

Utah Stars Cap Meteoric Climb to ABA Crown



Sports Mirror by
John Mooney
Tribune Sports Editor

Nice Guys Do Win Pennants And Stars Can Prove It

Bill Sharman, who coached the Utah Stars to the American Basketball Assn. championship over the long grind, brushed aside congratulations long enough to say, "Thank you for everything" to the media writers.

And this has been the attitude of the owner, Bill Daniels; the president, Vince Boryla; the front office staff, and Coach Sharman and his coaches and players.

Every game when you walked by and said "Good luck", someone would say, "Whether we win or lose, thank you for everything you've done to help us this far."

Media writers, accustomed to the "you lost a game for us, but we won on our own" couldn't believe the humility of the Stars.

The Stars won magnificently, but graciously. They had words of thanks for everyone, especially the fans who adopted a wandering ball club and took it to their hearts.

This was the first major league team ever to represent Salt Lake City and Utah, and the whole organization was major league, all the way.

Goes Back Long Time

A column on the women's "liberation" movement in sports brought back memories to Bill Cardwell of Bountiful.

Bill recalls, "The break into semiprofessional baseball by females of the human race occurred sometime between 1900 and 1915 with a barnstorming team of females known as the Boston Bloomer Girls. The team was comprised of all females except the positions of catcher and first baseman. Two men played these positions and they wore wigs, midis (then the name for a loose shirtwaist) and pleated bloomers.

"The reason I was made aware of the team was that my uncle, Ross Allen, played first base for them one season after he had been cut from a minor league club. He left me with the impression the gals were pretty good.

"Women's lib is not a new movement. I think it really started around the turn of the century when the first females took typing and shorthand courses to enter the male world of business as secretaries. My mother was one of those and she often spoke of the social ostracism their efforts produced. By way of the business world, she met and married my father in 1903.

"I am with you. They should have given that gal a try as an umpire, but let her work up the ladder."

Along with males playing as members of female barnstorming teams, there's a legend that Smokey Joe Wood, one of the great pitchers of all time, hurled for a time as a member of a "women's" baseball team.

It's pretty well documented that Babe Pinelli, the old National League umpire, played one game as a member of the Bloomer Girls.

In 1912, when the owner-promoter of the Bloomer Girls arrived in Oakland for a game against the PCL Oaks, he signed up a team of boys called "The Beach Outlaws."

Each was given 50 cents to get his head shaved. They, including Pinelli, beat the Oaks, 3-2.

When Pinelli's friends attempted to break his disguise and expose the hoax, they couldn't recognize him. Finally, Babe stood up, pulled off his wig and hollered, "Here I am. It's me, Ralph."

Anyone else know of any male baseball players who masqueraded as a female to play baseball? And don't tell me about Finocchio's All-Stars in San Francisco.

A Tip for Speakers

Some of our young protesters are most eloquent, but I think repeating the advice of "Wild Red" Berry, the rasser, would be a help.

Berry advises, "In promulgating your esoteric cogitations and articulating superficial, sentimental and psychological observations, beware of platitudinous ponderosity. Let your extemporaneous decantations and unpremeditated expatiations have intelligibility and veracious vivacity without rodomontade and thorasonical bombast.

"Sedulously avoid all polysyllabic profundity, pusillanimous vacuity, pestiferous profanity and similar transgressions. Or, to put it a bit differently, talk simply, naturally, and, above all, don't use big words."

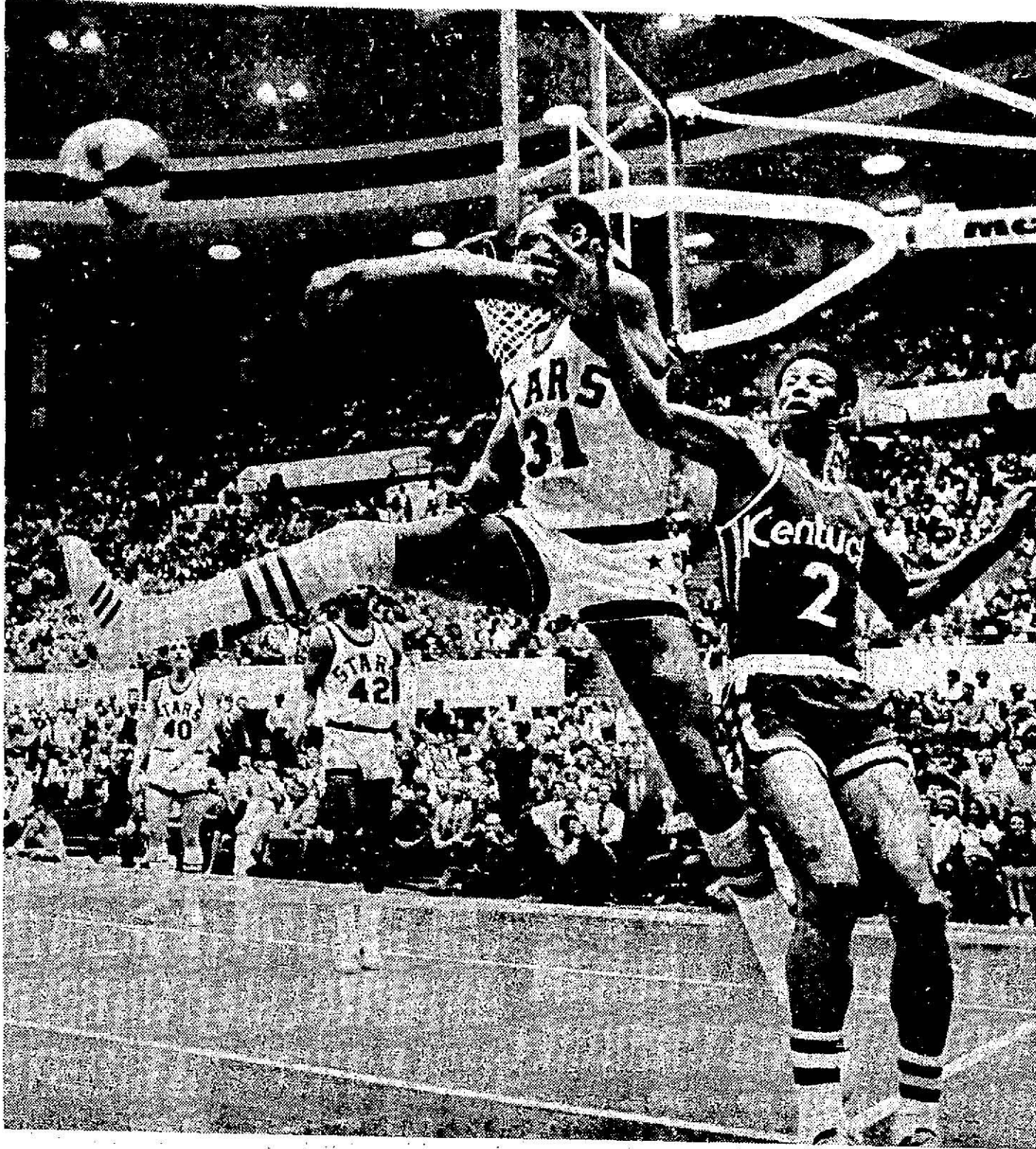
Coaches in Revolt

The WAC golf and tennis coaches are upset over the assignment of the conference spring sports championships to Texas-El Paso next spring, since the Miners don't field teams in tennis or golf.

But when one coach questioned the lack of gallery if the meet was held where a school didn't have a team entered, the assistant athletic director at UTEP cracked, "We'll have as many people watching golf and tennis as you have here in Tucson."

Observation Ward

Wonder if those TV meteorologists would like me to dream some weather forecasts for them?



Zelmo Beaty, Utah's super star, hustles to get to the ball just before it goes out of bounds. Zelmo saved the ball and passed off to a teammate. Kentucky's Walt Simon looks astonished.

Zelmo Leads Win In 131-121 Fray

By Steve Rudman
Tribune Sports Writer

With three minutes to play Willie Wise stuck his valuable arms up in the air and shouted, "We're No. 1."

Then the crowd of 13,260 followed suit, and as the clock slowly ticked away it became obvious that this was a very special night in Utah sports history.

Perhaps it was the biggest night. Certainly it was the most exciting.

Wild Cheering

And when the buzzer finally sounded, giving Utah a 131-121 triumph over the Kentucky Colonels, those fans broke out in the wildest cheering since they repealed Prohibition.

The Stars are No. 1. The champs. The best in the American Basketball Assn. for the 1970-71 season. Better than Kentucky, better than Indiana, better than everybody.

The fans who came to see the climax to the ABA season were not disappointed. After the Stars had won the first major professional sports championship in the state's history, they crowded onto the court and just wouldn't leave.

They grabbed Wise and put him on their shoulders for all to see. And when Willie got up there every eye in the house shot in his direction as he again raised two arms high in the air and yelled "Hey, baby, we did it!"

The Final Round

The Stars certainly did do it. They won the final round four games to three after struggling past Indiana in a grueling seven-game semifinal series and Texas in the quarterfinals.

And it was a coup of major proportions for the Stars in only their first year in Utah. "You gotta admit," Zelmo Beaty jabbered in the locker room, "This is basketball country. Now you gotta admit that, don't you?"

Mike Butler, who was as much a hero as anybody, said, "Boy, is this great. Of course, I've been saying all along that we would win the championship. I'm happy I had some small part to play in it."

It's Beautiful

Wise agreed. "Beautiful, baby, beautiful," he said over and over as the champagne flowed freely in the dressing room.

That dressing room was a madhouse.

For one thing, Dick Nemelka got orange juice, champagne and a little bit of everything else poured all over him. George Stone got ice shoved in his basketball trunks by Bill Daniels, the team's owner.

Everybody got wet, including one reporter who will have to send his topees to the cleaners Wednesday morning.

Even Jack Dolph the league commissioner, didn't escape the celebrating. Daniels spotted him and poured a



Willie Wise
Champion Gets Champagne

half a bottle of champagne on his head.

The celebrating went on and on and on, and it was a great performance in the last three periods that made it possible.

Early Lead

Kentucky broke away to a 32-28 lead in the first period as Dan Issel connected regularly.

But then the Stars, spurred by Beaty and Merv Jackson, came to life and carried a 61-54 lead into the locker room at the half.

The Stars opened up a 14-point lead in the third period and kept it most of the way, allowing the Colonels to trim the margin a couple of times to three and four points, but managing to come up with big plays when it counted.

Beaty, Wise, Red Robbins, Glen Combs, Jackson and Ron Boone had given the Stars the lead going into the final, nervous minutes, but it was Butler who preserved the championship.

Just 22 Minutes

Butler had played only 22 minutes in the first six games of the series but he came in with exactly four minutes left and proceeded to drive for a layup, bank in a three-pointer, hit two crucial foul pitches and grab two key rebounds.

"I knew it was all over when I hit the foul pitches," Butler said. "And after that Willie came over and put his arms around me and I just knew it."

Butler also wasted a lot of time by dribbling away precious seconds. He dribbled

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Player	Points	Rebounds	Assists	Steals	Blocks
Kentucky	44	25-33	121	Totals	50
Utah	28	31	37	21	12
Powell	6	2	19	Wise	6
Ligon	1	1	3	Robbins	5
Issel	15	11	12	At	15
Dampier	5	4	15	Beatty	7
Carrier	11	4	31	Combs	7
Hunter	2	2	4	Boone	2
Simon	1	0	2	Stone	2
Pratt	1	2	3	Butler	2

Th' Stars' Fans Know No Calendar

By Dick Rosetta
Tribune Sports Writer

"Basketball on May 18? I would watch the Stars play on July 4 if that were the case!"

That was the typical reply Tuesday night at the Salt Palace as 13,260 screaming fans showered accolades on their 1971 American Basketball Assn. champions following the victory over Kentucky's Colonels.

Why Fan Support

The objective was to determine opinion why Utahns continue to surge through the furstles at a 13,000-fan-per-game clip when it's the middle of the spring.

"It's a basketball state, isn't it?" Mr. and Mrs. Ron Busche of Ogden said from their makeshift seats in the lower balcony. They were occupying folding chairs set up when the Salt Palace sold 17 seats on 16-seat rows.

"We think we've got a great team. We watched them in January, we're watching them tonight and we would watch them July 4. Let us know if they are playing then, will you?" Mr. Busche added.

Civic Pride

"I think it's just a small matter of civic pride," security officer Ken Farnsworth chimed in as Red Robbins stuffed one Dan Issel's shots back into Dan's throat.

"This is a national champi-

on team. We've never had one. As an officer, it's darned difficult for me to keep from jumping up and down and screaming. But I feel that way," Ken smiled.

Ron Henriksen of Salt Lake echoed many sentiments in

claiming. "What difference does it make what time of year it is? Can you imagine what this has done for Utah over the nation? Man, anyone who could argue against basketball must be nuts."

"I just love it," Murray stu-

dent Kris Holmes yelled as she jumped up and down in the balcony. "Yes, but I wished she would sit down for just a second," boyfriend Craig Poulsen, a basketball star at Murray, moaned.

Sue Edwards, herself a basketball player 30 years ago, was trying to keep track of her 10-year-old son Douglas and seven other members of the Edwards party. "We usually sit together, but tonight we had to take our chances on tickets. You know, my entire family has the scores of every game the Stars have played this year. We're all fans."

Dennis Dall and his wife, who have driven in from Bountiful for nearly every game since October, were in the upper balcony, far above the Salt Palace floor, where the public address system is impossible to hear.

All Over State

"We had to come up here because tickets in our regular section in the dress circle were all gone," Dennis said. "Ah, the sound doesn't matter, the Stars do their own talking. They are the greatest thing that's ever happened to this state."

That was about it Tuesday. They were here from Vernal, Fillmore, Ogden, Logan, Wendover. Fans were here from St. George, Moab and Price. Some drove all the way from Kanab and Blanding.



Is Salt Lake happy over a winner? Kent Jones is typical Stars fan as he gleans over victory.

Baseball Standings

American League					National League				
Eastern Division					WEST				
W	L	Pct.	GB	W	L	Pct.	GB		
Boston	22	11	.667	New York	21	13	.619		
Baltimore	20	14	.588	Pittsburgh	22	14	.611		
New York	16	17	.485	St. Louis	21	15	.583		
Detroit	16	19	.457	Montreal	18	19	.480		
Washington	15	21	.417	Philadelphia	14	22	.389		
Cleveland	14	20	.412	San Diego	11	23	.324		

Western Division					EAST				
W	L	Pct.	GB	W	L	Pct.	GB		
Oakland	26	14	.650	San Francisco	28	10	.737		
Minnesota	19	18	.514	Atlanta	19	18	.514		
California	19	20	.487	Houston	18	19	.486		
Kansas City	18	19	.486	Los Angeles	18	19	.486		
Albuquerque	11	19	.366	Cincinnati	18	20	.474		
Chicago	14	20	.412	San Diego	10	26	.278		

Tuesday's Games					Tuesday's Results					
Chicago at Kansas City (opt., rain)	San Francisco 7, Chicago 3	Baltimore 6, New York 2	Pittsburgh 3, Montreal 2	New York (Gentry 3-3) at Philadelphia (Short 2-1), night.	Atlanta 4, Philadelphia 3	Cleveland 7, Washington 3	Houston 3, San Diego 2	Pittsburgh (Moore 2-1) at Cincinnati (Nolan 3-2), night.	San Diego (Phoebus 2-4) at Houston (Billingham 2-3), night.	Los Angeles (Downing 3-2) at St. Louis (Gibson 4-3), night.

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