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Jordan seen as Bull savior

United Press International
CHICAGO — Every few years, an NBA rookie comes along who is expected to lead his franchise to the playoffs.

Sometimes the rookie can do it: a Kareem Abdul-Jabbar with Milwaukee, a Larry Bird with Boston.

The Chicago Bulls are looking at Michael Jordan, the 6-foot-6 Olympic hero and North Carolina All-American, as a savior.

The Bulls have not been second class NBA citizens as far as their record has been concerned — they haven't made the playoffs in seven seasons.

Attendance dipped to around 5,000 a game last year as the Bulls' posted a 29-53 record and failed to create anything resembling the interest generated by baseball's Chicago Cubs.

"We realized that when we drafted Michael Jordan, we were not drafting for our major need which was a center," said General Manager Rod Thorn. "But when you have a player of his ability available in the draft, you take him."

Jordan, who will play guard and forward, will be counted on to score, set up plays, play defense and most important, dazzle fans back into the Chicago Stadium.

"The thing people have to understand is that this is not just Michael Jordan's team," says Jordan, the No. 3 choice in the college draft. "This is a team. I just want to fit in and contribute."

But during the exhibition season, Jordan showed the same brilliance millions had seen him exhibit at the Los Angeles Olympics, and during his three years with the Tar Heels.

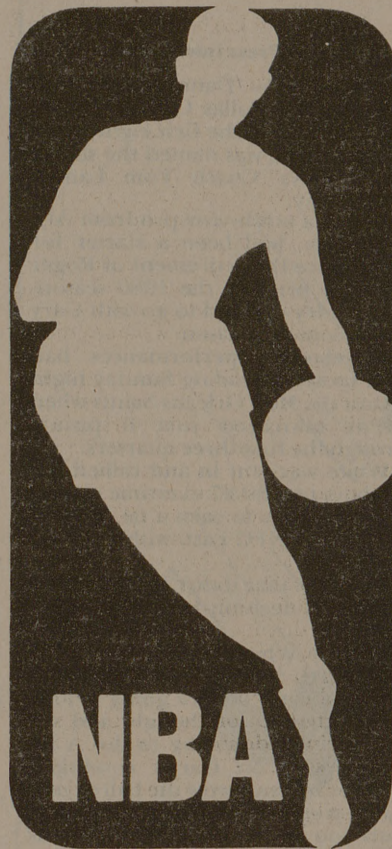
Whether Jordan will be able to turn the franchise into a winner and start drawing fans back to the Stadium remains a major question. The club did have Reggie Theus, also capable of rousing a crowd, for several years. But Theus couldn't turn the club into a winner and was traded last year to Kansas City.

"I don't think there is any question that Michael Jordan is one of the most exciting players to come into the NBA in years," said Coach Kevin Loughery. "We understand that there are other things we are going to have to improve on, however, if we are to be a winner."

Jordan, who signed a reported seven-year, multi-million dollar contract in September, actually will be playing a position that may be the Bulls' strongest. The club already has guards Quintin Dailey, Ennis Whatley and Ronnie Lester — all former No. 1 draft choices.

Loughery has considered teaming Dailey, the team's sixth man last year, with Jordan to capitalize on both players' scoring ability. But he still faces problems in the frontcourt.

Chicago still has journeyman Dave Corzine at center but did move to give him relief by trading promising guard Mitchell Wiggins to



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Houston for veteran center Caldwell Jones.

"The group we have this year seems to be together as a team," Corzine said. "I like that feeling. It's something that goes hand-in-hand with a winning season."

The team's leading scorer last year, forward Orlando Woolridge, returns for a fourth season. The other forward spot remains a question.

Jordan, college basketball's Player of the Year last season, could play up front but his style and size seem to dictate he remain in the backcourt.

The Bulls, who have never won an NBA championship, have been in and out of negotiations with forward David Greenwood since the end of last season. Greenwood was eligible to become a free agent but hasn't signed with another club. Realizing his market value may have diminished, the club reportedly reduced its original offer to Greenwood in recent weeks.

Regardless of his surrounding cast, Jordan will draw attention in other NBA cities because of his Olympic success. He is also prepared for the rigors of NBA traveling and the possibility of losing.

"If I survived the Olympics and Bobby Knight," Jordan said of the U.S. coach, "then I'll be ready for anything."

Detroit's Trammell nurses knee injury

United Press International
NEW YORK — Detroit Tigers shortstop Alan Trammell, on the mend following knee and shoulder surgery, said Wednesday he expects to be in shape by Christmas.

"I had surgery done Friday and have already gotten rid of the crutches for the knee," Trammell said. "I'm moving my shoulder around already. I had a torn cartilage from last year which they sutured. It didn't mend although they tried to save it, so they went in and took it out."

"The shoulder operation took only 20 minutes and they went in and cleaned it up. By Christmas, I'll be ready to go if I follow my rehabilitation program exercises."

Trammell injured his knee a year ago. The day after a Halloween party he modeled a Frankenstein costume standing on blocks that

raised his height to 7 feet. One of the blocks slipped and he fell and tore cartilage.

"The rehab program calls for light exercises of the leg, mainly leg raises designed to strengthen the quad muscles," he said. "I have to move the arm around to make sure it is not tight and eventually work up to heavier weights. When I go back to San Diego I can ride a bike and swim, which will help. I hope to be able to try throwing in six weeks."

During Detroit's victory in five games over San Diego, Trammell hit .450 with five runs scored, two homers and six RBI. He made only one error at shortstop.

"It is a special thrill to play in a World Series," Trammell said. "It is a once in a lifetime thing and you can put pain to the side. There was no way I was going to miss the World Series."

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