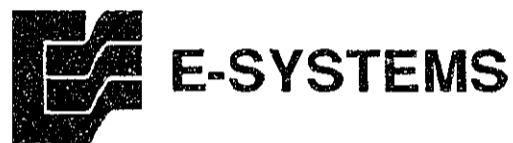


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For further information please stop by the Career Services Center.

\*All divisions require US citizenship and B grade point average.

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## With End of the Super Bowl, Focus is on NBA

Column by David Berl and Jeremy Cohen  
SPORTS COLUMNISTS

Now that another Super Bowl has sputtered to a close and Bill Arnsparger and the Arnspargerettes have confirmed that they are exactly 23 points worse than the Forty Niners, our focus shifts to the league where no one wants to be a King: the NBA.

As the bulk of teams surpass their 41st game this week, we in Mudville would like to adorn our heroes with some well-deserved mid-season awards. Here to bestow the honors, in a stunning floral evening gown, is NBA commissioner David Stern. David, the manila folder please.

**Bold Award #1: Least Deserving of a Sneaker Contract.** The Nominees: Roy Tarpley, Larry Krystkowiak, Matt Fish, Dwayne Schintzius.

Roy Tarpley's shoe would certainly have extra tongue, but this award has to go to the least recognizable man in professional sports, the Los Angeles Clippers' Matt Fish. There are plenty of reasons Nike and Reebok aren't knocking down the aquarium door to get Fish's endorsement, but the foremost of these is the fact that "Air Fish" just sounds stupid.

**Bold Award #2: Biggest Bust.** The Nominees: Shawn Bradley, John "Hot Plate" Williams, Ron Harper, Yinka Dare.

Shawn Bradley has more personal fouls than Jim Bakker this year, however Hot Plate Williams is the biggest bust in both senses of the word. Loaded with talent, the Indiana Pacer center has chosen Dunkin Donut desserts instead and ballooned up to well over 300 pounds. People in Indianapolis may ask "What's eating Larry Brown?" but we in Mudville just hope it isn't Hot Plate.

**Bold Award #3: Rookie of the Year.** The Nominees: Every rookie but Yinka Dare.

This past June's draft has been, by leaps and rebounds, the best the league has seen in a long time. Each of the top 10 picks is a contributing starter, with Glenn Robinson, Jason Kidd, Juwon Howard, Brian Grant, and Eddie Jones destined to be perennial All-Stars. But the cream of the crop has to be Detroit Piston small forward Grant Hill. Not only is he head and deltoids above the rest in terms of floor presence and versatility, he's a nicer guy than Newt Gingrich.

**Bold Award #4: Best Impersonation of Yugoslavia.** The Nominees: The Golden State Warriors, Derrick Coleman and Butch Beard, Gheorge Muresan, Rex Chapman, Lewis Billups.

Muresan has the size of the European country, but Coach Don Nelson's Golden State Warriors have the bickering spirit. The Warriors start an All-Star lineup of Tim Hardaway, Latrell Sprewell, Chris Mullin, Tom Gugliotta, and Rony Seikaly but just can't seem to get along. The early-season trades of Chris Webber to Washington and Billy Owens to Miami have left an irreparable schism between coach and players. The Warriors are close to last in the NBA in assists, and rumor has it they won't even pass the ketchup at company picnics.

**Bold Award #5: Most Underrated Player.** The Nominees: Eliot Perry, Dana Barros, Tyrone Hill, Rod Strickland.

Dana Barros is the lone bright spot on a 76er team with more empty displays than a wax museum in Ecuador. Nevertheless Tyrone Hill is the biggest reason the Cavaliers fans haven't submerged themselves in Lake Erie. Among the league leaders in rebounds with 11.6 a game, Hill is the second leading scorer and top shooter on a first place team. With a face about as memorable as Beasley Reese's shoe size, Hill promises to remain

obscure for several seasons to come.

**Bold Award #6: Wish He Were a Mute of the Year.** The Nominees: Ed Asner, Dennis Rodman, Peter Vessey, Scottie Pippen.

Although Peter Vessey has more bad predictions than a weatherman, Scottie Pippen easily runs away with this honor. His constant quarreling with Chicago general manager Jerry "Don't Call me" Krauss "from Benson" has left the Chicago Bulls scrambling for consistency and his bad egg reputation has spread throughout the league. Mudville would like to present Pippen with the league's first button-down jersey, so he doesn't have to put it on over his swelled head.

**Bold Award #7: Reclamation Project of the Year.** Nominees: Charles Oatlaw, Willie Burton, Bobby Phillips, Mike Fratello.

The Czar of the Telestrator had strong support in this race, but envious NBC color commentator Matty "Knave of the Telestrator" Goukas' vote swung the pendulum to Philadelphia small forward Willie Burton. Claimed off waivers from Miami early this season, Burton was left feeling lower than Matt Fish in fake gold chains and khaki bell bottoms. Nonetheless, his resurgence has been remarkable as he now shoots over 45 percent from behind the three-point arc on his way to 17.3 points a game.

**Bold Award #8: The Official Mudville 21 Nun Salute.** Nominees: Brendan Byrne Arena, Nick Van Exel, K.C. and the Sunshine Band, John Starks.

In a surprise, New Jersey's home court Brendan Byrne Arena gets the nod here over the LA Lakers' promising point guard Nick Van Exel. We only hope the rejection doesn't tear apart the once proud Sunshine Band.

**Bold Award #9: Most Valuable Player.** The Nominees: Charles Barkley, Hakeem Olajuwon, Tree Rollins, Shaquille O'Neal.

While Shaq gets all the gigs with Fu Schnickens, Tree Rollins is the driving force that makes the Orlando Magic resemble a blood sucking tick. Averaging 1.3 points and 1.7 rebounds a contest, Rollins has been the veteran, deciduous presence that the young Magic require. He has budded off some impressive victories this year, and look for Orlando to see the forest through the Tree all the way to the NBA finals.

### The Inside Pitch:

With another predictable football season drawing to a close this week and the baseball powers that be at odds with themselves, basketball has emerged as a viable contender to the title "America's pastime." Indeed, the most popular sport among the 10-year-old dreamers is no longer played on grass and dirt, but on pavement and hardwood floors. A growing concern among fans is the spoiled nature of many of the game's young stars.

*Sports Illustrated* recently ran a cover story on the new generation of professional basketball phenoms, citing Derrick Coleman and Chris Webber as poster boys for an emerging class of selfish, insubordinate players. What is shaking down in pro basketball is the steady deterioration of competition, shifting the battles from physical to financial and from athleticism to attitude. The hurt can already be felt in the college ranks, where it is a rare individual who manages to turn down a hefty contract for a college degree.

The ultimate travesty is that college basketball, long a bastion of pure competition where soldiers fought more for school glory than personal gain, is losing many of its most talented players prematurely. One can only imagine how much more exciting this NCAA season would be with Anfernee Hardaway,