

# Heat give Spurs Mourning sickness

**The Miami center had 10 points down the stretch while outplaying his San Antonio counterpart, David Robinson.**

MIAMI (AP) — Alonzo Mourning outplayed David Robinson down the stretch and the Miami Heat scored the game's final 10 points to beat San Antonio 96-89 Monday night.

Mourning scored 25 points, including a hook shot over Robinson with two minutes left to give the Heat the lead for good. Miami held San Antonio without a basket in the final seven minutes to rally from an 86-75 deficit.

The Heat, who had lost seven of their past eight games, beat a team with a winning record for the first time since Nov. 18. Their next four games are against teams with winning records.

San Antonio, which leads the Midwest Division, has lost three of its past four games, all on the road.

Robinson had 25 points but only four in the second half, when he was slowed by foul trouble. The All-Star

center, who had averaged 33 points in his five previous games against Mourning, fouled out for the first time this season with 21 seconds left in the game.

Sean Elliott also scored 25 for San Antonio but turned cold at the end.

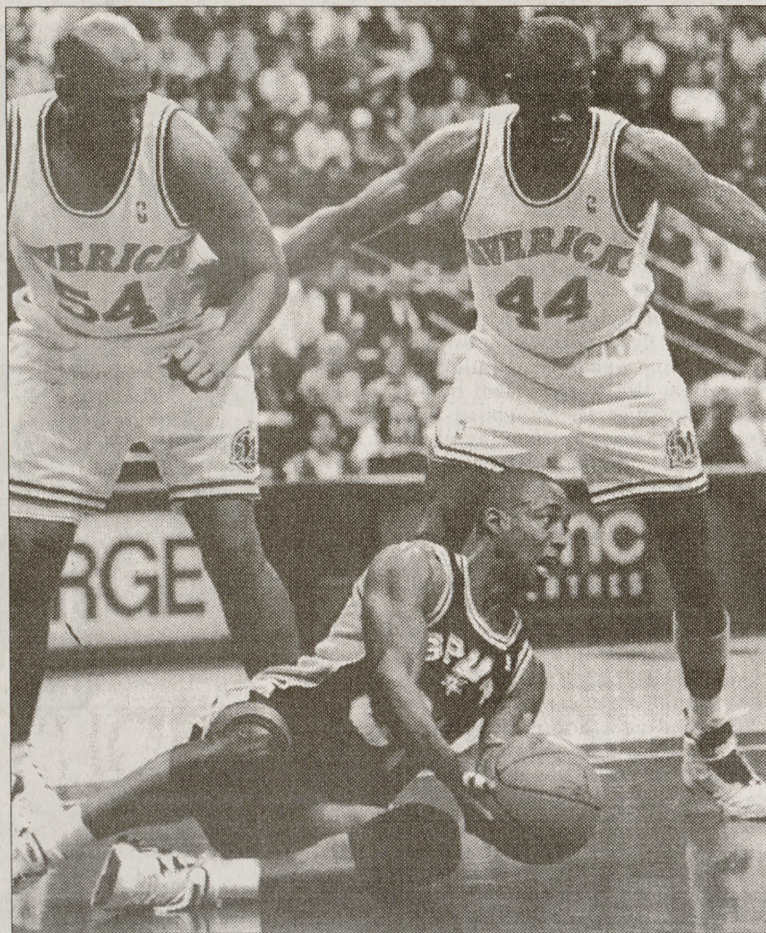
Miami's Rex Chapman scored a season-high 25, including a basket that trimmed the Spurs' lead to 87-86 and a 3-pointer to put the Heat ahead 93-90 with 37 seconds to go.

Miami's Billy Owens, returning after a three-game layoff with an upper respiratory infection, grabbed 14 rebounds.

Elliott's six consecutive points late in the third quarter gave the Spurs their biggest lead, 77-62. He hit a basket for an 86-75 advantage with seven minutes to go, but that was the Spurs' last field goal.

They made two free throws, one following a technical foul on Heat coach Pat Riley, for an 89-86 lead with 3:15 left. But Mourning dunked, then made a hook shot on Miami's next possession for a 90-89 lead.

After Elliott missed two shots, Chapman added a 3-pointer, and Miami broke a four-game losing streak against San Antonio.



Spur forward Sean Elliott dives for a loose ball against the Dallas Mavericks. Elliott and the Spurs were defeated Monday night in Miami.

# Rockets drop third straight game

**Ex-Rocket Craig Ehlo scored 25 points against his old teammates in the Hawks' 105-96 victory.**

ATLANTA (AP) — Steve Smith scored 26 points and Craig Ehlo had 20 of his season-high 25 in the final 14:30 as the Atlanta Hawks downed the Houston Rockets 105-96 for their eighth straight victory Monday night.

The winning streak is the longest for the Hawks since putting together a 14-game string two years ago. It's also the second longest current streak in the NBA behind Chicago's 11-game string.

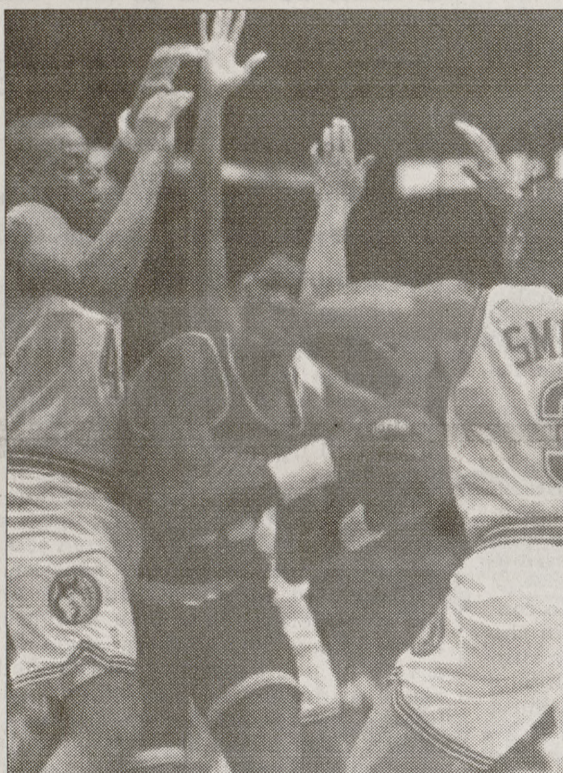
Clyde Drexler led the Rockets with 23 points and Hakeem Olajuwon added 20. It was the third loss in a row for the two-time defending league champions. Mookie Blaylock added 20 for Atlanta, and Henry James, a recent signee from the CBA, scored 16 for Houston, including four 3-point baskets.

Defense was the key for the Hawks, who came up with 14 steals and forced the Rockets into a season-high 27 turnovers that Atlanta converted into 20 points.

Neither team led by more than five points until the Hawks took a 73-67 lead at the end of the third quarter on Blaylock's driving layup with five seconds left.

Ehlo had 18 of his points in a stretch that started with two free that cut Houston's to 65-64 and ended with 8:20 to play in the game on a 3-pointer that stretched the Hawks' lead to 87-78.

The Rockets twice cut the deficit to five points, first on Sam Cassell's two free throws with 2:53 left and the last on Cassell's driving layup that made it 101-96 with 1:58 remaining. Houston went scoreless the rest of the way.



Houston's Hakeem Olajuwon is swarmed by a trio of Minnesota Timberwolves in a 1995 game. Houston lost to Atlanta Monday night.

# New Rockets' arena possible, mayor says

**Houston Mayor Bob Lanier is negotiating with the team for a downtown arena.**

HOUSTON (AP) — After losing their NFL team to Tennessee, Houston wants to be sure the National Basketball Association champion Rockets stay in town.

Mayor Bob Lanier on Monday said he is negotiating with the Rockets to build a new arena for the NBA team near the downtown George Brown Convention Center. The Rockets still have eight years to run on their lease with the city-owned Summit, but the mayor thought there was a

good chance a deal could be made. "I feel reasonably optimistic," he said.

Lanier declined to provide details, other than to say the convention center would share in the benefits and cost of such a venture.

The Rockets franchise would not comment. "That's the position we've taken on this," spokeswoman Kathy Frietsch said.

Lanier made his mission known in his annual State of the City address before the Greater Houston Partnership, where he repeated themes that handily clinched 83 percent of the vote last November. "I think this city is in re-

markably good shape," he told about 1,500 business leaders. "It's certainly a lot easier than four years ago."

Lanier noted that when he first took office, the city was starting at a 13 percent financial deficit, crumbling infrastructure, an exodus of residents from the core city to the suburbs and a crime wave.

He said the city budget now is in balance, streets, sidewalks and streetlights are being repaired, people are moving back into the city.

As for his continuing feud with the Oilers, Lanier said he balked at suggestions from team ownership that the city build a \$200 million stadium from tax money.

# Bushes make pitch for Astros

**The Astros are also using Clyde Drexler and Bum Phillips in ads to sell season tickets.**

HOUSTON (AP) — Former President George Bush and his wife Barbara are making pitches for the Houston Astros.

In a television ad campaign set to debut Jan. 29, the former first couple is seen recalling Bush's days as a first baseman for Yale University. Mrs. Bush recalls how she was scorekeeper for the team.

"I still can't believe you gave me an error in the Cornell game," Bush says in the spot.

"That was a playable ball, George," Mrs. Bush says.

"Was not. Was not," he says.

"Jeff Bagwell would have had it," she says, referring to the Astros infielder.

The playful spot is one of three featuring famous Houstonians that will air as part of the Astros' push to sell 18,000 season tickets. So far, about 9,000 have been sold.

Dwindling ticket sales have forced Astros owner Drayton McLane to consider selling the team.

The Bushes volunteered their time for the ad campaign, which was unveiled Monday.

Gov. Bush was not immediately available for comment.



Bush

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