

Rockets clinch Western title

United Press International
KANSAS CITY, Mo. — Three weeks ago, the Houston Rockets directed all of their thoughts at the Los Angeles Lakers. Two weeks ago, the Rockets spent all of their thoughts on the San Antonio Spurs. And during the past week, the Rockets concentrated solely on the Kansas City Kings.

Now Coach Del Harris wants his Houston players to concentrate on another team — the Rockets themselves. At least for the next few days.

Harris feels his Rockets have earned that right after rocking the Kings Wednesday night, 97-88, to win the Western Conference title and advance into the NBA championship round for the first time in their 14-year history.

Houston thus becomes the first team since the St. Louis Hawks in 1966-67 to gain a championship berth with a sub .500 regular season record. The Hawks finished 39-42 back then and the Rockets went 40-42 this season.

Houston overcame Kansas City's homecourt advantage to capture the series 4-1 — just as the Rockets overcame homecourt advantages during the opening two rounds in beating Los Angeles 2-1 and San Antonio 4-3.

"We haven't had a chance to reflect," said Harris. "We haven't had a chance to get together and pat each other on the back, to brag and to tell each other how good we are — to tell a few lies.

"We haven't had a chance to enjoy this yet. We've always been looking toward the next game, the next team. Forget it — forget the rules, forget everything. Feel it. I want this team to feel what it has accomplished. Enjoy it. Let this all sink in."

Houston now awaits the winner of the Eastern Conference championship series between the Philadelphia 76ers and the Boston Celtics — two teams the Rockets did not beat a single time this season. Philadelphia leads that series 3-2 and hosts Game 6 Friday night.

Moses Malone scored 36 points and the Rockets capitalized on an atrocious closing quarter by the Kings to eliminate Kansas City. The Kings led 77-73 heading into the final period but went on to score only 11 more points on 4-of-17 shooting from the field.

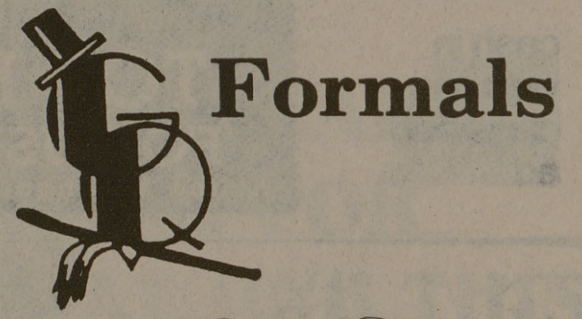
Malone played the entire 48-minute game, hitting 12-of-17 shots and also collecting 11 re-

bounds, two assists and two blocked shots. He scored 13 of his points in the second quarter to pull the Rockets from first-period deficits of 11 points into a 30-30 intermission deadlock.

"We have the best center in basketball," said Harris of the NBA's leading rebounder and second leading scorer this season.

"Anytime Moses takes the floor his team can play with anybody," added Kansas City Coach Cotton Fitzsimmons. "Moses and the guys off the street could compete in the playoffs."

After Scott Wedman sank an 18-foot shot from the right wing to tie the game a final time for Kansas City at 82-82 with 4:39 remaining, Robert Reid scored on a finger roll and Calvin Murphy converted a steal into a layup basket within 10 seconds of each other to send Houston on a 9-2 spree and secure the Rockets their seventh NBA title in nine road playoff games this month.



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Top players taken as draft winds down Wednesday

United Press International
NEW YORK — Pro scouts earned their pay Wednesday by rummaging through the leftovers of the 46th NFL draft in search of some overlooked top collegiate talent.

Almost all the familiar collegiate names were called Tuesday in the first round of the 46th NFL draft, although the league completed the first six rounds.

However, there was enough quality to keep the draft fans in their seats until the last name — Delaware tight end Phil Nelson — was called at 3:38 p.m. EDT.

Running back George Rogers, the Heisman Trophy winner from South Carolina, went to New Orleans and North Carolina linebacker Lawrence Taylor went to the New York Giants to trigger the first day's activity — which was dominated by the University of Pittsburgh.

The Panthers had 11 players selected in the first six rounds Tuesday, including a trio of first-round picks. All-America defensive end Hugh Green went to Tampa Bay on the seventh pick, fullback Randy McMillan was chosen 12th by Baltimore and tackle Mark May, the Outland Trophy winner, was selected by Washington with the 20th choice.

New Orleans opened the second day of drafting Wednesday

by selecting wide receiver Kevin Williams of Southern California as the first pick on the seventh round. On the same round, Baltimore took Clemson kicker Obed Ariri, who led the nation with 23 field goals as a senior. The Pittsburgh Steelers took Florida linebacker David Little and Buffalo picked Colorado linebacker Steve Doolittle.

On the eighth round, Seattle chose Brigham Young running back Eric Lane, the New York Jets chose Oklahoma quarterback J.C. Watts as a defensive back, Baltimore took Houston defensive tackle Hosea Taylor and the Giants named Wake Forest guard Bill Ard.

New Orleans opened the ninth round by taking Washington running back Toussaint Tyler and Seattle selected Notre Dame running back Jim Stone. St. Louis took Stump Mitchell of The Citadel, the No. 2 rusher in the nation last year, Tampa Bay named quarterback Mike Ford of Southern Methodist, Green Bay took Notre Dame tackle Tim Huffman and Cincinnati selected Washington State quarterback Samoa Samoa as a running back.

On the 10th round, Green Bay took Tulane quarterback Nickie Hall and Chicago selected Indiana quarterback Tim Clifford.

wide receiver from Northern Illinois on the 11th round and Pittsburgh selected University of Pittsburgh quarterback Rick Trocena, the 12th Panther taken overall.

On the 12th and final round, San Francisco chose Alabama running back Major Ogilvie and the Tennessee State quarterback J.C. Adams and Houston named Florida State kicker Bill Capece.

The draft took 16 hours and 10 minutes, the quickest since 1977. The Pacific 10 was the leading conference with 42 players chosen and the Big Eight had 32 picks.

Faculty-staff deadline Friday

Friday is the last day for Texas A&M University faculty staff to order their season tickets for the 1981 football season. The faculty-staff members wishing to order game tickets must do so before 5 p.m. at the athletic office in G. Rollie White Coliseum.

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