

SPORTS PROBE

by Steve K. Walz

New York—Every year a healthy group of able bodied youngsters graduate from the minor leagues, where the pay is low but the training invaluable, into a major league uniform. Up in the big-time the minimum pay is in excess of \$20,000 and the travel accom-

modations first class. But the manager, teammates, fans and the press all expect him to perform minor miracles, for the rookie represents the future of the ballclub. Here is a list of American League hotshots:

Rookie class of 1980 American League



California Angels
Bob Clark and Gil Kubski—Both are excellent hitting outfielders, but will probably shuttle between 'AAA' ball and Anaheim.



Baltimore Orioles
Dave Ford—Expected to solidify Earl Weaver's bullpen.



Milwaukee Brewers
Dan Boitano—The Brewers are short in the bullpen and this hurler is expected to fill the gap.



Chicago White Sox
Britt Burns—At 20 years old, this flame-throwing lefty is one of the most promising pitchers in the American League.

Rich Dotson—Another good young hurler for manager Tony La Russa.

Harold Baines—The prize of the front office. Bill Veck found him playing Little League ball a decade ago and saw this outfielder hit the long ball even then.



Cleveland Indians
Joe Charboneau—Power hitting flycatcher needs to learn the opposing pitchers, but has shown flashes of brilliance with the bat.
Jerry Dybzinski—Homegrown infield product with lots of range and some pop in the bat.



Detroit Tigers
Kirk Gibson—The most heralded rookie in the A.L., this outfielder is expected to perform heroics the way Al Kaline used to in the 60's.



Dennis Werth

Mike Griffin



New York Yankees
Mike Griffin—A hard throwing starter and long reliever who needs to pitch regularly to be effective.
Dennis Werth—At 27 he is what they call a 'late bloomer.' Good with the bat and versatile in the field.



Oakland A's
Jeff Jones—Billy Martin likes this kid's arm for his mound corps.
Ray Casey—Power hitter who will be used as a pinch hitter this year.
Next week—The National League rookies.

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A MAGICAL SHOWING

Los Angeles Lakers Win NBA Championship Over Philadelphia

BY LARRY BARBER

The magic of rookie Earvin Johnson, a silky explosion by veteran Jamaal Wilkes, inspired team-play, and the spirit of Kareem Abdul-Jabbar; provided the Los Angeles Lakers with a shocking 123-107 victory over the home-standing Philadelphia 76ers Friday night in the sixth game of the 1979-80 National Basketball Association finals, and awarded them the league's coveted World Championship Trophy. This completed its 34th season. The win gave Los Angeles its second championship in nine years, and obliterated Philadelphia's hopes of adding to its 1967 title.

NBA history is glittered with incomparable players, super teams, and unbelievable games, but the gem turned in by Earvin "Magic" Johnson Friday night will go down as one of the greatest individual efforts ever recorded, especially in a championship situation. "Magic", at 6-8½, is said to be the tallest guard to play in the NBA, and in that sixth and deciding contest; he started at center, although he ended up playing all over the floor. Of the unfamiliar position, Johnson answered all questions and stunned all second-guessers from the opening tip, as he demoralized Philly with 14 of 23 field goals and went 14-14 from the foul strip on his way to a series single-game-high 42 points, while ripping off fifteen rebounds, handing out seven assists,

stealing three balls, and leading a furious Laker fast break. With his amazing instinct and uncanny court sense, "Magic" kept the Sixers off balance as he moved from the post to power forward, to the backcourt, and again to the middle whenever the change presented itself. He surprised Philly with outside jumpers, went inside to score, helped manhandle the boards, and penetrated the defense time after time. LA coach Paul Westhead said that the rookie was like Houdini out there, and Philly coach Billy Cunningham admitted that when his club got close, it was Johnson and Wilkes who beat them back. Wilkes, a smooth surgeon-like 6-6 forward, probably played the game of his career as he connected on 16 of 30 field goals and all five free throws in route to a 37-point, 10-rebound performance.

Johnson, who as a sophomore, led Michigan State to the 1979 NCAA Championship, looked somewhat subdued following the game, and said, "It hasn't sunk in yet. Maybe when I get back to the hotel I'll be able to relax and enjoy it."

Magic became only the third rookie to secure those back-to-back titles, joining Bill Russell and Henry Bibby. For his stimulating exhibition Friday, and all through the series, the twenty year-old star was named the Most Valuable Player, which compensates for his not

being chosen Rookie of the Year. Boston's Larry Bird, whose Indiana State Team lost to Johnson and Michigan State in last year's college finale, won the rookie award.

Why did Johnson start at center, and why did he and Wilkes score so much? Well, team leader and captain Abdul-Jabbar was in Los Angeles nursing a sprained ankle suffered in Wednesday's 108-103 win, where he scored forty points. Like most, he anticipated a seventh game, and wanted to be as strong as possible.

Because of the tragedy, LA was expected to buckle under the superior inside strength led by Darryl Dawkins, but they jumped to an early lead and matched the Sixers through a first half that ended 60-60.

In the third quarter, the Lakers cranked up again, and in one instance reeled off fourteen consecutive points. Philadelphia refused to die, and finally caught up with the Lakers in the last period, but Wilkes and Johnson would not be denied as they guided LA through its final and deciding victory burst. Substitute and defensive ace Michael Cooper, who started at guard, had sixteen points. Jim Chones added eleven and ten rebounds.

Another starting sub Mark Landsberger scored five, but had ten retrieves, while Norm Nixon contributed nine assists and four points.

Brad Holland came off the bench to hit eight big points; Marty Byrnes did

not score, and Butch Lee did not play. Spencer Haywood had been suspended following game two of the championship series.

Julius "Dr. J" Erving, who scored 36 points Wednesday night, led the Sixers with 27, while Steve Mix had eighteen. Dawkins, who figured to romp, finished with only fourteen points and a miserable four rebounds. Lionel Hollins and Maurice Cheeks concluded their season with thirteen points each.

A telling difference in the series was rebounding, as the Lakers won that department in each game and totalled 308 to Philly's 223 for the six games. Despite the absence of Jabbar in Friday's contest, LA still managed to out-rebound the 76ers 52-36.

Erving said they never really solved the rebounding problem, and Cunningham lamented, "They played flawless basketball. They were quick getting the steal and had the ball down court before the buzzer. They proved they were not a one-man team, and put on the greatest performance I have ever seen. Wilkes was awesome, and as for Johnson, if you ask me to compare him with Larry Bird, I'd have to take Johnson."

Magic realized from the start what had to be done, and said, "I just tried to play where I was needed." So it was, and so he did, and all Laker followers are grateful for that.

Elson's Really Exclusive Pre-Season 1980 NCAA Football Forecast

BY ELSON ARMSTRONG

1. **Southern California** — If there's a football team in America that'll beat Troy in 1980 it's probably located in Pittsburgh (as in Steelers). The monstrous Trojans should be a sight to behold. A 21-21 tie with Stanford cost John Robinson a National Crown in 1979 but there shouldn't be that kind of foul up this year. A possible NCAA probation looms because of some academic hanky panky.

2. **Oklahoma** — Are they used to winning seasons in Norman? Just feast your eyes on the Sooner Record over the past decade: 1971-11-1; 1972-11-1; 1973-10-0-1; 1974-11-0; 1975-11-1; 1976-8-3 (A lousy year!); 1977-10-2; 1978-11-1; 1979-11-1. This trend should continue in 1980 and if USC is sacked by the NCAA then Boomer Sooner may be the No. 1 fight song in the land.

3. **Ohio State** — Hey, there's something strange going on in Columbus. The Buckeyes have an exciting passing attack and Coach Earl Bruce has the fanatical legions chanting "Woody Who?" A bitter 17-16 loss to USC in the Rose Bowl robbed OSU of a national title last season. In '80 the Bucks want to go one better.

4. **Alabama** — As usual Bear Bryant will mumble about how sorry his team will be this year and as usual the tide will respond by winning the SEC and the Sugar Bowl. This squad while not as talented as the '79 NCAA Champs should still be pretty darned good.

5. **Pittsburgh** — Oh, that city of champions just keeps turning out winners like an assembly line. Last year the Panthers' only loss was to North Carolina. Pitt again should be "it" in the East and they should capture a second straight.

6. **Notre Dame** — How bad was 1979 for the Irish? Things were so low that announcer Lindsey Nelson almost choked while saying "We now move to further action". Clemson, Tennessee, and USC made things miserable in South Bend. 1980 should be a great improvement, but alas, no national title.

7. **Purdue** — The Boilermakers have been sneaking up on the nation for the past two seasons and they've won two bowl games. This year they should really make some noise and seriously challenge Ohio State in the Big Ten.

9. **Nebraska** — The Cornhuskers screwed up in the dying seconds of the Cotton Bowl and lost to Houston. The winning ways should return to Lincoln and the 'Huskers should finish second to you know who in the Big Eight.

10. **UCLA** — All went kaput in Westwood last year after the loss to Ohio State. This time out the Bruins should beat just about everyone they play before doing their usual elfoldo against USC.

11. **Brigham Young** — The college of the throwing quarterbacks was very impressive last year (they even have black players now!!!) They should win their third

straight WAC Title and another Holiday Bowl appearance is a distinct possibility.

12. **North Carolina** — In 1979 Coach Dick Crum got the Tarheel faithful in Chapel Hill-Durham off his back when he led Carolina to wins over Pittsburgh, N.C. State, South Carolina, and upset Michigan in the Gator Bowl. The love affair should continue in 1980 as the Heels march to the ACC Title.

13. **Stanford** — Last season after all those lofty pre-season rankings (as high as number six), the Cardinals fell on their collective faces. In 1980, the Farm should be jumping as the winning ways return and the AX is returned from Cal.

14. **Michigan** — How long has it been since the Wolverines won their last game of the year? How does 1969 grab you? Maybe, just maybe, it'll happen in '80 but don't hold you breath.

15. **Penn State** — Joe Paterno, probably the classiest coach in America, says that football should be fun. Again Joe should be smiling all the way to bowl game somewhere.

16. **Houston** — The Cougars over the years have been the nation's most explosive outfit. (Remember when they mauled Tulsa 100-6 in 1968?). That killer Veer should roll again as usual.

17. **Texas** — The Longhorns were great on defense last year but their offense was really lacking. This kind of trouble should continue this year.

18. **South Carolina** — The Gamecocks' running back George Rogers (maybe the most powerful runner since Earl Campbell) led the Palmetto school to an 8-3 record, the best ever in the school's history. It may be tough to repeat that because the '80 schedule is much stronger. This USC will play the California USC sometime in October.

19. **Auburn** — Are the Tigers finally good enough to beat Alabama for the first time since 1972? No, but they should give everyone else on their schedule fits.

20. **Florida State** — Last year the Seminoles were rolling like a south Florida hurricane until those bad guys from Oklahoma scalped them in the Orange Bowl. 1980 should be a good year but FSU will not surprise anybody this time.

Sleeper Teams of 1980

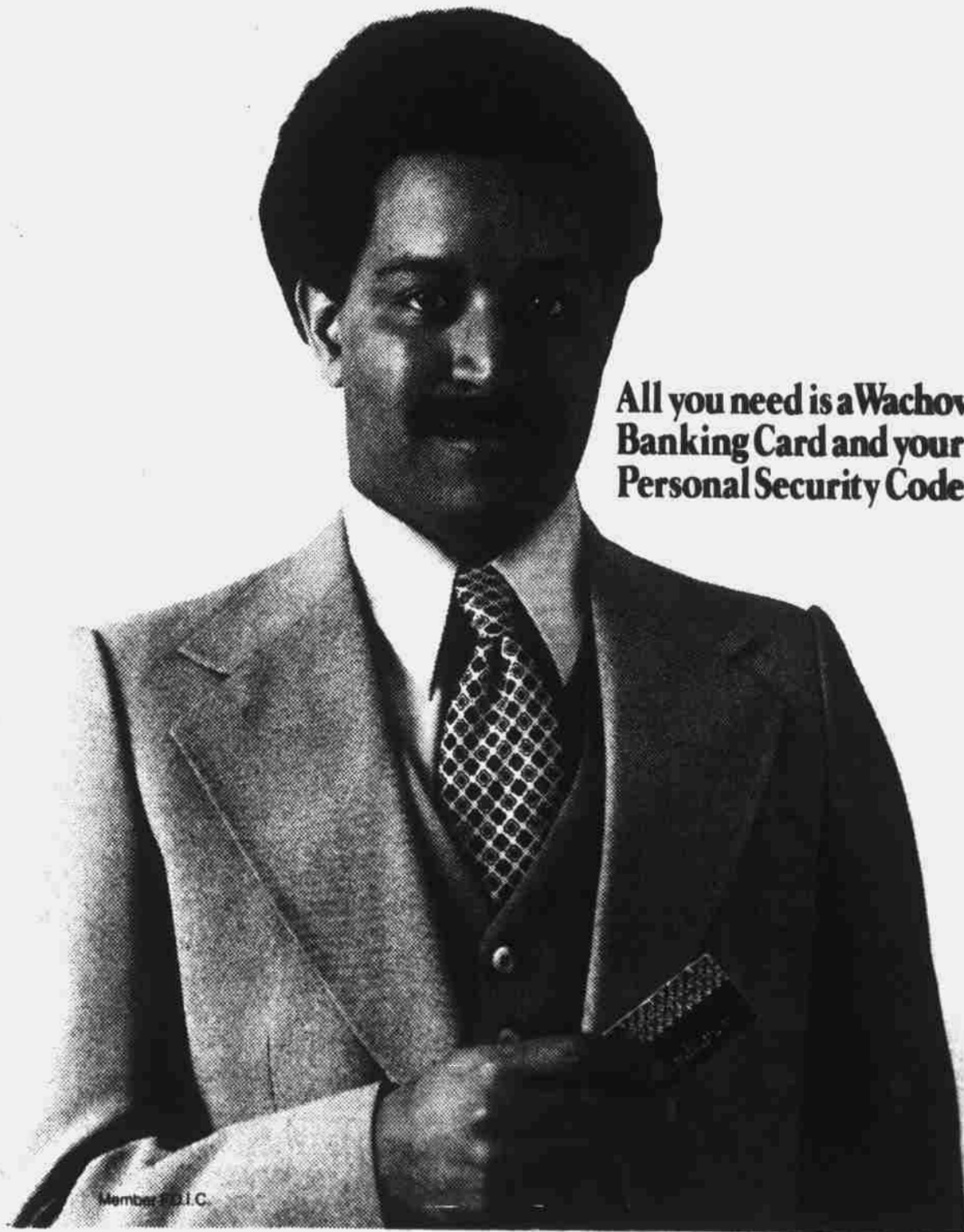
Fresno State — Jim Sweeney who coached the Bulldogs to dizzying heights in 1977 is back in the raise capital and the way that he's recruiting the 'Dogs new 30,000 seat stadium may be sold out from day one.

Duke — In Durham they're saying that "Red means Go" in honor of Coach Red Wilson's attempts to liven up the Blue Devils football fortunes. He's brought in numerous hot shot recruits to help him in this endeavor.

Virginia — Look for the Wahoos! Last year they thrashed Georgia 31-0 in Athens.

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