

Features

Globetrotters pay Montoya's smokin' blues Asheville a visit

By Lena Burns
Staff Writer

The Harlem Globetrotters basketball team will play the New York Nationals at the Asheville Civic Center on April 6.

You have to act fast if you want to hear the song "Sweet Georgia Brown" booming through the speakers and see high-flying slam dunks and seemingly impossible half-court shots. And let's not forget those famous spinning red, white and blue basketballs.

"I have never played in Asheville before. I am very excited. Everyday is a new experience," said rookie Harlem Globetrotter Curly Johnson.

Not to be confused with a teammate of the same name, Johnson has only been with the Globetrotters for one year. Globetrotter-wannabes are invited to try out for the team through a special camp. The recruiters choose new players by the way a player plays his personality, character and his ability to be an all-around good person, according to Johnson.

No stunts are required when trying out, but the Globetrotters are best known for their amazing stunts and amusing dribbling skills.

The Harlem Globetrotters have been playing for the last 73 years, since 1927, and have performed in 115 countries for over 100 million fans. This 2000 season marks the 73rd consecutive season of play, according to a press release about the Globe Trotters.

No other professional sports teams have played as many games as the Globetrotters. January 1998 marked the

team's 20,000th game, and in the past four years the Harlem Globetrotters have played almost 800 cities in the United States and Canada.

They have appeared in more than 80 countries around the globe, according to the press release.

The Harlem Globetrotters consists of 24 players who are separated into two divisions, east and west coast, according to Johnson.

The Harlem Globetrotters were the first team in history to receive the

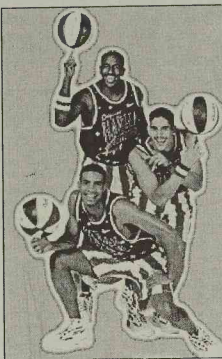


PHOTO COURTESY OF THE HARLEM GLOBETROTTERS WEB PAGE

The Harlem Globetrotters play in the Asheville Civic Center April 6.

Profile

John Bunn award during the Naismith Basketball Hall of Fame ceremony in Sept. 1999, according to the press release.

The award annually honors a national or international figure or team who has contributed immensely to basketball. "As a former player and now owner, it is an honor to be the first team in history to receive the prestigious John Bunn award," said Mannie Jackson, owner and chairman of the Globetrotters, in the press release.

Jackson made history when he bought the Harlem Globetrotters in 1993. He was

the first African-American to own a major international sports franchise.

The Harlem Globetrotters have won more games than any other professional team in history, according to the press release. They began their well-known dribbling and stunt routines one day in 1939. The Globetrotters were leading by a score of 112-5 and for kicks began to clown around. The crowd loved it, and since then have entertained crowds with their wild stunts.

The legendary Globetrotter Inman Jackson created the famous pivot role that the players perform, the "weave around."

Over 100 million fans worldwide have witnessed the magic of the Harlem Globetrotters, according to the press release. The numbers will keep rising as the team reaches its 73rd season.

By Melissa Starnes
Staff Writer

Blues guitarist Coco Montoya played at Be Here Now on March 29. The smoke in the bar may not have only been from cigarettes, but also from Montoya's ultimate guitar playing ability.

I had neither gone to Be Here Now nor heard a blues guitarist play before, so all of this was a new experience for me.

The crowd cheered as Montoya and his three band members came on stage. I had never heard of him before, but I'm guessing that he is a well-respected artist, because over 50 people showed up for the concert.

He played the type of music that people can either dance to or just sit and enjoy. When he played the second song, I looked around and saw that at least four people were bobbing their heads to the beat of the music. It made me laugh, but as he continued to play, I found myself wanting to bob my head and tap my foot to the beat.

I liked his music, though many of his songs sounded the same. He said he would play a mix of old and new songs. Most of his songs were fast, except for a few that were toned down into slow, melodic songs.

My favorite song was the last one I heard before leaving. The song was about a guy's point of view in a relationship, and I remember one line from the lyrics was "Am I losing you?"

What was different about this song was the dynamics. Some parts were fast and loud, while others were slow and melancholy-sounding. All the instruments played quieter during these parts. I liked this song's unpredictability be-

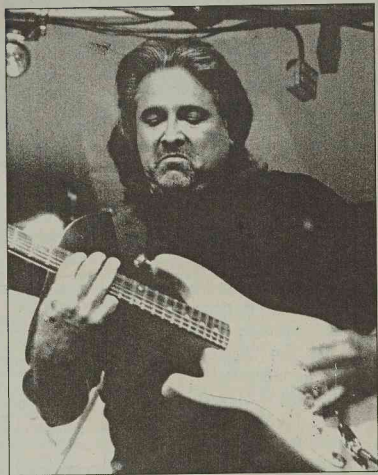


PHOTO BY JUSTIN MECKES

Coco Montoya, a blues guitarist, performed at Be Here Now on March 29.

cause it surprised me when the music got faster or slower. The song "You Didn't Think About That" was upbeat. The lyrics were told from a man's point of view. From this song on, many audience members danced

in front of the stage. Though most were probably drunk and danced like '60s love children, I could see that the audience received Montoya's music well.

Montoya has a solid, rich voice. The speaker system was extremely loud, but I could understand most of his lyrics. It seemed that the lyrics were mostly about heartache and the ups and downs of relationships. He sang with his eyes closed, and had a serious

expression on his face during all of the songs.

Though I know nothing about what good guitar and bad guitar playing sounds like, I could tell that Montoya has great talent.

"I think they were incredibly good musicians," said Katie Hayden, a music and Spanish major. "As a group, they blended together well, yet each instrumentalist had their own personal style."

The band mainly stood still during the concert, except for bobbing their heads and tapping their feet.

After about three songs, I got a little bored with just watching them and hoped they would do something more exciting. Later, I got what I asked for.

Montoya made the sound of someone crying on his guitar.

I have never heard anybody do something like this before.

I enjoy friendly musicians. Montoya encouraged the audience to cheer and made jokes between some songs.

He loved playing his music and no one in the band seemed tired or bored, even after an hour and a half of playing.

Montoya's most recent album is called *Suspicion*. This is his fourth solo album. His career began when, by chance, he met blues legend Al Collins, and later became a drummer for his band. Collins began teaching Montoya the guitar, according to a press release announcing the event. After ten years of playing with a band called The Bluesbreakers, Montoya decided to start a career and released *Gotta Start To Travel* in 1995.

The following year came the album *Ya Think I'd Know Better*. After that, in 1997, he released *Just Let Go*, according to the press release.

Review

"Breathing Troubled Air—A Prayer for the Mountaintains," a documentary video about the effects of air pollution in Western North Carolina, will be presented on April 11 at 7 p.m. in Lipsinsky Auditorium with a discussion panel following.

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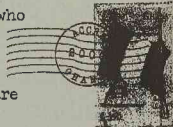
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Tickets available at:
Highsmith Student Center
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Sponsored by The YMI Cultural Center. This event is supported in part from the North Carolina Arts Council, a state agency.

There are those who shy away from challenges.

And then there are those who travel 9,000 miles looking for them.



Wednesday, April 12 at UNC Asheville

Distant Dialogues: Personal Writings from returned Peace Corps volunteers
YMI Cultural Center, Big AI Room
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