) record.

His seven-year stretch with Cleveland had been the longest stay in the NBA, for a head coach. A well-respected NBA veteran, he displays the same traits that characterized his career as a player — his outstanding work ethic, his ability to build good working relationships, and his ability to think on the court.

He enhanced his place in the basketball world last summer joining the 1992 United States Olympic Men's Basketball squad as an assistant coach on Head Coach Chuck Daly's staff. The "Dream Team" captured the Gold Medal in Barcelona, Spain, breezing through their eight games of competition.

In addition to serving as the head coach of three NBA All-star games (most recently the 1989 All-Star game in Houston), Wilkens received his most memorable honor on May 9, 1990 when he was enshrined in the Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame in Springfield, Massachusetts.

Wilkens enjoyed a 15-year playing career in the NBA, and

he ranks among the all-time leaders in assists, games played, minutes played, and free throws made. He was named Most Valuable Player of the 1971 All-Star Game in San Diego.

A first-round choice in the 1960 draft, Wilkens spent his first eight NBA seasons as a member of the St. Louis Hawks. In 1968, Wilkens was traded to Seattle where he would spend the next four seasons. In 1972, he became a member of the Cavs when he was acquired along with Barry Clemens in exchange for Butch Beard. Wilkens represented the Cavs in the 1973 All-Star Game, in a season when he averaged 20.5 points and 8.4 assists per game. Wilkens concluded his playing

career with the Trail Blazers in the 1974-75 season as a player-coach.

Wilkens' college years were spent with the Providence Friars, where he led his freshman team to a 23-0 record. In his junior year, the Friars lost in the semi-finals of the National Invitational Tournament.

Providence reached the finals of the NIT his senior year but fell short, losing to Bradley. Wilkens was named the tournament's MVP and was first-team selection to two All-American teams. Wilkens graduated from Providence with a degree in economics.

Wilkens and his wife Marilyn have three children - Leesha, Randy and Jamee.

## BULLS SEND SERIES BACK HOME, WITH 3-2 LEAD OVER NEW YORK

By W.G. Ramirez

After the New York Knicks rambled past the Chicago Bulls in Games 1 & 2, eyebrows were raised and questions remained unanswered whether the Bulls could defend their two-time NBA title.

The series returned to Chicago, and the Bulls played brilliantly, deadlocking the series 2-2. Superstar Michael Jordan capped off the homestand by pouring in 54 points in Game 4.

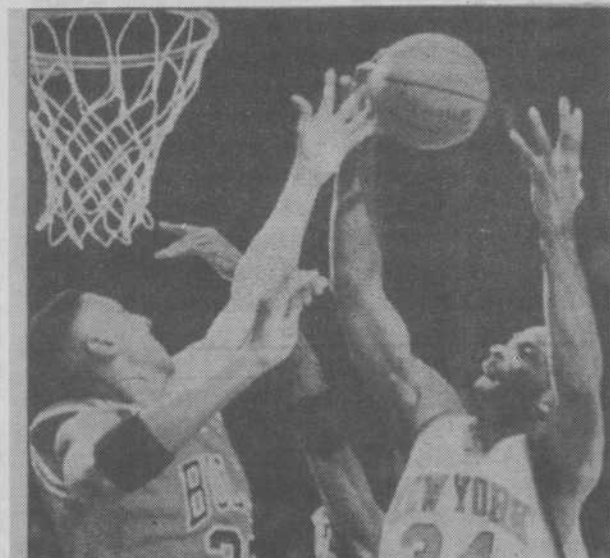
Last night, Madison Square Garden was the sight for Game 5, where the closest and most defensive battle of the series took place.

As so often the case, Jordan began the fourth quarter without yet exploding for a barrage of points. For almost 12:00 minutes, through the end of the third quarter and beginning of the fourth, Jordan was the Bulls' only scoring force, leading Chicago to the eventual win 97-94, to take a 3-2 lead in the series.

The series returns to Chicago Stadium Friday night for Game 6, where the Bulls have been unconscious in destroying opponents during the playoffs.

The Bulls went undefeated, sweeping Atlanta and Cleveland before losing to the Knicks in Game 1. New York must now defy the odds, beat Chicago, and force Game 7 in Madison Square Garden.

Up 3-2, Chicago sits in good position to advance to the NBA Finals and defend their NBA title while vying to become the first team



Scottie Pippen (L) and Charles Oakley both have played major supporting roles for the Bulls and Knicks, respectively.

in 28 years to win three consecutive NBA championships.

(See Bulls-Knicks, Page 19)

## PHOENIX SUNS HOPE TO WRAP UP SERIES TONIGHT

By W.G. Ramirez

Sir Charles Barkley and Dan Majerle unleashed a scoring display that rocked the America West Arena Tuesday night, leading Phoenix to a 120-114 victory over the Seattle SuperSonics. The Suns took a 3-2 lead in their best-of-seven series.

Barkley absolutely destroyed

Seattle, nabbing a triple-double - 43-points, 15-rebounds, 10-assists - while Majerle broke an NBA record, burying eight three-pointers, en route to a 34-point performance.

Seattle will need to win Game 6 tonight to stay alive in the playoffs. Phoenix has already won in Seattle during the series,

in Game 3, 104-97.

Seattle will have to depend on its veterans Eddie Johnson, Ricky Pierce and Sam Perkins, as well as youngster Shawn Kemp. The matchup between Barkley and Kemp will be as physical as ever when the two battle this evening.

The Suns' defense should

be the focal point for Game 6 against the Sonics. When at home, Seattle is liable to light up the outside shooting, leaving their nemesis in the dust. It wouldn't hurt if Majerle carried his hot hand over from Game 5 either.

Seattle captured the regular (See Suns, Page 19)

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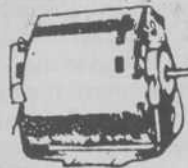
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