

Thursday • June 5, 1997



# Bulls beat up Jazz, 97-85



over the future of the Bulls, whose coach, best player and leading rebounder will be free agents at season's end.

But if Game 2 proved anything, it is that Chicago management would have to be crazy to break up this bunch. This was the Bulls at their best in every facet of the game.

Jordan, who had 38 points, 13 rebounds and nine assists to barely miss the first NBA Finals triple-double of his career, simply toyed with everything the Jazz threw at him.

As the crowd once again chanted "M-V-P, M-V-P" for Jordan, he burned Jeff Hornacek for 11 first-quarter points, scored nine in the second — primarily against rookie Shandon Anderson — when the Bulls pulled away for good, and added 10 more in the third as Bryon Russell tried to guard him.

By the time the fourth quarter

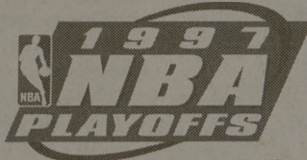
## Jordan denied first Finals triple-double

arrived, the Bulls did not even need him. But Jordan stayed in and went for the triple-double, barely missing it when Scottie Pippen blew a wide-open layup with 3 1/2 minutes left, a three-pointer with 2:15 to go and a jumper in the lane a minute later — all of which would have given Jordan his 10th assist.

"Pippen made me aware of it when he missed that layup. ... That's OK," Jordan said.

"I should have made the layup," Pippen admitted. The series resumes Friday night at Salt Lake City, where the Jazz

have a 21-game winning streak. Utah will be trying to become the first team in 20 years and the third overall to come back from an 0-2 deficit in the finals.



They'll need something out of Karl Malone, who couldn't have looked less like an MVP. Malone actually gave a huge indication of the way this game would go when he stepped to the foul line 93 seconds into the game and missed two free throws.

It was a repeat of his failure at the end of Game 1, and a roaring United Center crowd could not have been more pleased as it laughed at

Malone while he ran downcourt.

Before long, the Bulls were doing some laughing of their own, with those oh-so-familiar smiles on their faces. And well they should be smiling.

Having won four of the last six titles, the Bulls seem to have an overwhelming edge in confidence. The Jazz, meanwhile, were passing up open shots on the outside, failing to penetrate inside and relying too much on Malone to carry the load.

He finished with 20 points on 6-for-20 shooting, and had 12 rebounds. Hornacek added 19 and John Stockton 14 for the Jazz, who never led and didn't cut their second-half deficit below double digits until 1:34 remained.

It was not enough to undo the damage inflicted primarily by Jordan, the four-time finals MVP who made the winning shot at the buzzer in Game 1 and seems to be

on his way to a fifth award.

He shot 11-for-20 from the field and 15-for-21 at the line, and it got to a point in the second half where Jordan was looking down at his defender, giving him a grin and then making his moves with his tongue hanging out of his mouth.

Nobody else on Chicago did anything spectacular numbers-wise, but that did not mean the rest of the team didn't contribute. Ron Harper scored 13 points and became the first player in a long time to contain Stockton.

Pippen scored only 10 points, with six rebounds and four assists, but he set the tone defensively for the Bulls by blocking the first shot of the game, a layup attempt by Russell.

CHICAGO (AP) — The Chicago Bulls did indeed disassemble something — their once formidable opponent.

Michael Jordan was at his unplayable best, nearly getting a triple-double, the Bulls played team defense at the highest level and Chicago humbled the Utah Jazz, 97-85, Wednesday night in Game 2 of the NBA Finals.

"We came out on the heels of what we did in the first game," Jordan said. "We basically stayed in the game as last game. Right from the beginning of the game through the end we maintained our defensive pressure."

The victory came amid considerable handwringing in Chicago



# The numbers never die

Baseball, just as most sports, is a game composed of trillions and trillions of numbers combining to create its history. But uniquely in baseball one single number can, in turn, comprise the entire game.

You need only mention 56, 775 or 511 and even the most casual baseball fan will have visions of Joe Dimaggio, Hank Aaron and Cy Young. But one number has lived in infamy for 36 years and is arguable the most recognizable record in sports history — 61, the number of home runs Roger Maris hit in 1961 to break Babe Ruth's 1927 mark of 60.

Of the 16,000 men who have amassed over 100,000 home runs since 1961, not one individual has managed to collect 61 in a single season. Yet every April, within a week of opening day, the phrase, "on pace to," can be noticed in almost every broadcast, newspaper or talk show in America. And once again this season the media have their poster boy for the race to catch Roger — Ken Griffey Jr.

I don't usually succumb to the "on



Senior journalism major

pace to" pressure, but I can't stand to let this opportunity pass me by. So I'll throw out some numbers for your calculating pleasure.

I'll start simple and point out that with Junior's 25 home runs, as of June 2, he is averaging one shot every 8.8 at bats. Speculating that he will average four plate appearances per game over his last 104 games, Griffey will blast 72 bombs. But we all know that won't happen.

Let's be more realistic. The Kid has averaged a home run in every 16.1 at bats over his eight-year career, so taking that into account for the rest of the season, he should end up at around 50. But then consider the fact that in the past four seasons, when Griffey has emerged as the premier player in the Great Game, he has left the yard once every 11.7 at bats. That would bring him to 60 this season. Ahhh. Well, that's it, he's not going to make it.

But then again, if you take into account the teams Seattle has remaining on its schedule and Junior's career performances against them, his projected total plummets to 47.

But considering opponents in this equation, shouldn't we also take stadiums into account? Calculating Griffey's projected home run total with this constraint raises his total to 48. But remember, he is a quick starter. How much would the monthly home run averages over his career affect our number? Not much, still 48, but important nonetheless.

So I guess this just isn't the year for Griffey. Unless, of course, we consider how these situational statistics have improved over the last four seasons when Junior has been unconscious at the plate. So let's pretend Griffey didn't have those first four years of his career when he only averaged 22 home runs a year. Because you know, we can do that.

After plugging and grinding Griffey's situational numbers since 1993, we have made a startling discovery. Considering Seattle's opponents, Griff will belt 55 dingers, but including the sights of the Mariner's remaining games his total improves to 58. And using the monthly home run averages over the past four years we find that the Kid will fall just short of his run at 59.

Please see FURTICK on Page 4

## Bagwell leads Astros in 5-2 win over Reds

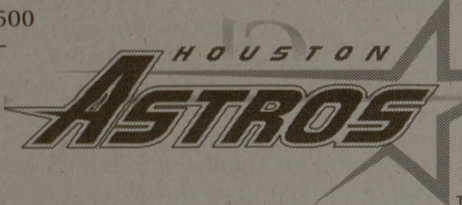
CINCINNATI (AP) — Chris Holt rebounded strongly from his shortstart of the season and Jeff Bagwell doubled home a pair of runs Wednesday night, leading the Houston Astros to a 5-2 victory over the Reds.

The Astros moved back to .500 (29-29) with their third consecutive win. The Reds have dropped four of six to remain in last place in the Central.

Holt (6-4) scattered seven hits over seven innings, striking his shutout when Willie Greene hit his sixth homer with two out in the seventh. The right-hander lasted only 3 2-3 innings last Friday, giving up six runs and seven hits in a 9-2 loss to San Diego.

Greene hit his second homer of the game in the ninth off Jose Lima. Billy Wagner got one out for his 10th save.

Dave Burba (4-5) couldn't throw strikes and couldn't get Bagwell out when it mattered. The



right-hander threw 112 pitches in five innings, giving up five runs and eight hits with six walks.

Thomas Howard hit a solo homer, his second, in the first inning, when Houston left the bases loaded.

Bagwell gave the Astros a cushion with his two-out, two-run double in the second, following walks to Holt and Craig Biggio. Bagwell is 5-for-13 (.385) with one homer and five RBIs in three games against the Reds this season.

Burba is the one Cincinnati pitcher that Bagwell has struggled against. He was 1-for-15 career off Burba before the double.

Biggio had an RBI single in the fourth and Brad Ausmus added a sacrifice fly that put the Astros up 5-0 in the fifth.

Houston's Luis Gonzalez had a pair of singles, extending his hitting streak to nine games. Cincinnati's Barry Larkin went 0-for-2, ending his hitting streak at 12 games.

## Cowboy's Irvin says he's unhappy

FARMERS BRANCH, Texas (AP) — Embattled Dallas Cowboys receiver Michael Irvin said Wednesday he's unhappy with his life and is considering retiring from football if he cannot rekindle his love for the game.

"I honestly don't know exactly what I'm going to do," said Irvin, his usually boisterous tone sounding lifeless and his wardrobe also dramatically toned down.

"I am not the most talented person in the world. I played my game with intensity and with emotion and that made the difference in my ability to play. Right now, I just don't have that intensity and emotion about the game. I don't have that love that I used to have about the game."

Irvin missed a minicamp in April

and has not shown up at Valley Ranch for a quarterback camp this week, prompting staunch defender Troy Aikman and Emmitt Smith to publicly ask him to decide whether he is coming back.

"I want to know as soon as possible," said Irvin, who would forfeit about \$5.5 million in salary if he retires. "As soon as I know, they'll know. I understand what they're saying, but I don't think they understand the whole situation."

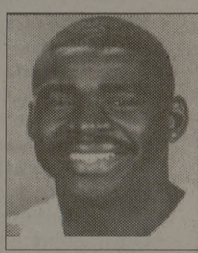
"I don't feel I'm any good to my-

self right now. I would be more of a hindrance than a help."

Irvin said he told Cowboys owner Jerry Jones in January that he was unhappy in Dallas. He asked Jones to look into a trade, but Jones later told him a deal would be impossible because of salary cap restraints.

"After that, I basically said OK," Irvin said. "I have never, ever sat there face-to-face with Jerry and said I'm demanding a trade. ... I understand my options."

The usually high-profile Irvin has tried avoiding the spotlight since former topless dancer Nina Shahravan recanted a rape allegation against him and teammate Erik Williams in January. Shahravan faces trial next month on a perjury charge.



Irvin

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Sure.

Alternative Lifestyles?  
Ok.

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