

Derby racers deserving of chance to run

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (AP) — The word that Thirty Six Red will win the Kentucky Derby doesn't come straight from the horse's mouth.

It does, however, come straight from the mouth of a man close to the colt.

"Yeah, I said that," trainer Nick Zito said Monday.

What Zito said was if Thirty Six Red won the 1 1/8-mile Wood Memorial, he would win the 1 1/4-mile Derby on Saturday at Churchill Downs.

Thirty Six Red won the Wood on April 21, holding off Burnt Hills by a head.

"He's earned his shot," the 41-year-old New Yorker said. "He's got the credentials."

Thirty Six Red's victory in the one-mile Gotham April 7 and his win in the Wood put him in the second echelon of Derby contenders behind unbeaten Mister Frisky and once-beaten Summer Squall.

Helping Zito's confidence is the fact that Thirty Six Red is the only one of the 17 Derby probables to win under Derby weight of 126 pounds.

The highest weight Mister Frisky carried was 122 pounds in winning the Santa Anita Derby on April 7.

The highest impost for Summer Squall was 124 in his victory in the 9 1/2-furlong Hopeful last year. He carried 122 in finishing second in the seven-furlong Swale on March 17.

In the Wood, the son of Slew o'Gold was second behind pace-setting Burnt Hills, never worse than a length back, before surging into the lead in the upper stretch.

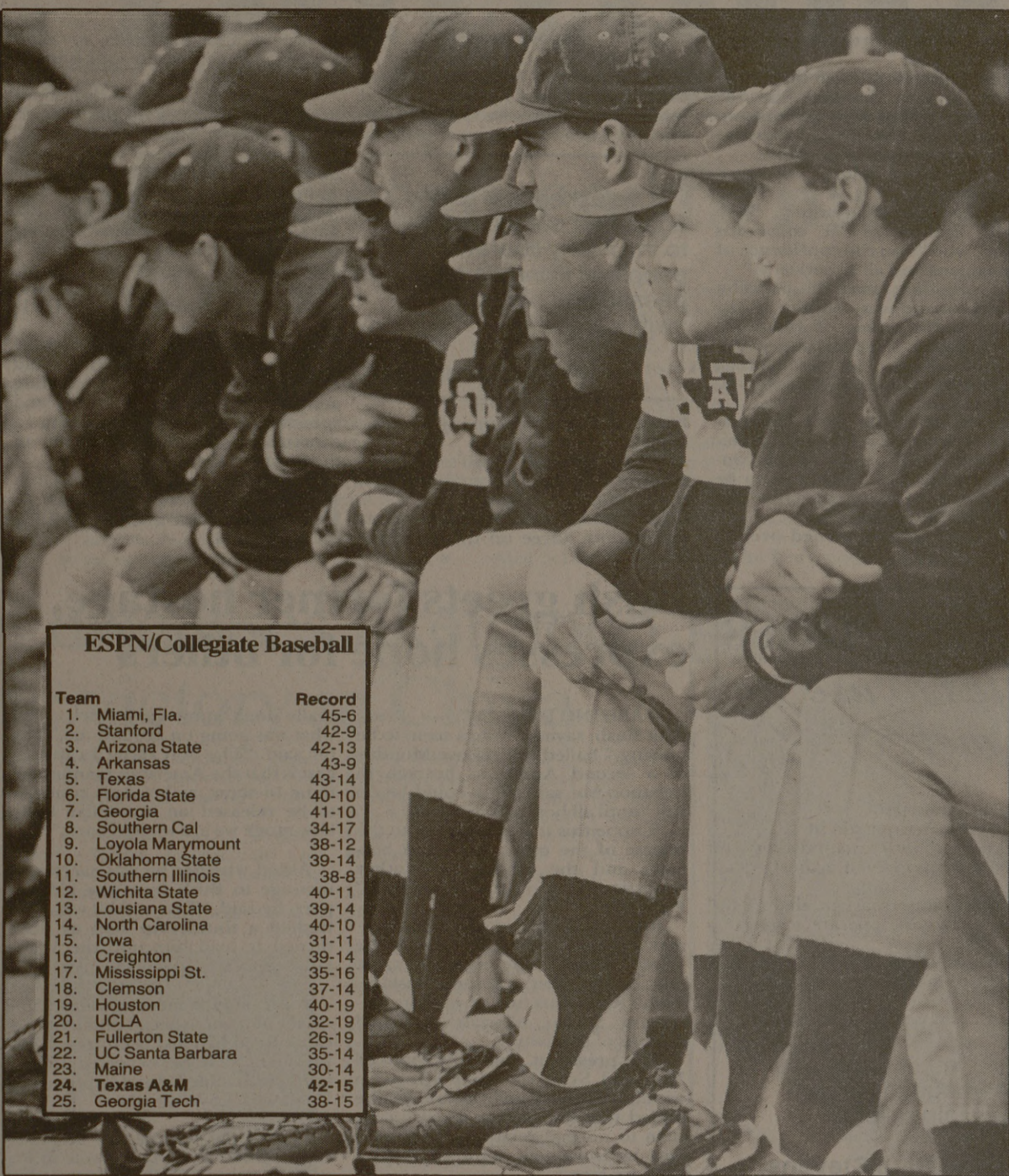
Thirty Six Red, ridden by Mike Smith, held a head margin over Burnt Hills all the way through the stretch.

The colt, bought for \$92,000 by B. Giles Brophy at the 1987 Keeneland fall yearling sale, posted two seconds and a third in five starts as a 2-year-old.

"He didn't have any physical problems," Zito said. "He was just unmanageable. He was his own worst enemy, but he showed signs of brilliance."

Thirty Six Red scored his first victory in his second start at 3, winning a seven-furlong maiden race by two lengths on Feb. 6 at Gulfstream Park.

Watching and waiting



Team	Record
1. Miami, Fla.	45-6
2. Stanford	42-9
3. Arizona State	42-13
4. Arkansas	43-9
5. Texas	43-14
6. Florida State	40-10
7. Georgia	41-10
8. Southern Cal	34-17
9. Loyola Marymount	38-12
10. Oklahoma State	39-14
11. Southern Illinois	38-8
12. Wichita State	40-11
13. Louisiana State	39-14
14. North Carolina	40-10
15. Iowa	31-11
16. Creighton	39-14
17. Mississippi St.	35-16
18. Clemson	37-14
19. Houston	40-19
20. UCLA	32-19
21. Fullerton State	26-19
22. UC Santa Barbara	35-14
23. Maine	30-14
24. Texas A&M	42-15
25. Georgia Tech	38-15

The Texas A&M baseball team must keep an eye out for this weekend's competition. The outcome of the series with Arkansas will determine the Aggies' fate for a post-season tournament bid.

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Mavs must duplicate '56 Pistons, '87 Warriors to remain alive in NBA playoff series with Portland

DALLAS (AP) — The only rallying cry the Dallas Mavericks have left in their playoff series against the Portland Trail Blazers is, "Fort Wayne, Fort Wayne."

The Fort Wayne Pistons rebounded from an 0-2 deficit to win a 1956 opening-round series, while the 1987 the Golden State Warriors did the same thing. They are the only teams in NBA history to rally from two losses to start a series.

"We can do it," Dallas coach Richie Adubato said, "but we'll have to rebound better."

Portland coach Rick Adelman is optimistic about ending the series in Dallas.

"I'd like to win it on the road," he said. "It's important for us to end it as soon as possible. I think the Denver-San Antonio series is going to go more than three games and I'd like to get a few extra days off. Our series has been real physical."

The Trail Blazers have beaten the Mavericks twice in Portland by scores of 109-102 and 114-107 in the best-of-5 series, which resumes Tuesday at Reunion Arena.

The Blazers, who haven't won a playoff series since 1985, feel they were nervous in their first two games at home.

"I think we were really tight," guard Terry Porter said. "We knew we had to win at home and we've been a little sluggish. It may help us now to go to their place."

Adelman agreed. "I think we may play a better game," he said. "We may be a little looser."

Portland, the NBA's top rebounding team, had a 47-33 rebounding edge in the first game where they got 24 points off 20 offensive rebounds.

On Saturday, the Mavs squandered a 15-point first half lead as Portland grabbed 21 offensive rebounds and got 35 points for its effort.

In both games, Dallas had its chances but were unable to overcome the Blazers.

"We just haven't been able to come up with the big rebound, big bucket, or big steal when we need it," Adubato said.

In Game 2, Dallas trailed by four with 40 seconds to play after Derek Harper hit two free throws. But Dallas failed to produce in the clutch.

Portland's bench also hurt the Mavs. Backup guards Danny Young and Draven Petrovic combined for 22 points in the second period as Portland overcame a 38-23 deficit. Petrovic ended up with 14 points.

"Portland can rebound, run, and has shown a good bench," Adubato said. "But we're back home now. The home advantage makes a big difference."

A victory by the Mavericks would force a fourth game at Dallas on Thursday, with a fifth game, if necessary, set for Saturday.

Portland won 59 games in the regular season to finish second in the Pacific Division to the Los Angeles Lakers.

Trail Blazer rookie reserve forward Cliff Robinson is expected to play Tuesday, despite his arrest early Sunday outside a Portland night club. He was charged with three counts of fourth-degree assault and one count of disorderly conduct after allegedly hitting a policewoman.

Portland swept all four games between the two clubs this season. That includes two blowouts at Reunion Arena. All this spells only one thing: An early vacation for the Mavericks.

The Rockets aren't in the same boat, however.

They won both games this season over the Lakers at the Summit. And they've shown they can play on the same court with the defending Western Conference champions.

All they have to do is find a way to free center Akeem Olajuwon.

Olajuwon averaged 24 points a game during the regular season. But through two games in Los Angeles, he's scored only half that. Los Angeles extended their first-round

playoff winning streak to 20 games, dating back to 1984.

A victory Tuesday night will give them 21. It will also give Houston management some time to think about what kind of deals it wants to make in the offseason.

The Lakers' Pat Riley became the all-time winningest playoff coach in NBA history with a 100-42 record after Sunday's win over the Rockets. His series counterpart Don Chaney guaranteed the series would be sent back to Los Angeles.

Get ready, Jack Nicholson.

"To give an idea of how positive we are, we know we can win in our building," Chaney said. "Our guys know these baskets, and we know this arena. This is home to them."

It may have to be more than home to them. It's going to have to be a miracle factory. That's the only thing the Rockets will need to pull it off.

"If I were scoring more, someone else on our team wouldn't be scoring," Olajuwon said. "It's all about balance."

"If they are double- and triple-teaming me, I'm going to hit the open man, and concentrate on defense and rebounding."

Both teams held closed workouts in The Summit Monday.

"We worked on a new wrinkle to try to break him (Olajuwon) out," Chaney said. "They doubled him real well in Los Angeles."

The Lakers did such a good job on Olajuwon that Chaney accused them of playing illegal zone defense.

"He's just working the media," Riley said. "We play very aggressive double team defense and we play within the confines of the rules."

"He's just looking for an edge."

Rockets

(Continued from page 9)

led from a 2-0 deficit to win a five-game playoff. The Fort Wayne Pistons beat St. Louis in 1956 and Golden State beat Utah in 1987.

"I don't deal with odds, I just know what we can do," Chaney said. "We had some good moments, we just didn't carry it all the way through."

"But we are home now. I'm not shighting the Lakers, but we know these baskets and we feel comfortable in our arena."

The Rockets have won three straight games and eight of their last 12 games against the Lakers in the Summit.

Los Angeles has gained the series

best-of-five series.

Dallas can look forward to returning to the friendly confines of Reunion Arena. The Mavericks' only problem, however, is that the Trail Blazers find the place just as cozy.

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Tijerina

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playoff spot in the Western Conference, the Rockets might be the most dangerous No. 8 seed in NBA history. The Los Angeles Lakers can attest to that.

In their first two games at the Forum, the Rockets have enjoyed huge leads over the Lakers, who had the NBA's best record this year. But they haven't been able to nail the game down, and have fallen apart in the final minutes.

That's where the home court advantage comes in.

The Mavericks limped to Portland, then have been blown out twice in front of hostile crowds. Both Houston and Dallas face elimination with their next loss, but at least the Rockets have some hope, however faint it may be.

Only two teams in history have come back from an 0-2 deficit in a

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