

sports

NBA champs to be decided

United Press International
SEATTLE — The Seattle Super-sonics and the Washington Bullets have spent all their tomorrows.

The Sonics had one to spare going into the sixth game of the NBA championship series at Landover, Md., but the Bullets took care of that, 117-82.

In tonight's seventh and final

game (8 p.m. CDT) for the NBA crown, the only advantage left to Seattle is the home court. And when there is no tomorrow that edge is questionable.

"Whoever wants it the most is going to get it," said Washington guard Kevin Grevey. "The home court isn't going to mean much."

"It doesn't matter where the

game is played — their fans can't put the ball in the basket for them," the Bullets' Elvin Hayes said.

Washington Coach Dick Motta hoped Sunday's lopsided score would give the Sonics a lot to think about.

"This will be the first time there will be true playoff pressure," he said.

Sonic Coach Lenny Wilkens was confident his players would regroup and the roar of friendly fans would prove the homecourt advantage is at its peak in a championship show-down.

Asked about the difference between the two clubs in the series, Wilkens said:

"We're going to win that game Wednesday. That's the difference."

"They've still got to win one more," said veteran Sonic forward Paul Silas who has two championship rings from his days with the Boston Celtics, "and ain't no way in hell they're going to do that."

For the Bullets, a victory tonight would bury the criticism that Washington chokes on the big games and erase a mid-season slump that had even optimists writing them out of

the playoff picture.

For Wilkens' Wonder championship would put the cap on a season in which he took over as head coach in 30. Then, the Sonics had a record of 22 games. Only the Nets had a more dismal record.

Under Wilkens, Seattle's regular season games were 19. They're 13-8 in the playoffs.

shooting for all the marbles in what will make their season in a long campaign.



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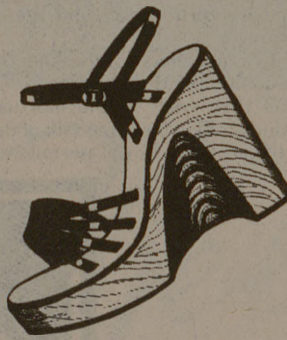


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RUST AND BLACK SIZES
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By David Boggan

Fat lady sings tonight

The opera ain't over until the fat lady sings.

— Washington Bullets' coach Dick Motta, prior to the NBA championship series

It has to happen tonight. The curtain will rise. The music will crescendo for the finale. And the proverbial fat lady will move to center stage and begin to sing.

The question is, whose song will she sing? Will it be a lively, quick tune for the youthful Seattle Super-Sonics? Or, will she perform a grandiose march for the stately old men of the Washington Bullets? This will not be known until the curtain falls.

This proverbial fat lady has only been proverbial for a short time, initially brought to life by Doug Moe before his San Antonio Spurs' opera was ended by these same Bullets in the NBA Eastern Conference semifinals. But the Sonics and the Bullets have prolonged the life of the operatic soloist as long as possible. The seventh and final act of this opera called the NBA championship series plays tonight. The stage is set in the Seattle Center Coliseum.

And what a command performance it has been to this point!

Through the magic of television and Brent Musburger, I have been able to see almost every second of action during the series. I have to be honest. Due to the nature of my Texas heart, once San Antonio had been eliminated, I thought I might catch intermittent segments of the games between washing the car and reading the comics.

Not so. I was convinced after Game 1 that I would be glued to the set for at least six, maybe even seven, good games of basketball. I remember saying after that game that the battle between these two Cinderella teams would last till past the stroke of midnight. The players' cars have long since turned into pumpkins.

This series has produced extremes certain to please the taste of individuals nationwide.

Game 1 saw Fred Brown bring the Sonics up from a 19-point deficit and defeat the Bullets 106-102.

Game 3 is my favorite, to date. The referees induced excitement just a bit in this game by calling Seattle's Paul Silas for inbounding

the ball while being inbounds. Instant replay showed that Silas was, indeed, out-of-bounds. This happened under Washington's basket with three seconds left in the game and a one-point Sonic lead. Bullets Bobby Dandridge put the ball up from the corner. The ball circled the rim, came back out and Seattle took a 2-1 lead in the series.

The largest crowd in history to attend a basketball game saw Wash-

ington beat Seattle, Kingdome, a 120-116 victory in Game 4.

And, just for diversification sake, the Bullets struck Sonics in Game 6, 118-109, the biggest margin in NBA history.

Now the time for Game 7 has arrived. The curtain is about to rise. With such a spectacular season, expect a grand finale.

Herrmann says Astros ready to cut veterans

United Press International
HOUSTON — Backup catcher Ed Herrmann says he believes Houston Astros management is trying to trade as many as six veteran players before the June 15 inter-league trading deadline, a newspaper reports.

In an interview with the Houston Post, Herrmann said Astros players who do not care about winning anymore could cause the team to lose 100 games this season.

"The club isn't interested in the veterans anymore," said Herrmann, a nine-year major league veteran. "There are going to be some sweeping changes around here — and fast."

Herrmann said the reason for the rumored changes was high preseason expectations and poor results. The Astros expected to challenge the best teams in the National League Western Division this year, but after Monday's loss at Chicago, the team was 22-28 and 10 games behind San Francisco.

"The older players are unhappy with the losing situation. As of late, their attitude has been detrimental to the whole club," he said.

Herrmann predicted that he and shortstop Roger Metzger could be sent to San Francisco, and that Joe Ferguson, Joe Niekro, Ken Forsch and Joe Sambito would also be traded.

Herrmann and regular catcher Joe Ferguson, both of whom are hitting poorly, have not played in a week. Houston replaced them with minor league catcher Reggie Metzger, a light-hitting

shortstop, was replaced

lineup by Jimmy Sexton

Niekro two weeks ago

place in the starting rotation

Forsch has been an ineffective pitcher. Sambito, a left-handed reliever, performed well recently.

Herrmann said he was almost quit the team before the 23 trip to San Francisco.

Manager Bill Virdon has had closed-door talks with him, he obtained three years in California.

"If he's a problem, he's a problem," Herrmann said. "I'm not counting on him to be a star."

"You can't eliminate a star," said the manager, "because saying we won't make some adjustments before June 15, but I don't know where he (Herrmann) gets his ideas there will be a lot of them."

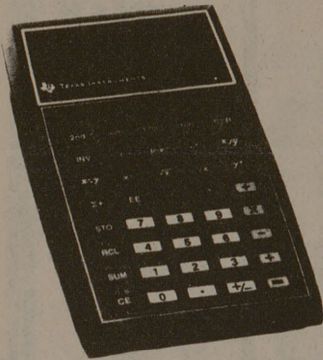
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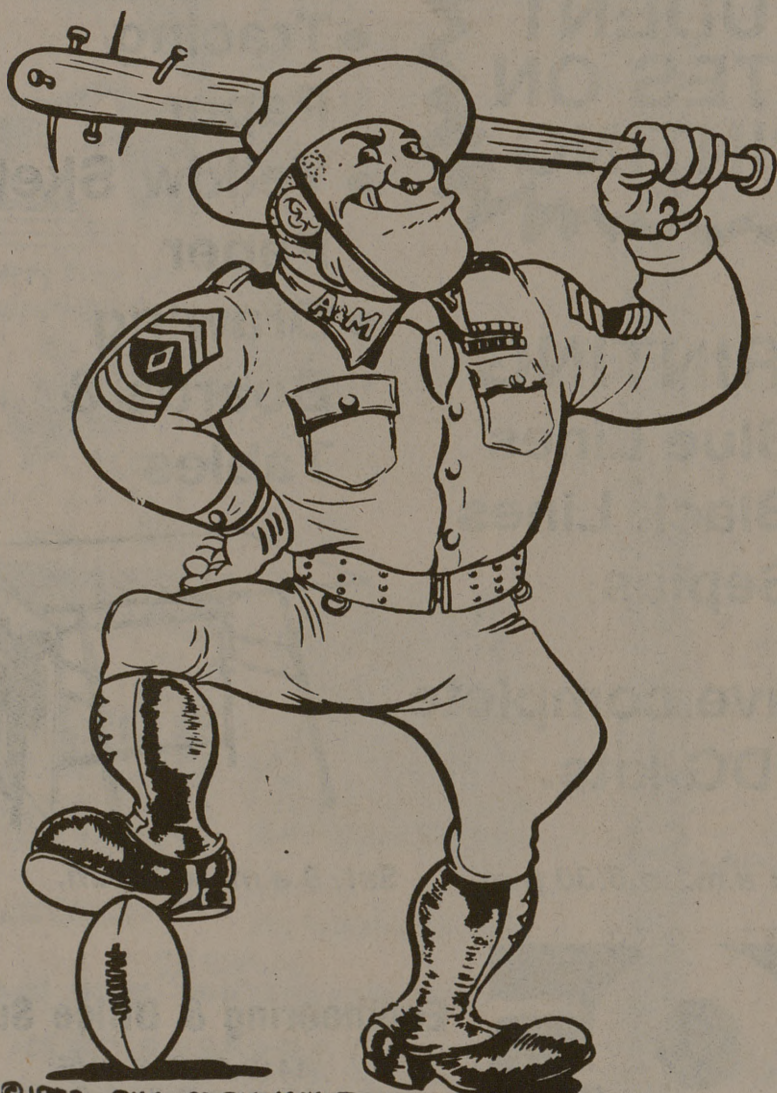
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