

sports

Walton revelations in book

United Press International
PORTLAND, Ore. — Bill Walton was as innocent as a Boy Scout in his early days in the NBA, according to one of his former coaches, and the rumors about the Portland Trail Blazers' center quitting in his rookie year were true.

The revelations are contained in excerpts from a book by Jack Scott published in four parts in The Oregonian last week under an exclusive arrangement with Scott and the newspaper.

Scott's book, entitled "Bill Walton, on the Road with the Portland Trail Blazers," is scheduled for publication June 14. Scott and his wife Micki shared a home with Walton

his first three years in Portland. In the first excerpt, Scott said the toughest task Walton ever faced was changing his children's diapers. In subsequent excerpts, it was revealed that Tom Meschery, assistant to then Portland Coach Lenny Wilkens and a veteran of NBA play and professional coaching, became a fast friend of Walton as a rookie and second-year player.

Meschery, says Scott, was the man the Blazers management turned to when it wanted to know what Walton was thinking.

"Tom never ceased to marvel at Bill's innocence," wrote Scott. Meschery told Scott "compared to most NBA players, Bill lives like a Boy

Scout. The harder we work him in practice, the more he loves it! I've never met anyone quite like him. We'd be in great shape if everybody on the team had his attitude."

Scott said Meschery's main concern about Walton was not his basketball intelligence, but whether "he's mean enough to play in the NBA." Meschery found out in practice one day when he took on Bill in practice and was working him over. Bill, wrote Scott, realigned Tom's nose. But, with blood dripping over him, Tom was grinning because he knew Walton could play rough when he had to.

Scott says Walton has matured, but his lifestyle basically is the same as when he came out of UCLA. And so are his social values. He also noted that Trail Blazer teammates who were critical of Bill's attitude on social issues in his first two years no longer are with the team.

Scott said Bill made suggestions to Blazer General Manager Harry Glickman and to new coach Jack Ramsay for team-oriented basketball, and changes were made which produced a championship in Portland in Walton's third year.

Scott said Bill's social and political values presented minimal problems

to his playing in the NBA, and added that one problem that almost drove him to quit the Blazers in his first year was having to play with a number of teammates who cared little about teamwork.

Scott revealed that Walton played with pain later in the season and during the playoffs last year. Scott said Walton kept playing because he felt a sense of loyalty to the fans, his coach and teammates, and because socializing regularly with team physician Dr. Bob Cook had made him more receptive to many traditional sports medicine practices that he shunned when he first joined the league.

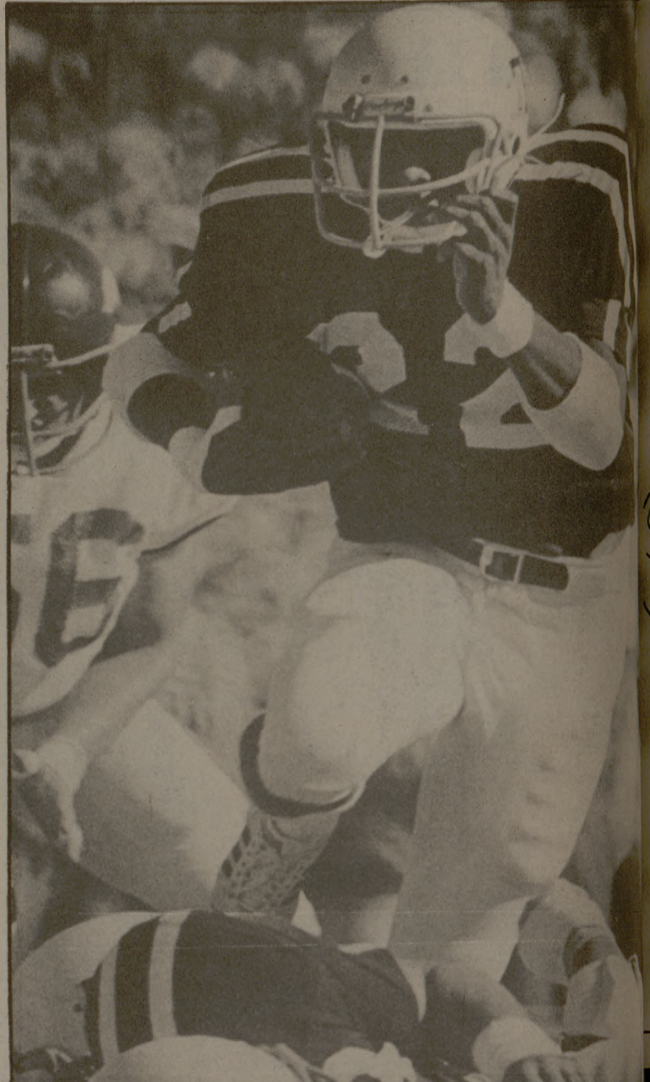
Walton made a similar effort in the playoffs this season, taking a shot to soften the pain in an ailing left foot, then breaking that foot near the ankle in game two of the quarterfinals against Seattle. He has not said a word for public consumption since.

Scott revealed that Walton was ready to quit Portland in his first year in frustration over a string of injuries that plagued him. He wanted to form an independent team of politically progressive

players to travel the country, playing games on college campuses, Indian reservations, and in community centers and prisons. In addition, players would get together with spectators after games for discussions of social and political issues, such as drug usage, the causes of crime, racism, nutrition and other matters.

Gary Walker, a Phoenix businessman and advisor to Blazer guard Lionel Hollins along with New York Yankee star Reggie Jackson, were interested in the project. After Walton got into a dispute with Sam Gilbert, the Los Angeles businessman who helped negotiate Walton's original contract with Portland, and turned elsewhere for advice, Walton's new lawyer, Charles Garry of San Francisco, dissuaded Walton from quitting the NBA.

Scott wrote that Garry never mentioned the money Bill would lose should he quit the NBA, but instead made Walton realize his unique position as a potential star of the NBA and how all the positive contributions he could make from that position would evaporate.



Back to the gridiron

Texas A&M's Curtis Dickey, having completed his sophomore track season, can now concentrate on next year's football season. Dickey was runner up in the 100-meter dash the NCAA track and field championships last week. Clancy Edwards of USC won the event with a time of 10.80. USC won the meet with 59 points. Texas A&M finished with eight points.

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GOODYEAR

Summer intramurals: registration today

Pat Keller of the Texas A&M University Intramural Department has announced that registration for competition in the summer intramural program will begin today and last through Thursday.

Events for the first session of summer school will include slow-pitch softball, three-man volleyball, tennis singles, racquetball doubles, cross country, three-man basketball and handball.

Team entries will be limited in number, due to time and facility shortages, Keller stressed.

All students, faculty and staff of

Texas A&M currently enrolled in or working for the University may participate. Competition will begin June 12.

Recreational facility hours for the summer have also been announced:

C. Rollie White Coliseum and Annex: Mon-Fri, 4-8 p.m.; Sat-Sun, 1-6 p.m.

DeWare Fieldhouse: Mon-Fri, 4 p.m.-midnight; Sat-Sun, noon-10 p.m.

Tennis courts: Mon-Fri, 4-10 p.m.; Sat-Sun, 1-8 p.m.

Weight room: Mon-Fri, noon-2 p.m., 7-10 p.m.; Sat-Sun, 2-5 p.m. Anyone requiring rules, reservations or information is asked to call the intramural office, 845-7826.

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