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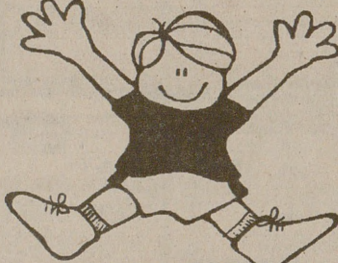
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# Mickens 'Mr. Windex' for Cougars

HOUSTON (AP) — He doesn't have any videos, isn't on the front of any cereal boxes and doesn't wear his own shoes.

No, Darrell Mickens doesn't have anything in common with Michael Jordan, though a few of his teammates will tell you otherwise.

The quiet, reserved Houston forward is one of the most explosive basketball players in the Southwest Conference.

And no one knows him. No one outside of the state of Texas, that is.

The 6-foot-5 Mickens burst onto the Houston scene four years ago when he won the slam dunk contest at the "Texas Shootout."

Three years later, the former Paris, Texas high school star is making a name for himself in the Southwest Conference.

As was the case in high school, Mickens leaves most people in awe with his ability to "fly" through the air. He's four to five inches shorter than most forwards he matches up with. He can do any slam dunk in the book and is becoming noted for a dunk few NBA players can do.

Mickens' top dunk comes off rebounds. He'll soar above and in one motion stuff the ball through the hoop before others have had a chance to react.

"You see guys that can jump really high, but he's got some ability to go along with it," said University of Houston coach Pat Foster. "There's a lot of guys who can jump, but this guy's a good basketball player along with it. That's the key to his success."

Houston senior Kelvin Smith said: "I haven't seen anybody who can get up like that. When he puts his mind to it, he can go get every board he wants."

The junior has earned the nickname "Mr. Windex" for his superior play on the boards. He collected 21 rebounds during the team's win over Texas in late January and is always near the backboard.

"He charges the board hard and does a lot of things really well," Foster said. "You combine that with the ability to leap and you've got a great player."

Of his leaping ability, Mickens says: "Some people make a big deal out of it, but to me, it doesn't seem that I'm jumping that high. Sometimes it scares me myself, but there's other times when I don't feel that I get up that high. But my teammates tell me I do, so I guess I do."

Mickens started to turn a few heads the first time he ever dunked a basketball, in the eighth grade. He led Paris to a 28-6 record his senior year in high school, in 1987, and he was named the district's most valuable player.

He was selected one of the 10 players for the North in the summer high school all-star game, and he boarded a bus in Paris after midnight one Friday night for the 296-mile trip to Autry Court on the Rice University campus in Houston, site of the Texas Shootout.

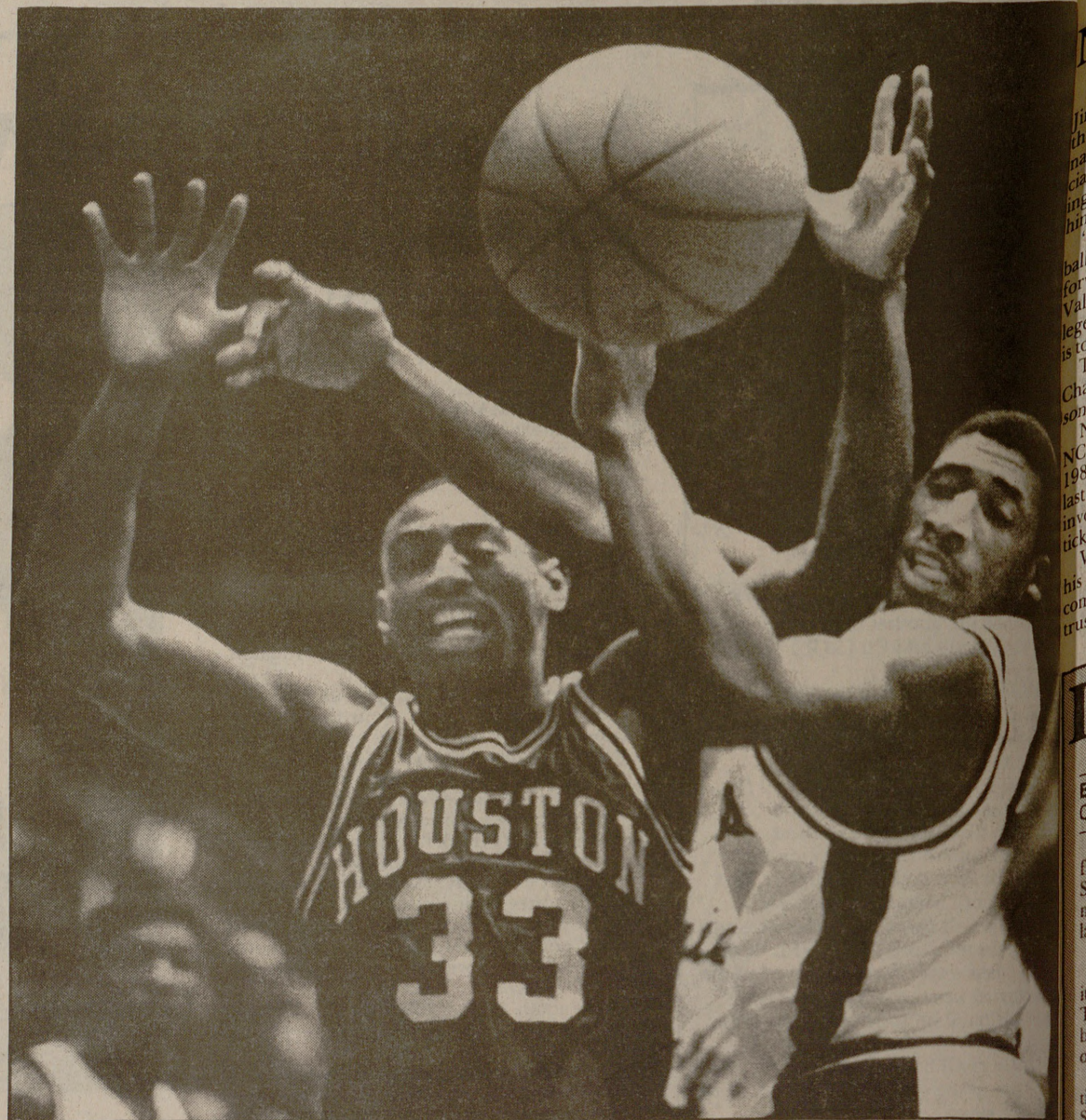


Photo by Jay Jamm

Houston forward Darrell Mickens (33), seen here in the Cougars 100-81 victory over Texas A&M last week, is expected to lead UH in the Southwest Conference Tournament this weekend.

"I rode the bus all that night and got in around 8 (a.m.), came in and got a shower and then went to some kind of breakfast and then went and played," Mickens said. "I didn't even get to sleep before I played."

"It was real horrible, but I had a lot of fun. I did pretty well in the games and everything. It was worth the trip," he said.

After weighing his recruiting options, Mickens picked Houston over the University of Texas.

Houston was closer to Paris than Austin, he said. Plus, he didn't want to be playing in the shadow of his close friend, Carlton Cooper, who was already with the Longhorns. He also liked the basketball tradition of the Cougars.

Mickens, who is Houston's sixth man off the bench, has adjusted his game only slightly since high school. He still soars above the rim, but he

does so while coming off the bench. Foster said Mickens is plenty good enough to start full time, but he doesn't want to tinker with things while Houston is on a winning streak that now has reached 11 games. The Cougars last lost on Jan. 22.

"He's good enough to start. He's good enough to play for a lot of people. The big thing we need to do is look at more ways to get him more minutes," Foster said. "But we've got a lot of players. We've got different positions."

The UH coach added, "I think we need to keep doing what we're doing and win ball games."

Mickens said: "I hope we can win the Southwest Conference tournament. It's been awhile since Houston has done that. We've finally gotten to the point

where we can play good basketball for a stretch of time and not a spurts."

Houston wrapped up second place in the regular-season SWC race by beating Texas 84-79 Monday night, and the Cougars will face Rice in the first round of the post-season tournament.

Mickens wants another shot at SWC regular-season champ Arkansas, which won both games against the Cougars in conference play and is the last team to have beaten Houston.

"In my opinion, the very first time they came here, I could not believe they walked out of here with a win. Even before the game started, I just knew we would beat them. I would love to play them again."

## NBA disallows Akeem quadruple-double League office cites Rockets' alteration of boxscore stats as wrong

HOUSTON (AP) — The Houston Rockets will not be fined for changing a box score that temporarily gave Akeem Olajuwon a rare quadruple-double, NBA vice president Rod Thorn said Tuesday.

"Let's just say it's been resolved to the satisfaction of the league," Thorn said.

Olajuwon led the Rockets to a 129-109 victory over Golden State Saturday with 29 points, 18 rebounds and 11 blocked shots.

He was awarded nine assists in the original box score, but the Rockets later released a revised box that showed him with 10 assists for a quadruple-double, a feat accomplished only two other times in NBA history.

Rockets coach Don Chaney and media relations director Jay Goldberg reviewed film immediately after the game and discovered the 10th assist, they said.

Thorn reviewed the film and disallowed the quadruple-double. He said it was the league's prerogative to make any alterations after a box already has been distributed.

"If you want to make that type of change of something that is of important to us and our record-keeping, then we should have some input into it," Thorn said.

Chicago's Nate Thurmond had 22 points, 14 rebounds, 13 assists and 12 blocked shots on Oct. 18, 1974. San Antonio's Alvin Robinson had 20 points, 10 assists, 11 rebounds and 10 steals on Feb. 18, 1986.

The Rockets said the uncredited assist for Olajuwon came with less than six minutes to go in the first quarter on a basket by Buck Johnson.

The league disagreed. "I just think records are a big part of our game and how you are perceived 15 or 20 years from now," Thorn said. "There have been so few people who have done that (quadruple-double), you don't want to have it tainted in any way."

Thorn said the proper procedure would have been to contact the league office and ask for a review.

"If an appreciable statistical change needs to be made after the box score is distributed, the league office is responsible for making the change if it is deemed necessary," Thorn said.

Chaney said there was little the Rockets could do.

"We have to defer to the league's decision," Chaney said. "What they think is an assist and what we think is an assist must be two different things."

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