

# NBA finals offer rematch for Lakers, Pistons

The NBA finals are finally here, and nobody is surprised at the matchup.

Oh sure, some thought that Karl Malone and the Utah Jazz could knock off the Lakers, but Golden State took care of them. So we have the Lakers and the Pistons again, but many things have changed from last year.

For one, Detroit now has the home court edge that was so critical for L.A. last year. Also, Adrian Dantley will be watching at home in Dallas while Mark Aguirre gets to play. Both teams have raised their playing levels to championship caliber. So we should be in for an exciting series.

The Detroit Pistons' game plan is centered around their ability to domi-

**John Voncannon**  
Staff Writer

nate a game on the defensive end. Led by reserve forward Dennis "the Worm" Rodman and guard Joe Dumars, the Pistons consistently frustrate their opponents into bad shots or, in the case of Michael Jordan, no shots. Detroit forces you into a game in which its defense sets the tempo.

On the offensive end, the Pistons are led by their guard trio of Isiah Thomas, Vinnie Johnson and Dumars. Aguirre and John "Spider" Salley get the job done inside. The "Bruise

Brothers," Bill Laimbeer and Rick Mahorn, can set some bone-crushing picks. Rodman's intensity on the offensive boards has sparked Detroit's play many times during the playoffs.

The key to the Pistons is Isiah Thomas realizing his role for any given game. Known as "Pocket Magic," the 6-1 Thomas has the ability to dominate for an extended period of time. In the past, he was known for his penchant to try to do everything on his own. However, during the playoffs, Isiah has done what is necessary for his team to win. This was most evident during the Chicago series, as he stole the limelight from Michael Jordan. It will be difficult to pull the same feat against the "Magic"

man. The Lakers are an old bunch, but they continue to run with the grace of gazelles. Led by MVP Magic Johnson, the Lakers offense is perhaps the most efficient in the league. Former UNC star James Worthy is a consistently explosive force in the paint. Byron Scott provides the outside touch. A.C. Green and Mychal Thompson give the Lakers a toughness on the inside that is needed to compete in the playoffs. What more can be said about Kareem? Despite struggling early in the season, Abdul-Jabbar is still deadly with the sky hook.

This season may be a true testimony to Johnson's ability and desire

to win. Everyone knows about Johnson's spectacular passing, but few are aware of his knowledge of the game. Johnson can read a defense in an instant and get the ball to the open man at just the right moment. This has been particularly beneficial for Worthy and Scott. Magic has also made his outside shot more consistent so defenders cannot cheat on defense. Although some may argue for Oscar Robertson, Magic Johnson gets my vote as the best guard of all time.

This series is true pick-em. Both teams are playing like champions and have an intense desire to win.

My vote goes to the Lakers simply because of their tradition. The Lakers are developing their own mystique — similar to what Boston has had for the last three decades. L.A. also has the Magic factor which makes up for any other weaknesses.

Look for big games from Worthy and Vinnie Johnson. Also watch Isiah Thomas' role in this series. If he can play up to Magic's level, then the Pistons could take the championship.

However, my feeling is that the Lakers will win in seven.

# Pro baseball picks three Tar Heels

From Associated Press reports

Three players from North Carolina's College World Series team were drafted on the first day of the major league draft.

All-Atlantic Coast Conference catcher Jesse Levis, from Philadelphia, was selected in the fourth round by the Cleveland Indians on Monday. Levis led the Tar Heels in batting with a .341 average, hit six home runs and drove in 38 runs.

Other Tar Heels selected were junior pitcher John Thoden, from Medford, N.Y., and junior pitcher Scott Lodgek, from Moorestown, N.J.

Thoden was picked in the 11th round by Montreal. He was 12-1 with a 2.42 ERA and 98 strikeouts in 133 2-3 innings this year.

Lodgek was taken by the Seattle Mariners but the round was unavailable. He was 1-0 and pitched only 14 1-3 innings this season.

By mutual agreement, major league teams announce only the first round selections. The rest of the picks will be announced by teams in the week of June 19.

The schedules were announced Tuesday for the four doubleheaders to be played between Dec. 4 and Dec. 7, 1989. All games will be televised by ESPN.

The first doubleheader will take place Dec. 4 at the Hartford Civic Center with a game between the two third seeds, Pitt and Georgia Tech, followed by the two No. 8s, Connecticut and Maryland.

The seedings are based on balloting by coaches who ranked members of conferences from first to last.

The Greensboro Coliseum will host the next two doubleheaders.

On Dec. 5, national runner-up Seton Hall of the Big East will meet Wake Forest in a game between No. 7 teams, followed by the two fourth seeds, North Carolina State and St. John's.

The next night will feature No. 5 seeds Clemson and Providence and second seeds Syracuse and Duke. Duke made the Final Four last year,

Syracuse the final eight in the NCAA tournament.

The final doubleheader will be Thursday Dec. 7 at Byrne Meadowlands Arena with No. 6 Villanova and Virginia preceding Georgetown and North Carolina.

The Big East has nine members and Boston College will not participate. But the Eagles are guaranteed a berth next year regardless of seeding.

### Hearns has one last shot

LAS VEGAS — Thomas Hearns has fought Sugar Ray Leonard many times in his mind.

Monday night, he will fight Leonard for real for the second time. It's a fight Hearns has lived for, often despaired for.

"Sometimes I sit in my room just thinking about Leonard and hoping and praying everything will go all right June 12," Hearns said Tuesday. Things didn't go all right Sept.

16, 1981, in the ring at Caesars Palace, where the rematch will be held.

Hearns, boxing beautifully after being hurt in the sixth and seventh rounds, was ahead of Leonard on all three official cards in their battle for the undisputed welterweight championship. Then, Hearns was knocked down in the 13th round and stopped in the 14th.

Since then, Hearns has been knocked out in the third round of a sensational fight with Marvelous Marvin Hagler and knocked out in the third round by Iran Barkley in a shocking upset.

Hearns will earn at least \$11 million for the rematch, but to one of the most successful boxers of the 1970s and 1980s, a victory over Leonard would be priceless.

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RAIN OR SHINE  
Some items not available on Tuesday.