

Spurs return to San Antonio; greeted by 1,500 cheering fans

SAN ANTONIO (AP) — The San Antonio Spurs savored their first-round playoff sweep as the team arrived home Wednesday to an airport jam-packed with 1,500 jubilant fans.

"Sweep, sweep, sweep, sweep," were the shouts as the Spurs stepped off a plane, fresh from beating the Denver Nuggets Tuesday night in Game 3 of the first-round Western Conference series.

"It's great. I wasn't expecting anything of this magnitude," said Terry Cummings, who led the Spurs with 28 points to defeat Denver and take the best-of-5 series.

San Antonio faces the Portland Trail Blazers in Portland on Saturday in their second-round, best-of-7 series. Portland defeated San Antonio in three of four games during the regular season.

Portland swept its series with the Dallas Mavericks, but Tuesday night's final victory was costly, as starters Kevin Duckworth and Buck Williams were injured.

Williams was cut above and below his right eye, suffering a corneal abrasion and a crack in his sinus area. A Portland team official said he "should be able to resume activities in the next few days."

Duckworth suffered a fractured fourth metacarpal in his right hand. The length of his absence hadn't been determined, but the injury would make rebounding difficult.

Hundreds of fans Wednesday waited to see the victorious Spurs, shake their hands and pat their

backs. The cheering crowd lined half a terminal at the San Antonio International Airport, and Spurs players at times were barely able to make it through the throng of admirers.

Balloons, banners proclaiming, "Way to Sweep" and brooms decorated the terminal. San Antonio Mayor Lila Cockrell was among the first to greet the players.

"It puts goose bumps on me," Spurs owner Red McCombs, who

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— Red McCombs, Spurs owner

traveled with the team, said of the near-raucous welcome. "I could live with this."

McCombs said there was no comparing the reception to last year's Spurs fan response. The team finished the regular season 56-26 this year, making the best one-year improvement in NBA history from their 21-61 record a year ago.

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McCombs said. "Never did we dream our hopes would be so fulfilled as what they have been this year."

Spurs coach Larry Brown said Wednesday he didn't want to think much yet about battling the Trail Blazers.

"They're a special team. If we can rebound with them and be physical, we have a good chance," Brown said. "They seem to be playing their best right now."

But several Spurs players seemed to already be thinking about Portland.

"I think we'll have to work a little harder in that series. I think that'll be a tougher series," said Cummings. "We can't let them out-rebound us, and we can't let them get in the open court with their transition game."

David Robinson, who scored 26 points in Tuesday night's victory, also said good rebounding will be essential.

"We're going to have to come out and play real focused and just be physical enough to get the boards and control the game. I think that's where the real control of the game is in playing against them," Robinson said.

Added Willie Anderson, who also scored 26 points Tuesday: "If we rebound we can win."

Anderson said if Duckworth is unable to play because of his injury Portland could have a depth problem.

Conference asks approval for resolution

DALLAS (AP) — The Lone Star Conference wants to play like the big boys. The league adopted a resolution asking the NCAA to reinstate contact drills in football spring training for Division II members.

This is the first spring training in football for NCAA Division II members without pads and contact. But the LSC wants to operate under the same spring training guidelines governing Division I schools.

Division I schools are allowed 15 practice sessions, including 10 with pads, within a 21-day period.

The LSC adopted the resolution Tuesday at the close of its annual spring meeting in Dallas. League officials will ask for the change at the NCAA national convention in January.

Also, the conference voted to renew its contract with the Southwest Conference to perform the duties of a commissioner's office. Officials also established a committee to propose LSC policies for drug education and drug testing.

The drug-policy recommendations come in the wake of the recent arrests of two Texas A&I football players and another student on cocaine-dealing charges. On Monday, a former A&I football player was arrested on drug charges.

The arrests Friday and Monday came less than a month after the arrest of Texas A&I linebacker Sean Banks at Wharton on a charge of possession of cocaine.

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Combination of Floyd, Maxwell team with Olajuwon to menace all beneath the boards

HOUSTON (AP) — Los Angeles, which has concentrated its defense on Houston's Akeem Olajuwon, now has another Rockets menace to contain — the guard tandem of Sleepy Floyd and Vernon Maxwell.

The guards' performances were major reasons the Rockets beat the Lakers 114-108 Tuesday night and forced the fourth game of their NBA playoff series Thursday night in The Summit.

Floyd scored 23 points and passed of a club playoff record 18 assists and Maxwell, acquired from San Antonio Feb. 21, scored 26 points.

Floyd and Maxwell each hit three 3-point baskets in the game, setting a team playoff record with six 3-pointers.

"Over the last 15 games we've really come together as a back court tandem," said Floyd, who struggled throughout the season as the Rockets' point guard.

Floyd and Maxwell meshed just in time to keep the Rockets from being eliminated. They still trail 2-1 in the best-of-five series.

"We complement each other real well on the floor," Maxwell said. "I pretty much know now what he likes and when he likes it. He's starting to know me the same way."

"It's the continuity thing that's the most important thing for us right now."

Both players can score and they both can operate the Rockets' offense.

"We've got good chemistry," Floyd said. "It's like the (Detroit's) Joe Dumars-Isiah Thomas combination. Both can create and both can score."

Maxwell isn't ready to be compared to the Pistons' combination.

"They are great players but I don't really pattern myself after whoever, I just play my game," Maxwell said.

Besides, Magic Johnson is Maxwell's hero.

"I respect him, he's my idol," Maxwell said. "He's a great player and I'm trying to get where he's at."

There's no nervousness about going against his hero, however.

"I'm never nervous, this is what you live for, to play against the great players and the great teams."

The Lakers have double- and triple-teamed

Olajuwon in the first three games of the series.

Olajuwon had to leave the game with his fourth foul 26 seconds into the third quarter Tuesday night and didn't return until 3:13 to go in the period.

But the Rockets battled throughout the quarter and still had the lead when Olajuwon returned.

Los Angeles led briefly near the end of the third period but the Rockets scored the first six points of the fourth quarter and held off the Lakers' 8-0 charge in the final minutes.

"It's going to give them confidence but I don't think it'll be a major aspect on Thursday," Lakers forward James Worthy said. "They spread out the scoring and were more of a team collectively than just a one-man show."

The Rockets have won four games in a row from the Lakers in The Summit and nine of their last 13 at home.

"When we're at home, our confidence level is real high," Rockets coach Don Chaney said. "We just feel like we can get this win tomorrow night."

Chaney has already guaranteed that the series will return to Los Angeles for the fifth game on Sunday.

Olajuwon thinks the play of Maxwell and Floyd will help fulfill Chaney's guarantee.



Musburger joins CBS competitor ABC as sports announcer

NEW YORK (AP) — Brent Musburger, abruptly dismissed by CBS last month after a decade as the network's top sports broadcaster, joined ABC Wednesday as a football and basketball announcer.

"Five years ago, I came within an eyelash of going to work for them," Musburger said. "I'm thrilled to get another opportunity."

"I got fired on April 1 and I came back on May Day. That's long enough for me."

ABC Sports president Dennis Swanson said Al Michaels would still be the network's top football

announcer. Michaels is attempting to get out of his ABC contract and has filed an arbitration grievance against the network.

"We've got Al under contract and we expect Al to do Monday Night Football this year and be involved in the 25th anniversary Super Bowl," Swanson said.

Swanson said Musburger would announce college football games with former Philadelphia Eagles coach Dick Vermeil and college basketball games with a analyst to be decided later.

He also will broadcast one of ABC's NFL wildcard playoff games, host the Super Bowl pre-

game show next winter and broadcast the World League of American Football.

Musburger's first appearance will be on a prime time special on June 25. His first sporting event will be the Hambletonian on Aug. 4, followed by the Little League World Series three weeks later.

Musburger said he has no problems working with Michaels.

"I consider him a friend. And I'm hopeful that he'll be at ABC for as long as I am," Musburger said. "It has not been discussed — between Dennis and I — anything about Monday night."

The 50-year-old Musburger

had been host of "The NFL Today" since 1975. He also broadcast college football games and anchored CBS' coverage of the Masters golf tournament, the NBA finals, the Pan American Games and U.S. Open tennis highlights shows. He was let go by CBS on the eve of the NCAA championship game, his final appearance on the network.

When Musburger began broadcasting in Chicago in the late 1960s, Swanson was on the air opposite him. The two also broadcast against each other in Los Angeles before Swanson got off the air and joined management.

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