

Preview: Optimistic Raptors

ALEX WICKWIRE
THE BRUNSWICKAN

Canada's NBA team, the Toronto Raptors, are entering their 14th year in the association with yet another roster retooled from the year before. It's unlikely that Raptors fans will miss Carlos Delfino, Rasho Nesterovic or Primo Brezec very much, but the departure of T.J. Ford will likely have an effect on Raptor-nation.

The summer blockbuster trade that saw Ford traded to Indiana for Jermaine O'Neal was the biggest news the team made all off-season. The move was considered a positive for both teams, but it could be argued that Toronto is better off for the upcoming season. Indy basically got a successor to Jamaal Tinsley at point guard, and a young big man in Roy Hibbert.

Anyone who follows Raptors ball knows that last season was filled with frustration and is widely regarded as a year in which the team underachieved. Finishing with a .500 record of 41-41 and getting bounced by Dwight Howard and the Magic in the first round of the playoffs was not the season the team had the potential to play. With two first round exits in two years, some people are beginning to wonder if head coach Sam Mitchell can coach

his way out of a paper bag in post-season play.

Team president Bryan Collangelo is one of the most famous executives in basketball for what he did with the Phoenix Suns. Collangelo making the O'Neal-Ford trade shows the fans that he is not building a replica of the Suns in Toronto, but that he is simply trying to create a winning squad in today's NBA.

The trade killed off the Jose Calderon-T.J. Ford playing time controversy, and brought help to a front court where Chris Bosh has been the only constant.

Former first overall draft pick Andrea Bargnani should be over his sophomore slump and ready for a break-out season. Often compared to Dirk Nowitzki, Bargnani could easily develop into a league M.V.P. with his ability to shoot the ball and create scoring opportunities inside.

Other additions to the team include two American-born players who had been playing in Europe before getting the call from Toronto. Collangelo signed forward Hassan Adams and guard Will Solomon from overseas. Another player the team acquired in the Jermaine O'Neal trade is Nathan Jawai. The Raptors gained the rights to Jawai from the Pacers, and he is currently on the injured list with a heart condition. Jawai comes from Australia and is often compared to Phoenix Suns centre Shaquille O'Neal. Jawai's size is another indicator towards the direction the Raptors are going this season.

Rather than playing a "seven seconds or less" style of high energy basketball like the Suns did, it's obvious that Toronto is going back to a fundamental style comparable to the recent champion Boston Celtics. Jermaine O'Neal will be an inside presence at center that players like Kris Humphries could never be.

Jose Calderon is poised for a breakout year like Bargnani, providing the muscle injuries he sustained playing for Spain this past summer don't bother him.

Chris Bosh is fresh off his gold-medal performance in Beijing and should benefit from the addition of Jermaine O'Neal. O'Neal is coming from a system in Indiana where he was the first option in the front court, to Toronto where he has a genuine all-star in Bosh to be the main focus. The two are without doubt going to complement each other simply because it's the first time in their respective careers that they have big-name help. O'Neal had Al Harrington as his top option in Indy, and Bosh has had the honor of playing with guys like Rafael Arrujo. Clearly the O'Neal-Bosh duo is going to wreck shop on the Eastern Conference.

With the defending champs as division rivals, the Raptors have their work cut out for them this season, and with this years team they're completely capable of making some serious noise in the NBA.

The Raptors will open this season tonight in Philadelphia against newly acquired Elton Brand and the '76ers.

Nothing to hide

Sports Editor's two-cents worth on the sport of bodybuilding



BALLS TO THE WALL

Mitchell Bernard

Two years ago, I was sitting in my living room with a care package that my parents had sent over to me. It contained all the necessities to keep a university student alive: some dishtowels, Kraft Dinner, body soap, and things of that nature. But one item in the package changed my perception on a sport forever.

In the latest issue of a weekly newspaper back home, there was an article about one of my former high school rugby teammates. Over the past year, my former teammate trained hard in the gym, maintained a crucial diet, and competed in the Atlantic Classic Bodybuilding Championships. Due to his hard work, my friend finished first in the junior division in his first competition.

I just stared at the picture in the newspaper and was in awe of his figure. Everything was so proportionate, as you could follow each of his muscles as they intertwined throughout his body.

At the time, I was a consistent gym-goer. I went three or four days a week, but nothing really intensive or mind-boggling. But after analyzing that picture, I felt a need to hit the gym one step harder.

I set off on a journey to learn more about the art of bodybuilding. I bought books, DVDs, and read articles on effective training and dieting. I pushed myself in to make the strong gains I wanted and stepped up my program everyday. This continued for about seven

months.

Eventually, it all fell apart. I went home for Christmas break and was lost in the loop. I never really had a chance to get back into that routine. I still go to the gym today, and I still try to eat healthy, but my dreams of entering a bodybuilding competition have been put aside for a few years.

Why do I mention this? Next weekend, the Playhouse will be host to the New Brunswick Bodybuilding and Figure Competition. A number of athletes from around the province will compete to represent their province in the Atlantic championships.

So why do people do this to their bodies? What makes bodybuilding so alluring? For me, it's the aesthetics. Now, don't get me wrong, I wouldn't want to be this massive giant that looks like he'll crush your head if you don't stop tapping that pencil. Instead, I'm all about symmetry and proportion. It's all about having the right body that suits you.

I have a lot of respect for those athletes who do finally make it to a competition. It takes months of strict dieting, along with years of heavy training to be able to strut out on to the stage. Athletes are forced to change their entire lifestyle in order to compete. And finally, to be willingly to bare it all in front of an audience – that just takes guts. You see there's nothing to hide – all of your work is

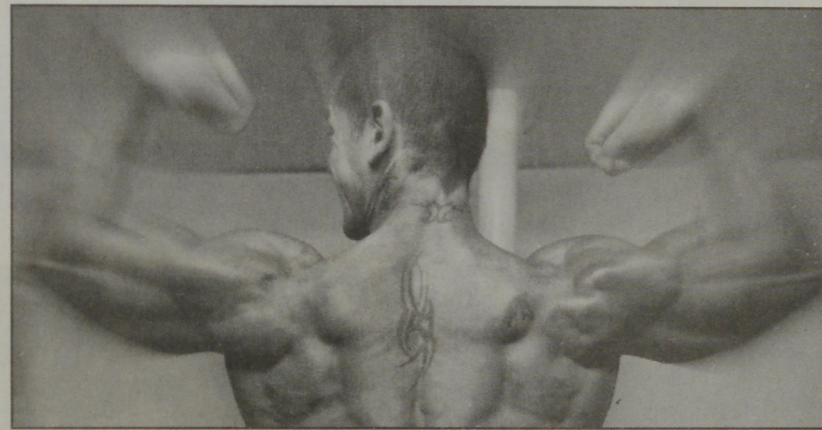
displayed before an audience, and a judge can tell whether or not you've been slacking off on those last few T-bar row reps.

I was at last year's competition, covering the event for the Brunswickan. The first competitor of the night was in the men's junior division. Actually, he was the only competitor in his division. But yet, he still walked onto the stage and performed his routine, despite the lack of competition. My first reaction was, "Wow, why would he still want to do his routine if he already won the title?"

The competitor put hours of work into his routine, and most likely had to adapt his entire lifestyle to accommodate his passion for bodybuilding. Of course he would want to perform his routine. And I'm sure there was no better feeling in the world for him than standing on stage before the vast crowd and baring it all.

Someday (possibly when school books and newspapers don't dominate my life), I'll take another kick at the bodybuilding can. I'll put the effort forth, add a few extra pounds, and compete with New Brunswick's finest. In the meantime, you'll find me in the stands at the next competition, wishing that it were I on the stage.

Mitchell Bernard is the Sports Editor of The Brunswickan.



Internet

ATHLETES OF THE WEEK



Eric Karosan
5th Year
Men's Soccer



Tanya Paulin
2nd Year
Women's Volleyball



UNB Media Services

Regent Optical
Since 1973

Student Discounts 10%
+ Refer A Friend Event
\$10 for Each Customer Referral

454-0642
162 Regent St.

Discounts and Reg. Priced Items Only
Minimum Customer Purchase \$150

SPECIALIZING IN:

One Hour Service
Prescription Oakley Sunglasses
Contacts for Dry Eyes

www.discountcars.ca

Discount
CAR AND TRUCK RENTALS

Heading out of town?

Let Discount take you there

WE RENT TO DRIVERS 21 and older

101 Regent St, Suite 100
(Downtown next to SMT)

ONE
Weekend
TWO
Weekends
FREE
Weekend

One easy number
310- CARS
(2277)

PRESENT THIS
COUPON FOR
YOUR
15% DISCOUNT



Proudly Atlantic Canadian Owned and Operated

the brunswickan.

volunteer for the bruns. 447.3388 / editor@thebruns.ca

Sweetwaters



Friday Nite...

Oct. 31st...

HALLOWEEN BASH

Rockin Rodeo

\$500

Cash Prizes for
best costumes



444-0121

www.sweetsrodeo.com