



Sportsbeat

Sampson's challenge

A Syndicated Column

Before he played his first professional game as a Houston Rocket, **Ralph Sampson** had already been heralded as the world's greatest rookie basketball player. Fresh from the campus of the University of Virginia, the 7-foot-4-inch center was already being compared to legends such as Chamberlain and Jabbar. He was inspected, interviewed and analyzed by the hungry media, their routinely overused superlatives like "awesome" and "superstar" quickly giving way to the more grandiose "savior" and "messiah".

The pressure to lead the prostrate Rockets, last year the worst team in the NBA, to victory, plus the constant media attention, would be a heady experience for the ordinary mortal.

But this 23-year-old first-round draft pick, his fate sealed by a four-year, \$5 million contract, is not ordinary.

And he is determined not to change.

"Ever since I can remember, I've tried to be myself in every facet of my life, be it Ralph Sampson the basketball player or Ralph Sampson the private individual," he explains.

Ralph Sampson the basketball player may revolutionize the position of center, using graceful, guard-like dribbling and accurate outside shooting to create imaginative plays all his own.

Yet he is a consummate team player, insisting, "I'm Please see page B5



Football star O.J. Simpson suffered from rickets and had to wear leg braces as a child.

Fighting For A Board

Carver's Latesa Peebles (30) pulls down an offensive rebound against Atkins' Angela Young (12). The final 9-10 basketball season ever closes this week with the boys' and girls' tournaments (photo by James Parker).

Black College Briefs

Quarterback Joe Gilliam cut by USFL team, career may end

By BARRY COOPER, Syndicated Columnist

SAINT LEO, Fla. -- Former Tennessee State star quarterback "Jefferson Street" Joe Gilliam has been cut by the Washington Federals of the United States Football League. It was another in a series of disappointments for Gilliam, who once graced the cover of *Sports Illustrated* and seemed headed for NFL stardom with the Pittsburgh Steelers. A bout with heroin ended his NFL career, however.

Last year, the Federals signed Gilliam to a one-year contract, and he played in four games, completing 40 of 102 passes for 673 yards, five touchdowns and 12 interceptions. But Gilliam proved expendable when the Federals acquired another black quarterback, Reggie Collier, who played last year for the Birmingham Stallions of the USFL.

Small Colleges And TV

WASHINGTON -- The federal government has asked the U.S. Supreme Court to rule that the NCAA's multimillion-dollar college football television package is anti-competitive. The government's involvement in the case is seen as a shot in the arm for the College Football Association, which has filed suit against the NCAA and is attempting to wrest control of TV rights from the organization.

Many feel that if the CFA wins this battle -- the Supreme Court is to reach a decision sometime this year -- it will mean the end of network television appearances by virtually all small colleges.

No Closer

DAYTONA BEACH, Fla. -- Black college football rivals Bethune-Cookman and Florida A&M are no closer to a resumption of their series than they were at this time last year, sources say.

Several weeks ago, it appeared there had been a break in the stalemate, when FAMU revealed on Coach Rudy Hubbard's television show that a tentative agreement had been reached to play the game this year on Nov. 3.

But B-CC officials immediately denied

that any agreement had been reached. Later, the Wildcats announced that they had offered FAMU a \$150,000 guarantee to play the game in Tampa this year. FAMU responded by blasting the Wildcats for making the negotiations public.

Insiders say that if the series is resumed this year, the first game would be played in Tallahassee. If not, the series would resume in 1985 with Tampa as the site. The teams did not play in 1983 after failing to agree on where to play.

Bethune-Cookman wanted the game played in Tampa, as it had been for five previous seasons, while FAMU wanted it played elsewhere.

MEAC's Berth Safe

MISSION, Kan. -- The Mid-Eastern Athletic Conference's automatic berth to the NCAA basketball tournament remains in effect, despite rumors to the contrary. The MEAC several months ago lost its berth in the Division I-AA football playoffs after Florida A&M was declared ineligible for the MEAC championship and then withdrew from the league.

Losing FAMU meant the MEAC was one team shy of the minimum number of football-playing schools the NCAA requires for automatic participation in the I-AA playoffs.

But the MEAC is on firm footing in basketball since league member Maryland-Eastern Shore, which does not play football, gives the conference a sixth basketball-playing school. The berth in the NCAA tournament will be worth at least \$9,000, \$13,000 of which would go to the MEAC office.

This And That

Former North Carolina A&T Coach Jim McKinley, fired recently from his job as head coach at Prairie View A&M, has been named defensive line coach for the Oklahoma Outlaws of the United States Football League. Among those recently inducted into the Florida A&M Sports Hall of Fame was Henry "Killer" Lawrence, who played at FAMU from 1969 to 1973 and now plays for the Los Angeles Raiders.

Reynolds tops Smith From Page B2

the locker room down by only two. Following intermission, Kenny Mickens began to find his range, hitting a 20-foot jumper on the Demons' first possession of the half and a 17-foot jumper moments later. When Mickens cooled off, Oliver got the hot hand, hitting two free throws and an outside jumper to boost the Demons' lead to 46-40.

From that point, Reynolds began to exert its dominance on both ends of the

court. Oliver paced Reynolds in scoring with 14 points in less than three periods of play. Maxwell and Moss both chipped in with 11. Mickens scored only six, but all of his points came in the decisive third quarter.

Leading the way for Smith were Hammonds and Bates with 13 points each. The Eagles' fiery point guard, Fonville, had 11.

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