

Former Clippers GM Baylor claims bias in suit

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Elgin Baylor, the former Los Angeles Clippers general manager who left the team last fall after 22 years, has sued the franchise, the NBA and team owner Donald Sterling alleging employment discrimination.

Baylor's attorney, Carl Douglas, said the lawsuit was filed recently in Los Angeles Superior Court.

Baylor is planning to hold news conferences to discuss the lawsuit, which also names club president Andy Roeser, Douglas said in a fax.

The lawsuit maintains that Baylor was "discriminated against and unceremoniously released from his position with the team on account of his age and his race" and that he was "grossly underpaid during his tenure with the Clippers, never earning more than \$350,000 per year, when compared with the compensation scheme for general managers employed by every other team in the NBA."

The NBA is named in the lawsuit, according to Douglas' fax, as "a joint venturer/partner of condoning, adopting and ratifying this discriminatory practice since the

league is fully aware of salaries paid to all of the general managers."

Clippers attorney Robert H. Platt said in a statement that he had not seen the lawsuit and couldn't comment on Baylor's specific allegations.

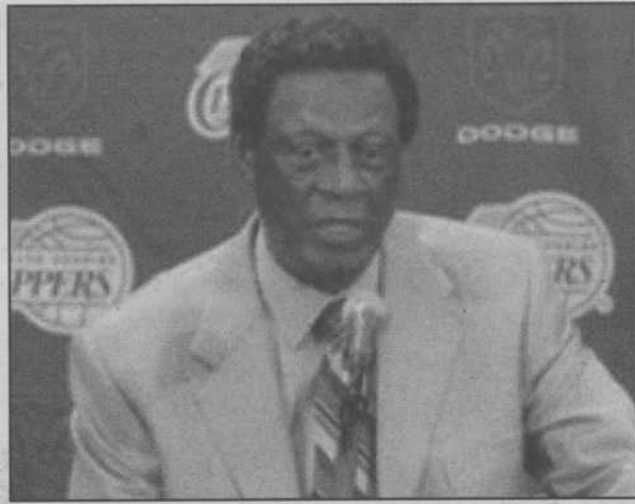
"However, I can categorically state that the Clippers always treated Elgin fairly throughout his long tenure with the team.

Prior to his decision to leave the team last October, Elgin never raised any claims of unfair treatment," Platt said.

"It's hard to believe that he would now make these ridiculous claims after the organization stood by him during 22 years and only three playoff appearances. It would be hard to find any sports team that has demonstrated greater loyalty to its general manager."

Sterling expressed surprise and disappointment when informed of the lawsuit.

"I can't imagine because Elgin has always been very, very close to me," the owner said in the team's locker room. "He's a fabulous person. I think there's some mis-



Elgin Baylor alleges employment discrimination in his suit.

take."

Baylor became vice president of basketball operations with the Clippers in 1986 after an outstanding 14-year playing career with the Lakers and a brief stint as coach of the New Orleans Jazz.

He was inducted into the Basketball Hall of Fame in 1976, chosen as one of the NBA's 50 greatest players during the league's 50th anniversary celebration in 1997, and named the NBA executive of the year following the 2005-06 season.

The Clippers have been one of the NBA's least successful franchises over the years and last made the playoffs in 2005-06, when they lost in the second round.

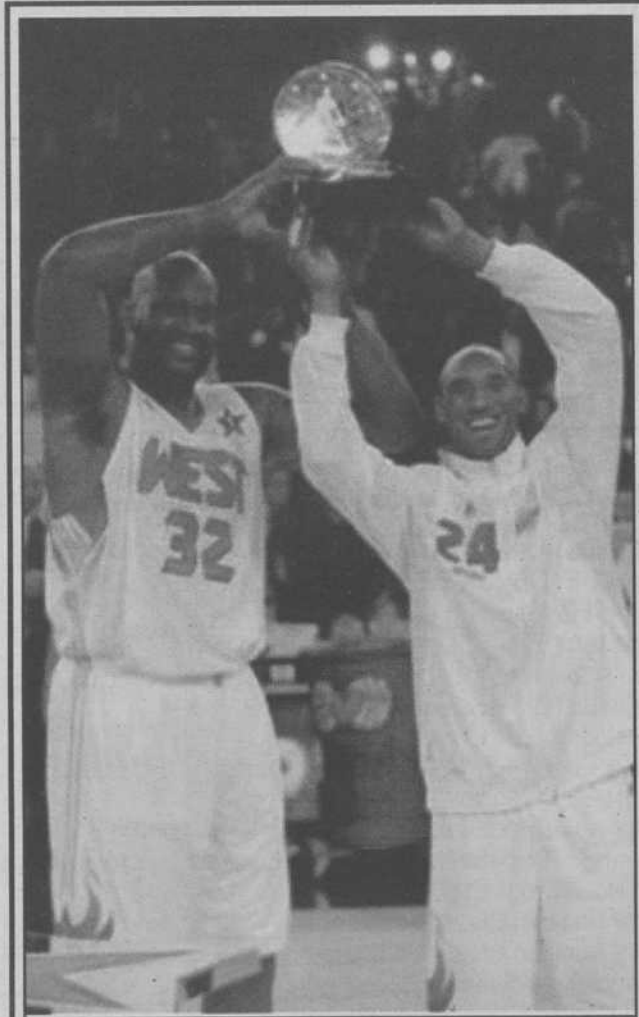
Coach Mike Dunleavy, now in his sixth season in Los Angeles, added Baylor's GM duties after the Hall of Famer's departure three weeks before the season began, while Neil Olshey was promoted to assistant general manager.

At the time, Dunleavy said Baylor had resigned.

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