

Pistons motor past Lakers for NBA supremacy

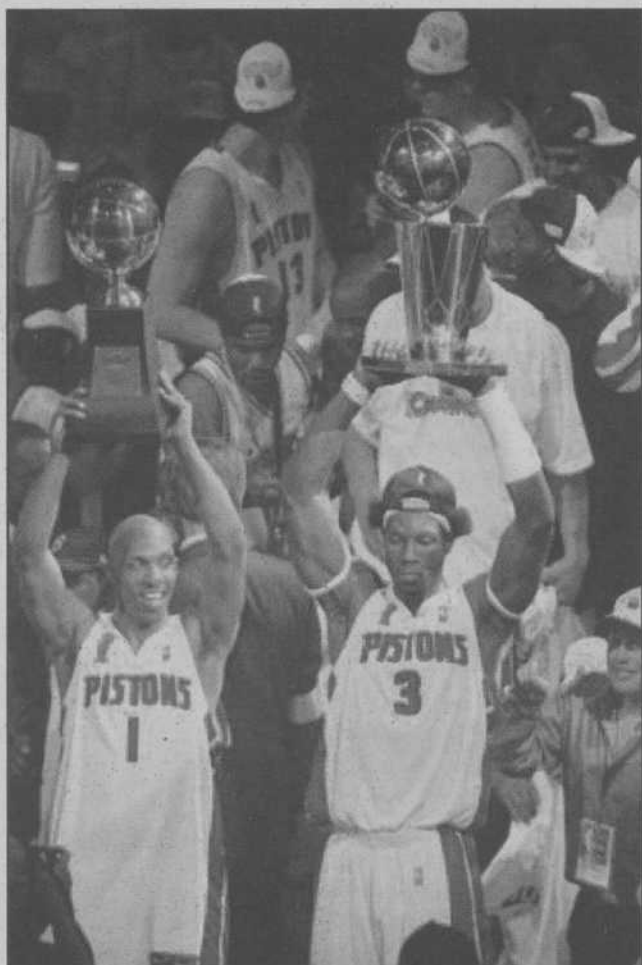
AUBURN HILLS, Mich. (AP) - Without a superstar among them and without being given much of a chance, the Detroit Pistons humiliated the Los Angeles Lakers 100-87 Tuesday night in Game 5 of the NBA Finals for their first title in 14 years.

With finals MVP Chauncey Billups and Ben Wallace leading the way, Detroit was at its very best in the clincher, defeating Shaquille O'Neal, Kobe Bryant and the rest of the Lakers in every facet of the game. It was methodical — and shocking — the way the Pistons shut down the Lakers with their patented defense and pulled ahead and away for one of the biggest surprises in NBA finals history.

"I never stopped dreamin', man," Billups said.

Wallace took a big step toward becoming a superstar with an 18-point, 22-rebound effort that helped Detroit become the first Eastern Conference team to win the title since the Michael Jordan-led Chicago Bulls in 1998.

Equally important was 14 points from Billups, the best guard on the floor through-



Detroit Pistons guard Chauncey Billups, left, holding the Most Valuable Player trophy, and superstar forward Ben Wallace, holding up the Larry O'Brien trophy, celebrate the team's NBA championship over the Los Angeles Lakers at the Palace of Auburn Hills in Michigan on Tuesday night.

out the series, 21 from Richard Hamilton and 17 from Tayshaun Prince.

"We just took it to 'em," Prince said. "We knew we could play with anybody in this league and I think we showed it."

Bryant scored 24 points to lead the Lakers, and O'Neal added 20 points and eight rebounds for a team that was built to win a championship with the addition of Karl Malone and Gary Payton this season. Derek Fisher and Slava Medvedenko were the only other Lakers in double figures, each scoring 10 points.

Game 5 was so lopsided that Lakers owner Jerry Buss, carrying his jacket and accompanied by an entourage, headed for the exit before the third quarter was over. By the time the last timeout rolled around, fans were already being urged to keep their celebrations under control.

As the final buzzer sounded and confetti began dropping, Pistons coach Larry Brown stoically walked to midcourt and received an affectionate handshake and warm smile from Lakers

coach Phil Jackson and a hug from Bryant.

After the game, Jackson said the chances of him returning to coach the Lakers are "pretty slim." Many of the other Lakers, including Bryant, could be going to another team. Bryant also faces the possibility of prison time

if he loses his sexual assault case in Colorado.

"Maybe losing this one is enough for me to say it's time to give it up," said Jackson, who has won a total of nine titles as a coach with Los Angeles and Chicago, "but I'm not yet ready to make that statement."

Mayweather convicted

LAS VEGAS (AP) - Lightweight champion Floyd Mayweather Jr., was convicted of misdemeanor battery stemming from a fight with two women inside a nightclub.

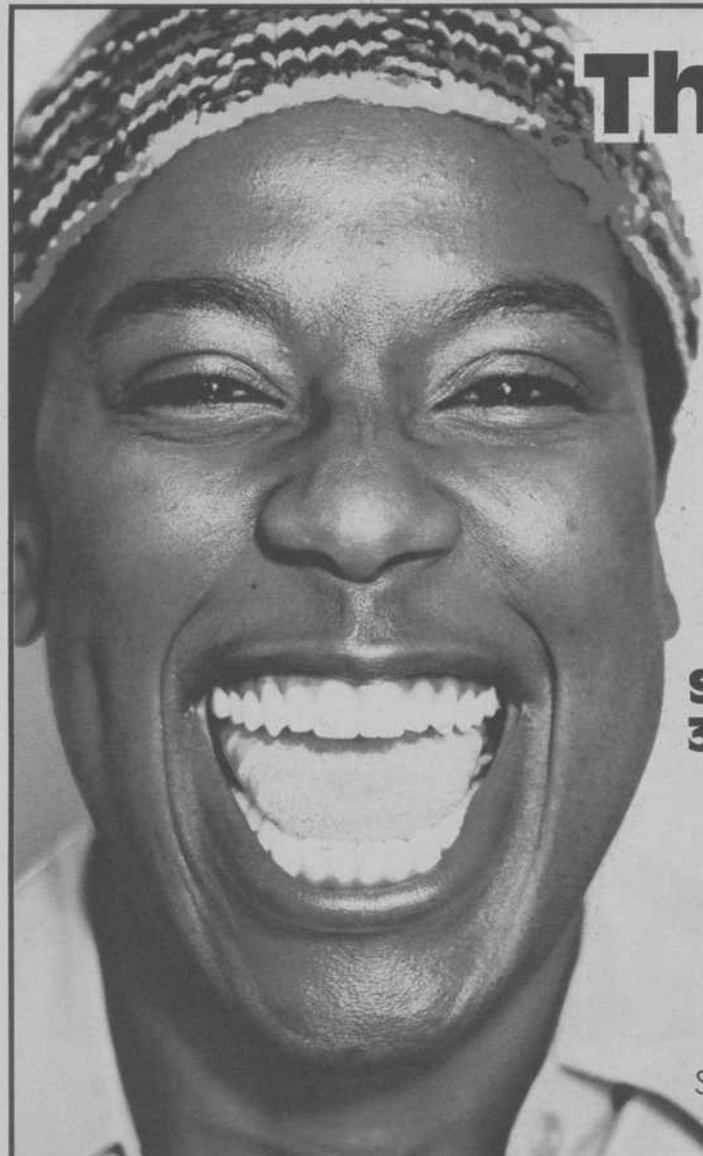
Mayweather received a suspended sentence of one year in jail and was ordered to undergo counseling. Justice of the Peace Deborah Lippis said Thursday if Mayweather didn't complete "impulse control" counseling and stay out of trouble for a year, he would spend a year in prison.

She also ordered the boxer to pay a \$1,000 fine or serve 100 hours of community service.

"You may be a terrific and famous fighter, but that doesn't make you a god," Lippis said.

Mayweather had testified he never saw the two women, who accused him of punching them in an unprovoked attack. Herneatha McGill and Kaara Blackburn said they were in a club at the Luxor hotel-casino in Las Vegas on Aug. 1 when Mayweather and several bodyguards walked in. McGill, who is friends with the mother of three of Mayweather's children, said she had a prior run-in with Mayweather and wanted to leave the club.

The women said Mayweather approached them as they started to leave.



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