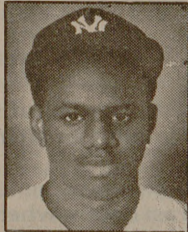


Don't count battered Lakers, Celtics out yet

The NBA is definitely FANTastic, and here at the 1990-91 season's midpoint some old dogs are playing new tricks on the rest of the league.

For the sixth straight year, most of the country's major sportswriters and broadcasters once again have said the reign is over for the two most celebrated teams of the 1980s, the Boston Celtics and Los Angeles Lakers.



Craig Wilson
Sports Writer

But what's this? Even without Larry Bird (and he will return) the Celtics have kept a stranglehold on first place in the East, a remarkable job.

With the perfect blend of a young, quick backcourt, and an older, yet still terrifying, front line, the Celtics have amassed a 32-12 record through Sunday.

Bird's back injury, though, is so painful that he can't even sit in a chair. "I have to lie down almost all the time," Bird said. "Once I get by that, hopefully all this will be gone."

As Bird continues to decline, Boston continues to lead the country in Pepto Bismol sales, as the Celtics have taken a recent nosedive to the tune of three wins in their last ten outings, while the Detroit Pistons (33-14) have won eight of their last 11.

But that leprechaun always seems to strike when you least expect it to.

Explosion is a mild word to describe the recent Los Angeles Lakers' winning streak, which reached 15 after a Laker win over the Chicago Bulls Sunday.

The Lakers (34-11) have the league's best record since their 2-5 start shook Southern California worse than a movement in the San Andreas fault.

Of course, Magic Johnson has carried the load and distributed points across the board.

Byron Scott, a notoriously bad shooter during the latter stages of last season, has begun to find the mark.

Sam Perkins and James Worthy are a formidable offensive and defensive tag team, much like they were at North Carolina, and Vlade Divac continues to improve.

But Magic is Magic, and he still is pulling tricks out of his hat.

"Everybody already had it in their minds that it was going to be Portland and Phoenix," Johnson said, "but we knew in our minds and hearts that we were going to have a good team."

Good? Probably great, as Portland is fast discovering.

In the East, the Pistons are playing well without guard Isiah Thomas, although they will miss him soon.

Detroit has won five straight since Thomas left, as Joe Dumars has played admirably at the point guard spot.

The third-place Chicago Bulls (30-14) have reportedly expressed interest in Dallas Mavericks guard Derek Harper, one of the more underrated players in the league.

The Air Jordan show has played to the tune of a 30-13 record as the Bulls won seven of their last 10 before losing Sunday in Los Angeles against the Lakers.

Jay Humphries and Alvin Robertson have led the Milwaukee Bucks (28-18) all year despite a recent cold streak.

But the Bucks still have the best pure shooter in the NBA in Ricky Pierce.

See Wilson/Page 8

Rose officially banned from Hall of Fame

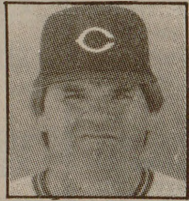
NEW YORK (AP) — The doors of Cooperstown slammed shut on Pete Rose when the Hall of Fame's board of directors voted 12-0 Monday to bar the banned baseball star from its ballot.

While the rule adopted Monday does not specifically mention Rose, the former Cincinnati Reds player and manager is the only living person on the permanently ineligible list.

Rose, the career leader in hits and games, can become eligible for the Hall ballot only if the baseball commissioner reinstates him by December 2005.

None of the previous 14 individuals banned from baseball were reinstated.

"The directors felt that it would be incongruous to have a person who has been declared ineligible by baseball to be eligible for baseball's highest honor," Hall of Fame president Ed Stack said. "It follows that if such individual is reinstated by baseball, then such individual would be a candidate for election."



Rose

"I'm not in control of that, so there's not much I can do about it," Rose said after leaving a Cincinnati elementary school. "I did my part."

Rose was placed on the ineligible list on Aug. 23, 1989, by the late commissioner A. Bartlett Giamatti. The commissioner concluded after a six-month investigation that Rose bet on baseball games, including those involving the Reds.

Rose, a three-time National League batting champion and its Most Valuable Player in 1973, had been considered an odds-on favorite for first-year election until the investigation that led to his banishment. He would have been eligible for the first time this December.

However, former American League president Lee MacPhail and current AL president Bobby Brown last month proposed the rule to keep Rose off the ballot. No write-in votes are permitted under the rules of election.

"I had felt right from the start that if someone was ineligible, that person should not be considered for the Hall of Fame," Brown said.

Rose, who last month completed a five-

month prison sentence for filing false federal income-tax returns, would not comment on the decision as he returned Monday to a Cincinnati halfway house. He is living there for three months as part of his sentence.

Brown and MacPhail were supported at Monday's meeting by a group largely made up of present and former baseball executives. Stack, who voted against the new rule at the Jan. 10 committee meeting, changed his mind and voted for it on Monday.

Bob Broeg, a Hall director who is a writer for the St. Louis Post-Dispatch, agreed with the baseball executives. He said he didn't think it would be right for Rose to be alongside other Hall of Famers in Cooperstown.

"He'd go in the first year and the next year he'd be signing autographs somewhere else for pay," Broeg said.

Voting against Rose were Stack, Brown, MacPhail, Broeg, NL president Bill White, former NL president Chub Feeney, former commissioner Bowie Kuhn, former Montreal Expos president John McHale, Milwaukee Brewers owner Bud Selig, Detroit

Tigers chairman Jim Campbell, Cooperstown Mayor Harold Hollis and Stephen Clark Jr., the son of the Hall of Fame founder.

Four directors did not attend the meeting: commissioner Fay Vincent, Hall of Famers Charlie Gehringer and Roy Campanella, and Boston Red Sox owner Jean Yawkey.

Vincent, who would rule on a request for reinstatement, is vacationing in Jamaica. He said that even if he had attended Monday's meeting, he would not have voted because of the potential conflict of interest.

The Baseball Writers Association of America, which votes for the Hall of Fame, said it would announce the number of write-in votes for Rose each year, even though they won't count.

"We feel a significant number of people will write in Pete Rose's name despite the decision," BBWAA executive secretary Jack Lang said. "We feel it is incumbent upon us to make those votes known."

Rose batted .303 in a 24-year career and set records for hits (4,256), games (3,562), at-bats (14,053) and singles (3,215).

Aggies toughen up for Red Raiders

By Craig Wilson
Of The Battalion Staff

After a frustrating loss to the Houston Lady Cougars and a heartbreaking loss to the Texas Lady Longhorns, things are only going to get tougher for the Texas A&M Lady Aggies.

The Lady Ags (9-10, 4-5) will get the chance to play spoiler, though, when they face the Texas Tech Red Raiders (16-4, 7-2) at 7 p.m. Tuesday night in Lubbock's Municipal Coliseum.

The third-place Red Raiders held the Lady Aggies to just 29 percent shooting and a season low 47 points as Tech prevailed, 60-47, at G. Rollie White Coliseum.

Texas Tech senior guards Tammy Walker and Krista Kirkland both scored 19 points for the Red Raiders in College Station.

Dena Russo led the Lady Ags with a game-high 20 points against Tech. She also collected 10 boards.

The Red Raiders are led by junior post Jennifer Buck, averaging 15 points and 4.3 rebounds a game. Junior forward Teresa McMillan (13.5 ppg, 7.4 rpg), and Kirkland (13.5 ppg, 4.9 rpg) are the other top performers.

Tech is coming off a 90-76 victory over SMU in Lubbock on Saturday. They are scoring at a 70.9 clip per game, while only allowing 61.8 points on defense.

The Lady Ags need to improve their foul shooting.

Free throws killed them against Texas down the stretch, as they made only six of 14 shots from the charity stripe.

Dena Russo again led the Ags with 17 points Saturday.

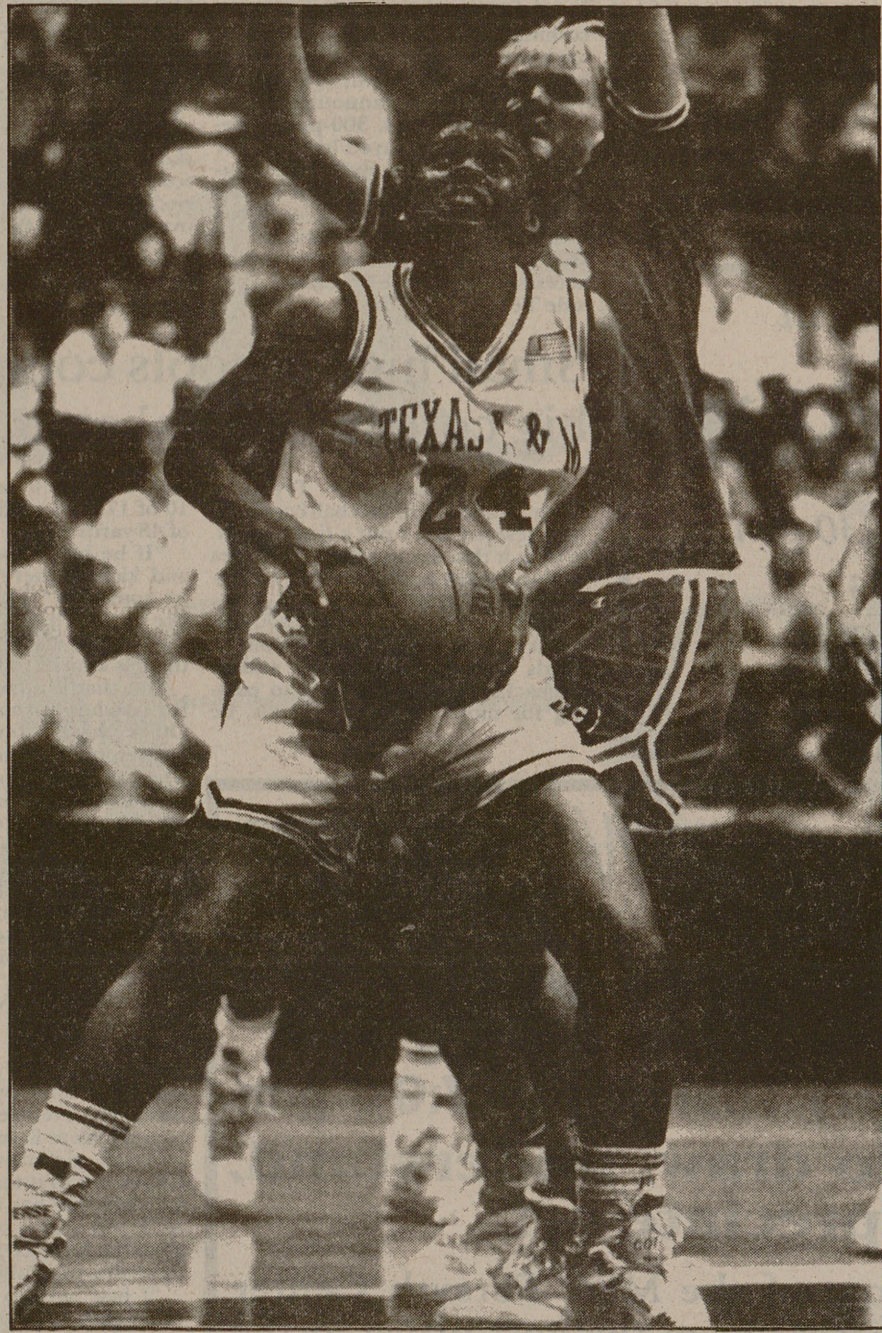
Yvonne Hill continues to lead the Lady Ags in scoring, with a 15.4 point average.

Despite the loss to Texas, the Lady Ags played one of their better games overall this season, and may possess a bit of momentum despite sitting in the midst of a two-game losing streak.

"The first half might have been the best half of basketball I've seen at A&M in seven years," Lady Aggie coach Lynn Hickey said of the Texas game. "I was just extremely proud of them."

Hopefully, that vote of confidence can help the Lady Ags play with the same amount of intensity against the Red Raiders as they showed against Texas.

The Lady Ags trail 24-6 in the all-time series and last beat the Red Raiders in 1988, 72-60, at G. Rollie White Coliseum.



KARL STOLLEIS/The Battalion

The Lady Aggies, led by Yvonne Hill, face Texas Tech tonight in Lubbock.

Rebs grab all the votes

By the Associated Press

UNLV was No. 1 in the Associated Press basketball poll for the 12th straight week, this time unanimous again, and Oklahoma State moved into the rankings for the first time this season on Monday.

UNLV (18-0), the only unbeaten Division I team, received all 63 first-place votes and 1,575 points from a panel of sports writers and sportscasters.

Nos. 2-3-4 remained unchanged as well, with Arkansas (22-1), Ohio State (18-1) and Indiana (20-2) occupying those spots. UNLV plays at Arkansas on Sunday, and coach Jerry Tarkanian admits he's thinking about the 1-2 matchup.

"I'd be lying if I said I wasn't," he said. First, the Runnin' Rebels have to play Fresno State on Thursday.

UNLV kept its record intact on Sunday with a 115-73 rout of Rutgers. The Rebels were unanimous No. 1 picks three weeks in a row until last week, when Ohio State got two first-place votes.

Oklahoma State (15-4) moved into the rankings for the first time this season at No. 22 after an 81-68 victory over Nebraska. There was one other new poll member, No. 25 Michigan State (13-6), which was ranked twice previously this season and as high as No. 4 in preseason.

Top 25

The Top Twenty Five teams in The Associated Press 1990-91 college basketball poll. First-place votes are in parentheses, last week's position and records through Feb. 3 are listed:

1. UNLV (63) 1	18-0
2. Arkansas 2	22-1
3. Ohio St. 3	18-1
4. Indiana 4	20-2
5. Arizona 6	18-3
6. Duke 7	18-4
7. Syracuse 8	19-3
8. St. Johns 5	16-3
9. North Carolina 9	15-3
10. Kentucky 10	17-3
11. Virginia 15	16-4
12. Southern Miss. 17	14-2
13. E. Tennessee St. 18	18-2
14. UCLA 12	16-5
15. Nebraska 11	18-3
16. New Mexico St. 16	16-2
17. Utah 13	20-2
18. Kansas 24	15-4
19. LSU 14	13-6
20. Georgetown 18	13-6
21. New Orleans 22	19-3
22. Oklahoma St. 22	15-4
23. Oklahoma 21	15-6
24. Pittsburgh 19	15-7
25. Michigan St. 13	6-6

The Presses will be hot on February 14!

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