

Mantle banned from baseball

United Press International
NEW YORK — Baseball Commissioner Bowie Kuhn has benched his second Hall of Famer.

The commissioner, in keeping with guidelines he established for Willie Mays in 1979, Tuesday banned Mickey Mantle from active association with baseball after the former Yankee slugger signed a \$100,000-a-year contract as director of sports promotion with the Claridge Hotel and Casino in Atlantic City, N.J.

Kuhn feels Mantle's association with an establishment that has gambling interests is not in the best interest of baseball, even though the former Yankee slugger's new job will have nothing to do with gambling.

"I have told Mickey I have no choice," said Kuhn. "His situation is like Willie Mays. Baseball and casino employment are inconsistent. This follows the pattern I set in 1969 when I said owners could not be involved in Las Vegas casinos."

"I would much prefer both of them were in baseball and I hope in time it can be worked out."

"Mickey understood I would have to go this way if he accepted the casino job and graciously sent me a message saying so."

"Obviously Mickey, like Willie Mays, continues to be welcome at all baseball functions."

In his new job, Mantle will plan, coordinate and promote golf tournaments and celebrity roasts for the hotel. He will have nothing to do with the casino operation. He clearly understands Kuhn's position on the matter and will not fight it.

"I got the letter this morning from the commissioner telling me I'm out as far as my baseball connections go," said Mantle. "I knew it was going to happen. He (Kuhn) did it to Willie, he had to do it to me."

"I wasn't doing that much in baseball anyway. I don't have any hard feelings toward the commissioner. He's not really depriving me of much. My only association with the Yankees has been as a spring training batting instructor for the last 14 years. If you can call it a batting instructor. Mostly, what I did was stand around, sign a few autographs and do some public relations things for Mr. (George) Steinbrenner."

The Yankees also said they would abide by Kuhn's decision.

"It's strictly up to the commissioner," said a Yankee spokesman. "We'll do what he tells us. We have no comment otherwise. Whatever the commissioner decides is fine with us and we'll certainly follow his instructions."

Despite Kuhn's decision, Mantle said he is not sorry about taking the new job.

"It's nothing I'm ashamed of," he said. "It's not like I'm standing outside the hotel and trying to get people to come in and lose their money."

"It's primarily the same job I've had since I've been out of baseball, but it will require a lot less time and I will make twice as much money. Now I'll only have to work about six days a month."

Although he will not be eligible for employment by any baseball team while he is associated with the hotel and casino, Mantle will be permitted to play in Old Timers' games, mingle with players and enter dressing rooms.

Akeem is a Cougar 'dream'

United Press International
HOUSTON — The skills of Akeem Abdul Olajuwon, who is a relative newcomer to the game of basketball, have diversified much like his diet and have made him the most dominant force in Southwest Conference basketball this year.

At the University of Houston, where "Akeem the Dream" discovered steak and ice cream in 1980, the son of a Lagos, Nigeria, cement contractor has Cougar fans eating out of his huge hands.

"Dreaming of a national championship," the banner at Hofheinz Pavilion said in tribute to him.

He has responded to the pounding excitement of college basketball and leads the country in shot blocking. He has good leaping ability and coordination to go with his seven-foot height.

Soon, he will break the Cougars' record of 125 blocked



Akeem Olajuwon helping UH on both ends of court

shots in a year.

But when he came to this country in September, 1980, Olajuwon was out of his league except in his eating habits. He devoured huge amounts of well-done steak and vanilla ice cream,

and almost nothing else.

He filled out from a gangly, 190-pound kid to a 240-pound brute turned loose on the SWC's hardwoods. At first his skills were limited to slamming dunks, grabbing rebounds and blocking shots.

Dribbling, jump shooting or making the "power step" were not in his repertoire.

And at first, Coach Guy V. Lewis was disappointed in his development.

"What you've got to understand is that Akeem hasn't played organized basketball very long," Lewis said. "He maybe has four or five decent years behind him now. When looked at like that, it's amazing what he can do."

Back then people snickered at Olajuwon's handwritten entry on the Sports Information Department's tout sheet. "And I guarantee nine or eight blocked shots a game," he wrote.

He averages six, and he's only a sophomore. Plus, this season he has added a shooting touch and is scoring 13 points a game — fourth best on the team. His presence on defense is a key to Houston's first-place standing.

Texas A&M coach Shelby Metcalf said as much.

"The way Akeem started blocking shots (in UH's 86-66 victory on Saturday) I guess it would teach you not to challenge him too much, wouldn't it? I hope we play them again. If we do, we're going to send Akeem flowers and candy that afternoon and try to get him to where he won't be so hostile," Metcalf said.

Said Arkansas coach Eddie Sutton: "Houston has a great defense. They know they can gamble because they know Akeem is back there to knock anything down. Houston hasn't had that luxury since Elvin Hayes."

Much has changed about

Olajuwon, 20, in 2½ years in this country — but not his personality. Olajuwon still greets visitors with an Englishman's concentration and concern, and the kindness of an unaffected kid.

"I am very happy to be here," he said. "I am liking everything about college and I'm having the best time of my life. I spend a lot of time practicing basketball and studying."

Although he has never fouled out of a game, he comes close almost every game. He spends time on the bench because more experienced ball-players can get him to foul them. But he's learning, Lewis said.

"Akeem's learning to play cat and mouse with them," he said. "He's going for some and not going for others. They just never know when he's going to do that."

MISA EN ESPANOL
Lugar: St. Mary's Church
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La asociacion de estudiantes Catolicos invita cordialmente a todos los interesados.

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