

# Night hoops shoots to save youth

By Diamond Ross  
Sentinel-Voice

A product of the first Late Night Hoops program seven years ago, Will Reed learned that together sports and education can make a difference.

Now Reed, an assistant coordinator for Late Night Hoops, hopes seven years later that he can impress that message upon area youth.

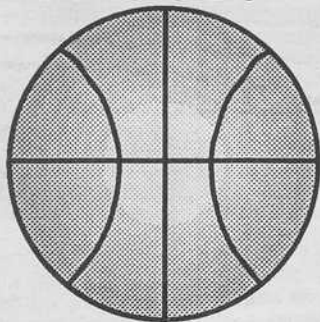
Late Night Hoops — a combined sports and activities program — offers youth a positive environment to spend their summer nights.

The program came to Las Vegas via Boston in 1990, when at a Boston conference, a young lady asked Tom Gholson to put together a squad to play against one another.

Gholson, former Las Vegas Housing Authority (LVHA) deputy executive, garnered funding through a drug elimination program from the LVHA and the City of Las Vegas.

Though the program is designed for at-risk inner-city youth, it is open to all because Reed says anyone can succumb to the pressures of life. "I hate the term 'at-risk' because everyone's 'at-risk'," he said.

Back in 1990, Reed and leisure activity attendant Edrick



Dickens scoured the city for players. "We went above and beyond our duties," Dickens said.

Today, the program averages more than 200 participants a year, ages 14-25, and fields 20 teams. The age groups are 14-16, 17-19 and 20-25. At the National Public Housing championship in New Orleans last year, the Las Vegas 16-19 age group won first place.

Notable Late Night Hoops alumni include former UNLV Runnin' Rebels Anderson Hunt and Moses Scurry. Penny Toler of the WNBA's Los Angeles Sparks, Western High School graduate and Texas Christian guard Prince Fowler, Cheyenne High School graduate and former Rebel Chancellor Davis and former Rancho High School star and Oklahoma recruit Michael Johnson.

Before the players head to the hardwood, they head to class, attending seminars on life skills, peer pressure, role models and conflict resolution.

The playoffs are taking place this week, with the semi-finals tonight at the Chuck Minker Sports Complex, 275 N. Mojave Road, starting at 10 p.m. The winning teams come back to play the championship games on Monday at Doolittle Community Center, 1901 N. "J" St., starting at 9 p.m.

## Weight training in kids requires special precautions

Special to Sentinel-Voice

Strength training offers benefits for many people, but consider a few facts before you encourage your child or young teenager to head for the weight room, says the head of Stanford University's sports medicine program.

Before puberty, weight training is not likely to provide significant increases in strength. And up to two years after puberty, kids are at increased risk for injury if they lift weights improperly, says Dr. Gordon Matheson, associate professor and chief of the Division of Sports Medicine.

"I would not prescribe a weight program for a preadolescent, aside from a general strength and conditioning program not

specifically designed to increase bulk. Without the increased hormone levels (e.g. testosterone) that occur at puberty, the strength benefits are marginal at best in both boys and girls. Kids who want to improve their athletic ability are better off developing skills by practicing and playing their sports," Matheson says.

"However, if your preteen is enthusiastic and wants to become active in weight training for its own sake, it can be safe as a sport if the child is training and appropriately supervised," he says. "In this age group, machine weights are safer than the freeweights, or barbells, because the are enclosed and designed not to fall or drop on the user."

After puberty, boys gain strength and increased bulk

from hormonal changes, and lifting weights can enhance these natural changes, Matheson says. But until 18 months to two years after the onset of adolescence, "kids are at increased risk of injuring tendons at the point where the still-developing growth plate attaches to the tendons," he says.

"The skeleton matures about 18 months before the muscles and tendons do, so during that period, the tendons and muscles are vulnerable to injury at the points where they attach to the skeleton," Matheson says. Sports activities of all kinds, not just weight training, can cause injuries in young adolescents, so caution and a prudent,

supervised stretching and training regimen are important, he says.

While boys are more vulnerable to injury than girls during this time because of male hormone production, the same general precautions apply to girls, who will gain strength — but not significant bulk — from weight training after puberty.

"Girls can benefit to some extent from weight training, particularly if they are engaging in sports such as basketball, wrestling or even soccer," Matheson says.

"But have your teen observe extra caution during the first two years of adolescence, when tendons and muscles are especially damage-prone."

## Californian turns Tyson's bites into profits

Special to Sentinel-Voice

Mike Tyson's biting attack on boxing champion Evander Holyfield might mean tasty returns for two California entrepreneurs.

Carlos Sepulveda, 32, and his brother have created a milk chocolate version of Holyfield's ear. The Glendale, Calif., businessmen dub the candy, "The Evander Holy Ear."

Tyson bit Holyfield on both ears during their June 28 rematch for the World Boxing Association heavyweight title. Temptations, a Pasadena chocolate shop, and Charlie Brown Farms, a candy and gift store in Antelope Valley, have ordered the candy.

The ears, at about \$3.50 each, are sold in clear plastic bags. The labels sport a drawing of Tyson, gloves raised, licking his chops and declaring, "You can't have just one."

Sepulveda said he got the idea by watching the fight. "When he bit him once, we were shocked," Sepulveda said. "When he bit him again, we thought Holyfield must have been tasty."

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## SPORTS BRIEFS

### ODOM LEAVES UNLV BASKETBALL PROGRAM

UNLV's most prized recruit since Larry Johnson has decided to leave. Lamar Odom opted to forgo his freshman year at the school amid controversy surrounding the sudden



ODOM

improvement of his ACT score. Odom, who had departed for New York by Friday afternoon's announcement, has reportedly decided to play in Europe or attend a prep school before entering the 1998 NBA Draft. Odom's ACT score was first questioned in an investigative article co-written by Don Yaeger and Alexander Wolff, both of Sports Illustrated. The 6-9 Odom was expected to be the starting shooting guard. That role will most likely fall into the hands of 6-4 redshirt freshman Donovan Stewart.

### TWIN TOWERS ERA BEGINS IN SAN ANTONIO

Number 1 draft pick Tim Duncan signed with the San Antonio Spurs last week, setting the stage for him to play alongside center David Robinson in the upcoming season. The Spurs would not disclose the terms of the deal, but under league rules his three-year contract is worth more than \$10 million. He becomes a free agent after three years. San Antonio used the first pick in the June NBA draft to select Duncan, a center from Wake Forest University and the consensus player of the year. Robinson's injuries and team injuries destroyed the Spurs. The team finished with the third worst record since the NBA last year, after going to the playoffs every year in 1990. Robinson, 31, missed 76 of 82 games last year due to a knee injury that occurred last pre-season.

### RAPTORS COACH SIGNS CONTRACT EXTENSION

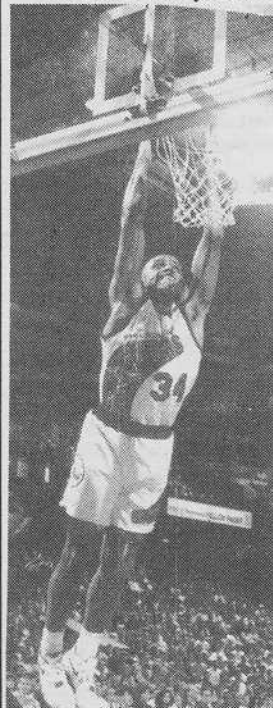
Darrell Walker, the second-youngest and lowest paid coach in the NBA last season, signed a three-year contract extension with the Toronto Raptors. Walker made \$265,000 last year - last among NBA coaches. His new deal will more than double that, earning him a reported \$1.8 million to \$2 million over the three seasons. Only New York Knicks coach Jeff Van Gundy, 35, is younger than Walker, who is 36.

### BENNETT OUT FOR YEAR; LEVENS TO TAKE PLACE

Green Bay Packer halfback Edgar Bennett is out for the season with a torn Achilles' tendon in his left leg. Bennett, the starter in a job-sharing arrangement with Dorsey Levens, was hurt on his third carry in Green Bay's 20-0 exhibition victory over Miami on Saturday. He broke free off the right guard for 18 yards before being brought down by safety Shawn Wooden. "I fully expected to go into the season splitting time with Edgar," Levens said. "I told him to keep his head up, we'll be praying. My heart goes out to him to him. But what do you say to a guy? We're competing for playing time, he goes down, what do you say to him?"

### BARKLEY APPEARS IN CLEVELAND COURT

Charles Barkley, 34, came to court Monday with a less-than-adult demeanor. Barkley, being sued for \$500,000 over a bar fight, mouthed an expletive at his accuser as the trial began in Cleveland. The trial stems from a fight at a dance club last summer when the U.S. Olympic basketball team was in town. Both parties say they acted in self-defense. The NBA star mouthed a curse at his accuser, Jeb Tyler, 24, before prospective jurors were led into the courtroom. Tyler's lawyer later asked jurors, "Does anyone have a problem with Mr. Tyler being from around Rochester, N.Y.?" Barkley raised his hand in response. The Houston Rockets' forward even patted and squeezed his lawyers' rear ends when asked to stand as the judge entered the courtroom.



BARKLEY

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