

Rockets prepare for takeoff

New look Rockets get ready for future with All-Stars Pippen, Barkley and Olajuwon

HOUSTON (AP) — The Houston Rockets didn't wait for a signed collective bargaining agreement before joining the other NBA teams in launching a plan to win back their fans.

First they went after Chicago Bulls forward Scottie Pippen. Then coach Rudy Tomjanovich handed out 1,000 free tickets to Saturday's preseason game at home against the San Antonio Spurs. Another 14,000 tickets were given to current season ticket holders.

If the new contract is approved in time for the game, fans could get their first chance to see their new superstar in a Rockets uniform.

The Bulls will sign Pippen to a five-year, \$67.2 million contract and then trade him to the Rockets for a second-round draft choice and third-year forward Roy Rogers.

The Rockets' giveaway plan is part of a league-wide move to soothe fans' feelings following the lengthy lockout. The contract agreement still had not been ratified on Tuesday but plans remained in

place for Saturday's game.

The Rockets also have distributed 14,000 free tickets for a scrimmage session in Compaq Center on Jan. 28. A similar giveaway is planned for a Jan. 30 game against the Spurs in San Antonio.

"The (NBA) Board of Governors came up with some ideas on how to make it right with the fans, and this was one of those ideas," Rockets spokeswoman Angela Blakeney said in reference to the free tickets.

As word spread of the pending deal for Pippen, excitement swelled among Rockets players working out at their practice facility on Tuesday. Hakeem Olajuwon thinks the Rockets are back in the championship chase.

"No question," Olajuwon said. "I think he's a complete player, offensively and defensively. He knows how to win; he's been there

many times. The most important thing is to make (the new team) work. We must be competitive and at the same time make it fun."

Mayor Lee Brown saw Pippen's arrival as an aid to the proposed new basketball arena for the Rockets.

"I think it is a good opportunity for another championship," Brown said following his state of the city address. "I'd like to go to the voters and ask approval for a new stadium with a championship under our belts."

Rockets rookies are even more eager to get the season started.

"It's going to be a dream camp for us," rookie forward Michael Dickerson said. "Now we've got to go to camp and take it all in."

Dickerson is no longer intimidated at being the teammate of future Hall of Famers Olajuwon, Pippen and Charles Barkley.

"Before this I would have been. But I've been working out with these guys, so now it's just a matter of playing our games," he said, adding that the Pippen deal came as no surprise.

Guard Bryce Drew didn't realize he'd have such an exciting rookie experience.

"It's a blessing to come into the league and have a chance for a ring," Drew said. "Many people play their whole careers and don't get one, and we come in our rookie year and we have a chance with those three players."

Team officials just hope the fans stick around for a possible championship. Blakeney said only a handful of season ticket holders had called to cancel.

"We asked them to give us a chance and see what the team looks like and see if they want to stay, and they've agreed to wait," she said.

Don Harris, a season ticket holder for 13 seasons, never considered turning in his tickets.

"I understand the economics of the game. It goes on in all sports," Harris said. "The short-term season and the news of Scottie Pippen turned the people around. I think everyone is excited about the opening game."

HOOPS

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KU should not get much of a challenge on their way to the best record in the North but should be challenged in the Big 12 tournament by OSU, OU and Texas.

• Missouri Tigers

The Tigers are 3-2 in conference and 12-4 overall. Norm Stewart has done much to quiet his doubters after two subpar seasons in a row.

Mizzou failed to defeat KU for the third time in a row at home but should be competitive for the conference crown.

John Woods has led Mizzou's balanced offense with 13.7 points per game.

If Albert White ever meets his potential the Tigers could be an NCAA tournament team.

• Nebraska Cornhuskers

Nebraska is basically a mediocre team with a mediocre record. NU is 2-2 in conference and 10-7 overall.

They can give some teams problems because of Venson Hamilton's inside presence but will end up in the NIT in March.

Hamilton is an all Big 12 caliber player averaging 13.8 points and

2.1 blocks per game.

• Iowa State Cyclones

ISU is 11-7 overall but just 2-3 in conference. A few juco transfers failing to qualify coupled with injuries have left the Cyclones short on numbers this year. Marcus Fizer averaging 17.7 points per game is the only bright spot in a rebuilding year in Ames.

• Colorado Buffaloes

Where have you gone Chauncey Billups. When Billups left the Buffs for NBA riches two years ago, the CU basketball program went with him. CU is 1-3 in conference and 12-6 overall.

Colorado is led by Kenny Price's 11.6 points per game. The Buffs should not be much of a challenge to the rest of the North teams.

• Kansas State Wildcats

KSU is the North's version of A&M. The Wildcats started off the season at 11-2 but have lost five out of their last six to go 1-4 in conference and 12-6 overall.

Tom Asbury is a good coach and KSU's stifling defense keeps them in almost every game they play, but they need senior post Manny Dies to step up his game or they are NIT bound in March.

Heisman winner a Ranger

ARLINGTON, Texas (AP) — The Texas Rangers on Tuesday agreed to terms on a one-year, \$425,000 contract with catcher Gregg Zaun.

Zaun, who was eligible for arbitration, earned \$280,000 with the Florida Marlins last year before the Rangers acquired him on Nov. 23.

He played in 106 games with Florida, hitting .188 with five homers and 29 RBIs. He has spent four years in the majors with Baltimore and Florida.

Texas also agreed to terms on one-year contracts with five rookies, including Heisman Trophy winner Ricky Williams. The former Texas Longhorns running back spent four minor-league seasons in the Philadelphia Phillies' organization. The Rangers purchased his rights from the Montreal Expos on Dec. 15.

The other rookies who agreed to contracts were pitchers Brandon Knight, Corey Lee and Mike Venafro and outfielder Mike Zywica.



Texas back **Ricky Williams** cashed in Tuesday, receiving his second straight Doak Walker Award and signing with the Rangers.

UT's Williams honored once more

DALLAS (AP) — Surrounded Tuesday night by football greats of bygone years, Ricky Williams received his second Doak Walker Award as the nation's top college running back.

Williams has already won the Heisman Trophy and will spend the next several weeks scooping up a display case worth of additional honors. But the Doak Walker Award held special significance, said the University of Texas star.

"Last year, this was the ONLY one I got, and it was dear to my heart," Williams said. "I'm also happy that the award's namesake was a great guy."

Williams met Walker last year and the two struck up a friendship across racial and generational lines.

But the Southern Methodist All-America and 1948 Heisman winner was paralyzed in a skiing accident and died last spring at 71.

Williams, who wore 34 on his jersey throughout his Longhorn career, honored Walker by wearing his number, 34, when Texas played Oklahoma at the Cotton Bowl — "the house that Doak built."

Former football players and sports writers were nearly unanimous in again voting Williams the top college running back — Williams made their job easy by leading the nation in rushing and setting major-college records for career rushing yards, scoring and all-purpose yards.

The voting took place in December, and Williams received the

trophy, a foot-high figure of Walker, at a banquet of the SMU Athletic Forum. Also at the event, former Kansas and Chicago Bears star Gale Sayers was given a special award for retired athletes who have contributed to their communities.

In a month, Williams will report to the Texas Rangers' spring camp to take another shot at professional baseball. But his attention will also be on the April NFL draft, when he is almost certain to be either the first or second player chosen.

"I don't really care where I play, I just want to go and play football," said Williams, who earned a reputation at Texas for saying the nice thing and doing such good deeds as talking to high school kids about avoiding drugs.



"If you take any reasonably smart person and tell them to spend a year researching an industry, they can become an expert if they work at it." Christy Haubegger

crazy," she recalls. "But I figured the worst thing that could happen would be that the business wouldn't fly and I'd end up being a lawyer after all."

As President of her class at law school, Christy already possessed the leadership skills that entrepreneurs need.

Her publishing experience, however, was limited to editing the Stanford

women's magazine aimed at African-Americans. Christy convinced the magazine's president to meet with her, and his company agreed to help fund her start-up. Christy launched *Latina* magazine in 1996, and it was an immediate hit. Today, it has an impressive circulation of almost 200,000, but it wasn't easy getting there. One of the hardest things about being a young entrepreneur is simply the fact that you are young.

Potential business partners often assume you are inexperienced. "Nobody saw me walk into a meeting and thought they were looking at a magazine publisher. But I persevered. You have to be prepared to get over your pride and fake your confidence when you need to."

While there is a certain glamour associated with being the publisher of a major magazine, Christy still relishes the role of underdog. "Each milestone means so much more when you're a start-up," she says. "A major retailer just advertised with us for the first time. To a larger publication, it wouldn't be such a big deal. But when they agreed to be in our magazine, we jumped up and down and cried and hugged. Then, she laughs, "we ate ice cream."

As an owner of a growing company and Publisher of *Latina*, Christy has continued to nurture her dream magazine into a leading lifestyle publication, read by thousands of dynamic, educated young women just like herself. She says that she hopes to inspire other young women to pursue their dreams as well.



"Strong enough for a Man. But Made for a Woman."

Name: Christy Haubegger
Age: 30
Career: Entrepreneur-Founder & Publisher *Latina Magazine*

Foundation (also given to Oprah Winfrey and Madeleine Albright), and Tom Brokaw named her one of the "most influential people of the year" in 1996.

So how did she end up in company like that? Turns out it all started with one simple question. "I took a few business classes in school with some great professors, and they always talked about the search for that mythical big idea," she recalls. "As a Mexican-American, I'd always wondered why no one had ever produced a magazine for Latina women. Then I wondered if I could do it myself."

Christy graduated from the University of Texas in 1989 with a philosophy degree and immediately headed off to Stanford University Law School. But as law school graduation approached, she couldn't shake the magazine idea from her head, so she decided to devote a year to chasing her dream. "My friends thought I was

The Secret Success Series brings you information designed to help you achieve your personal and career goals. Watch for the rest of this series in future issues of your school newspaper.

Law Review. Still, she figured she could learn what she needed to know pretty quickly. "If you take any reasonably smart person and tell them to spend a year researching an industry, they can become an expert if they work at it," she says. "All the data I needed was in the public library. Census data, information about the magazine industry, books on how to write a business plan, it was all there." In the meantime, she lived on the cheap in San Francisco's Mission District and did legal research to pay the bills.

Once Christy's business plan was done, she started to show it to people who might be willing to invest the millions of dollars she would need to launch a glossy publication. "192 people told me no. I counted," she says. "But most of them didn't slam the door in my face, and I was able to learn a lot by asking them how I could improve my business pitch."

Eventually, some good old-fashioned networking led her to her first big investor. "If you don't believe that stuff about using all of your contacts, you should," she says. Turns out that Christy's classmate's aunt's neighbor (follow that?) knew the editor of *Essence*, a