

BUCKEYE SPORTS BULLETIN

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"For The Buckeye Fan Who Needs To Know More"

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J.J. Says Goodbye

By Mark Rea

All-American basketball player Jim Jackson bid Ohio State a tearful farewell May 6, announcing that he would leave school a year early to make himself eligible for the National Basketball Association draft.

"I have mixed emotions," Jackson told reporters during a news conference at the Woody Hayes Athletic Center. "Here at Ohio State, we have been like a family. (Head) Coach (Randy) Ayers has been like a father figure. My teammates have been very great and understanding. The coaching staff has really helped me out a lot."

"I had a lot of mixed emotions, but it was really time for me to move on, get a better feel of myself and a better appreciation for the game of basketball."

Jackson was composed throughout most of the news conference until he caught a glimpse of teammates Jamaal Brown and Mark Baker. Then, when one reporter asked him how he would like to be remembered at Ohio State, Jackson's eyes began to water.

"I'd like to be remembered just for being a team player," he said, his voice cracking. "I've got my two teammates over here, Jamaal and Mark. I love you guys. This is a tough decision, but I want them to remember me for how much I love them. It's tough right now. These are not tears of anger, they're tears of joy because of how much respect I have for them. I just want them to remember me for the type of person I am, not just what I did on the court. That's secondary in life. I tried to go out every night to do things to win. I didn't have to score. I wasn't bogged down by scoring a lot. If I saw Jamaal or Mark getting off, I got them the ball. That's how much I care for them as a team and as people, and that's how I want people to remember me — as a team player."

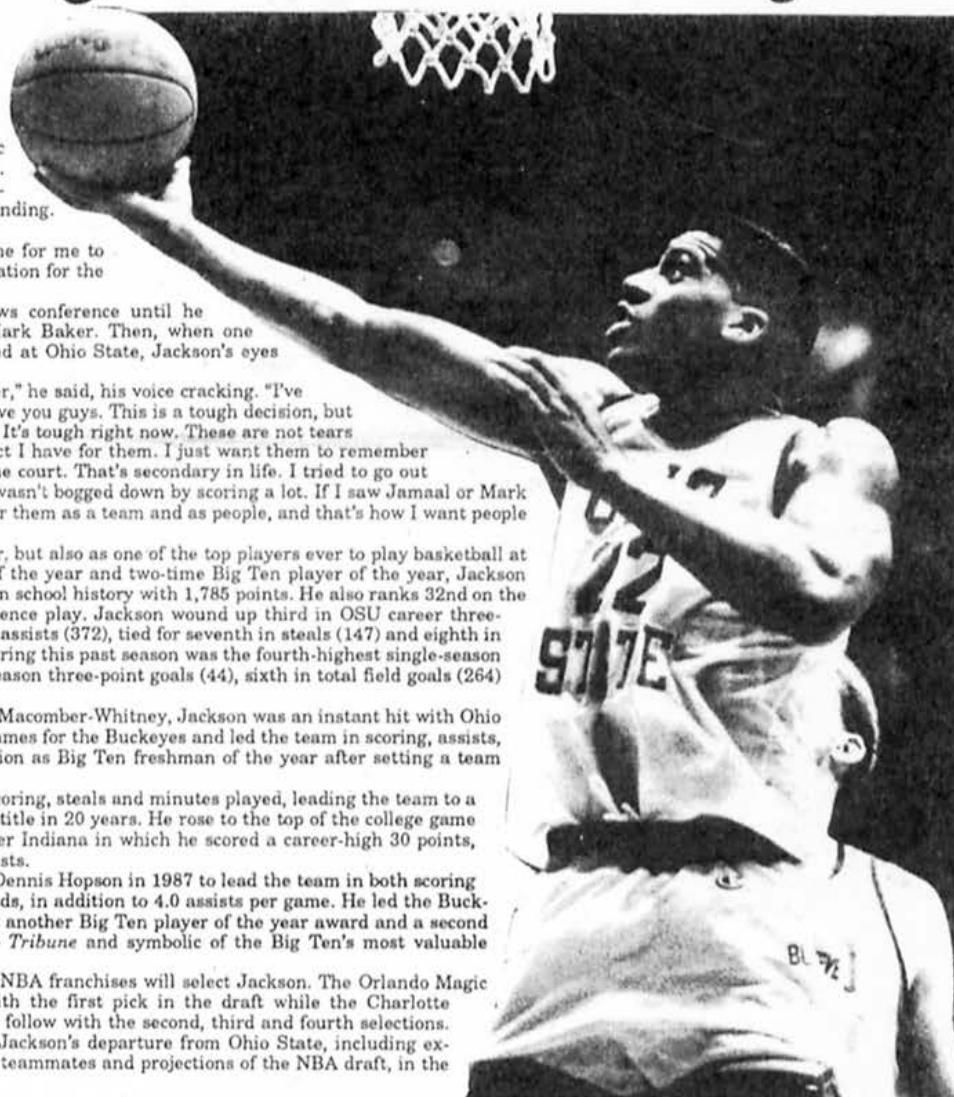
Jackson will be remembered not only as a team player, but also as one of the top players ever to play basketball at Ohio State. A finalist for the college basketball player of the year and two-time Big Ten player of the year, Jackson finished his three-year career as the fifth-leading scorer in school history with 1,785 points. He also ranks 32nd on the all-time Big Ten scoring list with 1,077 points in conference play. Jackson wound up third in OSU career three-point goals (82), fifth in total field goals (686), seventh in assists (372), tied for seventh in steals (147) and eighth in scoring average (19.2 points per game). His 718 points during this past season was the fourth-highest single-season total in OSU history. He also finished second in single-season three-point goals (44), sixth in total field goals (264) and ninth in steals (53).

Twice chosen as Ohio's "Mr. Basketball" out of Toledo Macomber-Whitney, Jackson was an instant hit with Ohio State basketball fans. As a freshman, he started all 30 games for the Buckeyes and led the team in scoring, assists, steals and minutes played. He was the consensus selection as Big Ten freshman of the year after setting a team freshman record for points with 482.

The following season, Jackson again led the team in scoring, steals and minutes played, leading the team to a Big Ten co-championship, the Buckeyes' first conference title in 20 years. He rose to the top of the college game during a nationally televised double-overtime victory over Indiana in which he scored a career-high 30 points, grabbed a game-high 11 rebounds and passed out six assists.

Last season, Jackson became the first Buckeye since Dennis Hopson in 1987 to lead the team in both scoring and rebounding. He averaged 22.4 points and 6.8 rebounds, in addition to 4.0 assists per game. He led the Buckeyes to a second straight Big Ten championship, earning another Big Ten player of the year award and a second consecutive Silver Basketball, awarded by *The Chicago Tribune* and symbolic of the Big Ten's most valuable player.

Speculation now centers around which one of several NBA franchises will select Jackson. The Orlando Magic are expected to select LSU center Shaquille O'Neal with the first pick in the draft while the Charlotte Hornets, Minnesota Timberwolves and Dallas Mavericks follow with the second, third and fourth selections. *Buckeye Sports Bulletin* will provide more details upon Jackson's departure from Ohio State, including excerpts from his news conference as well as reaction from teammates and projections of the NBA draft, in the following pages of this issue.



RICHARD STEELTS

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Jim Jackson's Career Basketball Statistics At Ohio State

YEAR	GP/GS	MIN/AVG	FGM	FGA	PCT.	FTM	FTA	PCT.	REB	AVG.	AST	BK	ST	PTS	AVG.	HIGH
1989-90	30-30	1035-35	194	389	49.9	73	93	78.5	166	5.5	110	14	39	482	16.1	28
1990-91	31-31	997-32	228	441	51.7	112	149	75.2	169	5.5	133	24	55	585	18.9	30
1991-92	32-32	1133-35	264	535	49.3	146	180	81.1	217	6.8	129	8	53	718	22.4	31
TOTAL	93-93	3165-34	686	1365	50.3	331	422	78.4	552	5.9	372	46	147	1785	19.2	31

Buckeye Sports Bulletin

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Jackson's Decision Was Correct

**Editor's
Notebook
with Mark Rea**

Two weeks before Jim Jackson announced to the world that he was leaving Ohio State early to pursue a professional basketball career, I wrote that I could not think of too many arguments for why he should have stayed.

Since that story ran, it has become apparent to me that there are many arguments for why Jackson should have stayed in college one more year.

Many of those who pointed those arguments out to me railed against my suggestion that Jackson would have been crazy to turn his back on what will likely be several million dollars for a few years of work.

One well-meaning fan went so far as to say that the reason I wanted Jackson to leave was that I was a graduate of the University of Michigan. (I'm not sure how this rumor got started, folks, but, for the last time, I am not a Michigan grad.)

In any event, most of the Ohio State fans were understandably upset that Jackson would play any less than four years for the Buckeyes. I don't like it, either. I would enjoy watching Jackson play for another season, serving as a bridge from the graduated seniors who resurrected the OSU program to the incoming freshmen in whose hands they leave their legacy.

But Jackson is not coming back and he has every right not to.

To be sure, Jackson owes a great deal to Ohio State, not the least of which is a free education the last three years and a chance to display his talents to national television's audiences several times.

In a perfect world, there are no hard choices to be made. In the real world, those choices must be made every day. Jackson made his, and I continue to say it was the correct one under the circumstances.

Had the Buckeyes had a legitimate chance at the Final Four next year, I would have my doubts. Certainly they have a chance at the Final Four next season. Michigan proved what five talented freshmen can do. But how many times has that happened before? I doubt that it will happen again in the foreseeable future.

Had Jackson had an uneven season, instead of just an uneven NCAA Tournament, I would have my doubts. But he did not have an uneven season. He had a superlative year, leading the Buckeyes in scoring and rebounding and finishing second in steals and assists. Those who make the argument that his NCAA Tournament performance somehow tarnished his season make a hollow argument.

Had Jackson been on time to graduate, I would have my doubts. A good student majoring in business, Jackson simply could not take enough hours per quarter to remain on track to receive his diploma in four years. Very few student-athletes can. That's why the NCAA allows five years of eligibility. Those who argue on this point are fooling themselves. Had Jackson returned for his senior season of basketball, he still would have had to leave school before graduation for the NBA.

Then there are those who believe that it is just plain wrong to succumb to easy money in lieu of staying in school to get that diploma.

Here's just one example for you. Say you are a student at any university, majoring in law. You're sitting in your

dorm one day when a guy from a prestigious New York law firm knocks on your door and offers you the following:

Forget about finishing school and having to pass the bar exam. We've had our eye on you for the past couple of years and we believe you'll make a great asset to our firm. We are prepared to offer you a guaranteed five-year contract, at \$2 million per year. What do you say?

How many would say, "No, thanks. Keep your money, because I'm going to stay in school." How many more would say, "Where do I sign?"

To be sure, that's a simplistic view of the way things are. But it would also be rather naive to believe that most people, faced with such circumstances, would choose to stay in school.

Unfortunately for most students, those circumstances do not arise. Fortunately for Jackson, they did arise and it would have been illogical for him not to have taken advantage of the situation.

And as the Buckeyes' basketball fortunes continue to prosper under the

guidance of head coach Randy Ayers, OSU fans will have to get used to the fact that the top players will no longer finish their full slates of eligibility.

It is not inconceivable that Lawrence Funderburke could leave for the NBA next year if he has a productive 1992-93 season. In fact, nearly all of the players Ayers brings into the program next fall have the potential of shining so brightly so quickly that the NBA will become attractive to them in a short period of time.

It will take a period of adjustment for Ohio State fans to learn to live without Jim Jackson, just as it took time to adjust 30 years ago to life without Jerry Lucas.

But the beauty of college basketball is that there will always be someone else to come along. At Ohio State, we've been rather fortunate. We've had Jimmy Hull, Robin Freeman, Jerry Lucas, Gary Bradds, Kelvin Ransey, Herb Williams, Clark Kellogg, Dennis Hopson and Jim Jackson. When one star says goodbye, there always seems to be another one just over the horizon to come and take his place.

We should not bemoan Jackson's departure. Rather, we should revel in the fact that we got to witness his talents for three years, be happy that he has the chance of a lifetime ahead of him and remain anticipatory of the next great Ohio State star, whoever he may be.

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Opportunities Just Too Much For OSU Star To Pass Up

Jackson Makes It Official: He's Going Pro

By Mike Wachsman

Even though the outcome was one of the worst-kept secrets on campus, nothing was official until Ohio State basketball star Jim Jackson announced at a press conference May 6 that he was going to turn pro.

Reading from a prepared statement, Jackson said, "After conversing with my family, friends and other support people, I have decided to make myself eligible for the 1992 NBA draft. I'd like to thank Ohio State University for assisting me and furthering both my athletic and academic careers."

"I would also like to thank my family, teammates, coaches. I look forward to coming back and finishing my school work in the summers to finish my degree toward business."

There seemed to be little suspense surrounding the decision, which Jackson said he made some time before he called the press conference.

"I had my decision for quite a while," he admitted. "But I felt I didn't have to rush into anything as far as making an announcement because I wanted to research a little bit more before I really jumped into it. After I met with some people concerning the NBA and the prospects of where I might go in the future, I think I weighed the pros and cons and did what was best for me."

"When I look at my career at Ohio State, I asked myself, 'Do I feel I did the best I could do, did I accomplish many of the things I wanted to?' The answer was quite simple. Yes, I did."

During the season, Jackson had given an almost unequivocal "yes" when asked whether he would return for his senior season at Ohio State.

"I seriously was meaning to come back," Jackson said. "During the season I felt that no matter what the outcome was, we could be a better team next year. But at the end of the season when I weighed my options and saw what the outlook for the future was, that is really what made me lean toward coming out."

That outlook of the future, coupled



Jim Jackson shares a light moment with Ohio State head coach Randy Ayers prior to Jackson's press conference to announce that he would forgo his senior season with the Buckeyes and make himself eligible for the NBA draft. Also pictured are Jackson's parents, Sandra and James. Jackson is expected to command a multiyear professional contract worth between \$10 and \$20 million.

with the opportunity to pay his family members back for the many sacrifices they made, was too much to pass up.

"A major part of why I really wanted to come out was to help my family out," Jackson said. "Not to say that they really need it, but they made a lot of

sacrifices to me when I was younger to help me get to where I am now. I think that was a major factor in why I chose to come out."

The way Ohio State head coach Randy Ayers saw things, it was only a matter of time before the decision was made.

"To be honest with you, I think this has been a two-year decision," Ayers said. "Jim and his family and I sat down in January of 1990 and I felt at that time Jim really needed to come back for his junior year."

"After that, we talked again in the fall and then in the winter, and I really felt we needed to wait until after the season, weigh the pros and cons, but I felt at that time he had to make a deci-

sion. I felt all along that Jimmy was ready to go. All along, I felt Jimmy was in a win-win situation."

Ayers said that Jackson benefited from his third season as a collegian.

"There was some speculation among the public that he might go after his sophomore year," Ayers said. "Certainly, with Jimmy being good friends with (former Georgia Tech and current New Jersey Nets player) Kenny Anderson, and the fact that Kenny was leaning toward coming out as a sophomore, Jimmy got a few questions in the tournament when we were in Dayton. He knew how I felt about him completing his sophomore year and coming back and having a solid junior year,

which he had. He worked hard in the summer and did that."

Even though the decision appeared to be a relatively easy one for the 6-6 Toledo native, nothing could be further from the truth.

"Being from a winning program, it is tough to leave," Jackson said. "But I looked at myself, and that's the most important thing right now. I had to be a little selfish where the decision was concerned. I think the program is headed in the right direction. It's more like a challenge now, and I have to gear up for that. There are guys in that league (NBA) who have been around for a while, so now I have to learn a little bit."

When asked whether it was tougher to leave Ohio State or to make the decision to attend OSU, his answer came in a split second.

"To leave, most definitely," Jackson said. "In high school, to be honest with you, when I was a junior and somewhat in my senior year, I never thought about coming to Ohio State. But then when I sat down with Coach Ayers and saw which way the program was going, I said this is the best opportunity for me. I can take what I've learned here and that should help me in the future."

That future appears to be paved with gold as he awaits the NBA draft in late June. It is expected that Jackson will be chosen somewhere within the first half-dozen picks, with many experts slotting him fourth with the Dallas Mavericks.

But before he becomes a star in the NBA, Jackson knows he needs to raise his game a bit higher.

"It will be tough in the NBA," he said. "You've got guys with double your talent that you have to compete against. And sometimes it's not the talent, but they have the mental capacity, they've been there and they know what to do. It will be hard, but with the work ethic that I have, the transition can be a lot smoother."

By the same token, Jackson sees himself as a student of the game and he knows the course of action he needs to take.

"I'm the type of person that, every summer, I break down my game and I try to improve on everything," he said. "Once you stop improving on every aspect of your game, you start to level off and people start to catch up with you. I'm going to have to be stronger."

"I'm going to have to have the mental mind set more than anything else. The NBA game for rookies is more mental than anything else. You have to adjust from playing 30 games to playing 82

games in the regular season, and if you make the playoffs, more than that. It's more of a mental adjustment than anything else."

And where does Jackson see himself ticketed in the professional game?

"Maybe the one or two (guard positions)," he said. "I'll have to work really hard on handling the ball a lot more. But as I get into it, I'm such a hard worker that, no matter where they put me on the court, I'll be able to adjust. I'll have my ups and downs working in, but with the kind of personality I have and with the people around me, I can hopefully overcome that and become a pretty good basketball player."

During the press conference, there were a couple of whimsical moments, such as when one reporter, speculating on the kind of money Jackson would earn, asked him how it feels to be in line to make \$12-14 million for four or five years.

"I don't know because I don't have it," Jackson said. "Ask me when I have it and I might be able to better answer your question."

There were some poignant times as well, such as when Jackson was asked how he would like to be remembered at Ohio State.

"I'd like to be remembered just for being a team player," he said. "That's the most important thing I'd like to leave here."

Then, when he caught sight of teammates Jamaal Brown and Mark Baker, Jackson paused, dabbed at his eyes and continued.

"I've got two of my teammates over here. I love you guys," he said, his voice breaking with emotion. "This is a tough decision, but I want them to remember me for how much I love them."

"It's tough right now. These are not tears of anger, they're tears of joy because of how much respect I have for them. I just want them to remember me for the type of person I am, not just what I did on the court. That's secondary in life. I want them to know how much I care for them as a team and as people, and that's how I want people to remember me."

When all the questions had been asked and the lights and cameras had long been put away, Jackson was asked what kind of effect Ayers had on him.

"Coach taught us on and off the court to be the best person we could be," he said. "He basically told us there's life after basketball. Sometimes you don't want to hear that, but you can see examples of it, like the people out in the streets. The things he says makes you want to be the best person you can be."

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Most Figure Team Will Eventually Succeed Without Star

Bucks React To Jackson's Announcement

By Todd Harrell

When Jim Jackson made the announcement he would leave Ohio State early to play basketball in the NBA, everyone who follows the Buckeye basketball program was affected by the impact of the decision.

Undoubtedly, the people who will feel the impact of Jackson's loss the most will be the OSU players lucky enough to have played with Jackson and who now have to deal with the prospect of playing without him next year.

The returning players had varied reactions to Jackson's leaving, but all seemed to feel the team will eventually function well without him.

Senior guard Alex Davis thought Jackson's choice to go to the NBA and earn millions of dollars was the correct one.

"When he made his decision, it was not a surprise to me," Davis told BSB. "I felt he was ready to go. I mean, he had

accomplished everything at Ohio State except for winning the national championship; so I think he just felt it was time to go."

Having lived with Jackson during his freshman year and also sharing the court with him during the 247 minutes he logged this past season, Davis probably knew Jackson as well as anybody on the Buckeye squad.

"I learned a lot from Jim my freshman year," Davis said. "Over the years, I think he has handled himself very well. He has handled the distractions of dealing with the fans and the media very well, while at the same time becoming the great ballplayer he is today."

Davis said the opportunity to watch Jackson up close, at work on the basketball court, was a real pleasure.

"To watch him in action every night was amazing," he said. "He could do so many things on the court. He could play

virtually every position on the floor at any time and the passes he made were just unbelievable. He was just a great player, and I think you only get to play with great players like that every once in a while."

Another player able to see Jackson in action up close was junior forward Jimmy Ratliff. He was Jackson's back-up at the forward spot for the Buckeyes and was put in what some would call an unenviable position during Buckeye practices — guarding Jackson every day.

Ratliff says he is glad to have drawn that very distinguished duty.

"I learned a lot from guarding him every day and by doing that, it just made me work that much harder," he said. "Because of Jim, I think I have improved a lot over the last two years. He made everybody better when he was out there practicing on the floor."

For sophomore point guard Doug Etzler, guarding Jackson on the scout team when Jackson played at the point position was an eye-opening experience early in the season.

"It was a very different experience for me," Etzler said. "I always looked up to Jim Jackson, having seen him on TV. So, as a freshman, I was kind of in awe of him at first. Later in the season, though, guarding him just became an everyday thing."

For senior Tom Brandewie to see

Jackson doing amazing things in practice was not a surprise.

"I was able to play with him and watch him a few times when we were both in high school," Brandewie said. "So when he would do something amazing in practice or in a game, it was not surprising to me. It was more like, 'Well, OK, that's just Jimmy.'"

Most Buckeye fans recall seeing some of the amazing moves Jackson displayed in game action, slicing and dicing, tossing and turning with the basketball as he went to the hoop for a score.

Ratliff recalls a play that would amaze him in practice.

"Jim has really big hands and he can palm the basketball just right," Ratliff explained. "When he's about to shoot the ball, you think you're going to block it, but he would then just palm the ball right out of your way. To do that is much harder than people think."

Last season, the Buckeyes were criticized at times for having only one weapon — Jackson — when it came down to "crunch time."

According to Ratliff, though, Jackson did not mind getting the ball late in the action with the game on the line.

"I think he liked that," Ratliff said. "He looked at that as a challenge and he wanted to accept that challenge of being the go-to man in the clutch for us."

Davis also said other team members

did not mind Jackson being the focal point of the offense down the stretch.

"It did not bother us because Jim had earned that respect," he said. "And what was great about Jim was that at times he would be double-teamed and would find a way to get the ball into one of us. Down the stretch, we were pretty good in our own right, as our record indicates."

Davis also stressed the point that Jackson being on the court helped the Buckeyes as a unit mentally as well as physically.

"You always had confidence on the floor when you played with Jim Jackson," he said.

But the returnees are not the only ones who were impacted by Jackson's presence this season.

"It's been great playing with Jim," said team captain Jamaal Brown. "Only a few people come along like that in a lifetime, and for me to be on a team with him while he became a superstar, that was a great feeling."

Point guard Mark Baker, whose spot Jackson likely would have taken had he stuck around, was also touched by playing with the Toledo native.

"I've known Jim since before we came to Ohio State," Baker said. "I've always had a certain type of respect for him. Jimmy has been the type of person who wanted to do the right thing, no matter what it was. He always wants to win. You want to surround yourself with players like that."

"The thing that really impressed me about Jimmy was that he got all the fame and glory when he came here, but he never let that get to him. Every day after practice, he was always the one staying the extra hour to work on things. I was impressed with Jim."

Ohio State head coach Randy Ayers was also impressed with Jackson, saying he was the hardest-working player he has ever been around.

"I could sit here and talk forever about Jimmy," Ayers said, "but the things that impressed me the most were his class and his work ethic. Jimmy has a great work ethic and is a program player. The great players not only take care of themselves, but make everyone else around them better, and I think Jimmy did that here for three years."

Ayers admitted there will be needed adjustments next season without his star player.

"The area where we're going to miss Jimmy the most is leadership," the OSU head coach said. "He would have been a great influence on these young kids coming in. In addition, with Jimmy and Chris Jent being essentially swing players, we became pretty much of a pressure team that could come out and guard anybody on the perimeter."

"We'll be taller next year, and one of our concerns will be to find out if we can maintain our pressure without giving up the court."

For next season, the Buckeyes have to adjust to the post-Jackson era. To do so, all the returning Buckeyes agree the team will have to spread the ball around the floor quite a bit more next season.

"We will be a good team, but without Jimmy around to step up and be our go-to guy, it will take a lot of time," Ratliff said. "It will take a lot of hard work, but in the end, I feel we will be all right."

Davis believes next year will not be easy for the Buckeyes, but he reminds people the team has played well without Jackson before and can do it again.

"People forget that we didn't have Jim for our tour in Europe last summer and we did pretty well there," Davis said. "It's going to be tough because we are so used to going to him. We will just need all five starters to step up and produce."

All the Buckeyes wish Jackson well in his pro career and Brandewie perhaps summed it up best concerning how the team will remember Jackson.

"We were all friends and we will always be friends," he said. "Jim was closer to some guys than others, but overall we (the team and Jackson) will always, in some ways, be closely related."

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Barring Trade, J.J. Figures To Go To Minnesota Or Dallas

Jackson Expected To Go Quickly In Draft

By Mark Rea

Jim Jackson will trade in his scarlet and gray uniform next fall for one with different colors. Most experts figure the primary colors on his new working clothes will be blue and green, but a last-minute trade could make it purple and gold.

Blue and green are the primary uniform colors of both the Minnesota Timberwolves and the Dallas Mavericks, teams which figure to draft Jackson when the NBA holds its college player selections June 24 in Portland, Ore.

However, there have been rumors circulating lately that have the Los Angeles Lakers making inquiries as to what it would take to trade for an early selection in order to take Jackson.

In the annual lottery held between the 11 teams that do not make the NBA postseason playoffs, Minnesota got the third selection and Dallas received the fourth pick.

The Orlando Magic won the lottery and will get the first overall selection. They figure to use that first pick to get LSU center Shaquille O'Neal, a 7-2, 300-pounder the team hopes is the second coming of Kareem Abdul-Jabbar.

Facing double and triple-teaming most of the season, O'Neal still managed to average 24 points and 14 rebounds for the Tigers, helping them into the second round of the NCAA Tournament before they bowed out to Final Four participant Indiana.

Comparing O'Neal to the NBA's all-time leading scorer is putting the cart a

bit ahead of the horse, but Orlando hopes he can approach Abdul-Jabbar's early career successes. Coming out of UCLA for the 1969-70 season, Abdul-Jabbar helped lead the Milwaukee Bucks to the NBA championship in just his second season.

The fact that the Magic will select O'Neal is a forgone conclusion.

"Somebody said whoever won the lottery, the village idiot could make the pick," Magic president and general manager Pat Williams told BSB. "You win with great players who can do great things. There are a handful of that type of player, and you don't see them traded."

If there is no trade, there shouldn't be much surprise about the second selection in the draft, either. Georgetown center Alonzo Mourning should find his new home with the Charlotte Hornets, owners of the second pick in the draft.

"Barring any flaws, we've got to fill a void with a defensive presence, and that means it's more toward Mourning," Hornets head coach Allan Bristow told BSB. "We're 95 to 96 percent certain, but I don't want to say definitely."

Rumors have been heard, though, that the Lakers are considering a player package to offer to the Hornets in exchange for their second pick. Included in that rumored package is longtime Lakers forward James Worthy, who first achieved stardom in college at North Carolina.

Charlotte would also reportedly receive at least one more proven player from the Lakers roster, possibly another

NBA Draft Order

Selection order for the first 10 teams in the first round of the June 24 NBA draft along with final 1991-92 records and needs:

1. Orlando Magic (21-61)
Need big man to complement guards Scott Skiles and Nick Anderson
2. Charlotte Hornets (31-51)
Marquee center would augment this year's top rookie Larry Johnson
3. Minnesota Timberwolves (15-67)
NBA's worst record. Wolves need everything. Report is they like J.J. a lot
4. Dallas Mavericks (22-60)
Looking for protection in case guard Fat Lever (knee) can't come back
5. Denver Nuggets (24-58)
Scored with center Dikembe Mutombo last year. Eye backcourt help this time
6. Washington Bullets (25-57)
Point guard, deep threat needed to take burden off Michael Adams
7. Sacramento Kings (29-53)
As with so many other teams, franchise big man could make difference
8. Milwaukee Bucks (31-51)
How much longer can the Bucks rely on Moses Malone in the pivot?
9. Philadelphia 76ers (35-47)
Needs depend upon whether or not Sixers make trade involving Barkley
10. Atlanta Hawks (38-44)
The right player could make this team a contender again next season

North Carolina alum, Sam Perkins, or one or two future draft choices.

Worthy was the Lakers' top scorer this past season and his return to North Carolina would be a marketing bonanza for the Hornets. Meanwhile, the Lakers

would be able to select Jackson, a player known to be coveted by team vice president Jerry West, and one who could learn under the tutelage of Magic Johnson, regardless of whether Johnson remains retired.

Should the Lakers not be able to put together a package attractive enough, the Hornets are expected to go ahead with their plans to select Mourning, leaving the Timberwolves and Mavericks with the next two picks.

Many experts have predicted Jackson will be among those two selections, but there are plenty of other talented players to choose from.

Christian Laettner of Duke, the college player of the year and lone non-professional selected to the U.S. Olympic team, is an attractive selection. Other top prospects include Todd Day and Lee Mayberry of Arkansas, Byron Houston of Oklahoma State, Harold Miner of Southern Cal, Don MacLean and Tracy Murray of UCLA, Walt Williams of Maryland, Robert Horry of Alabama and Tom Gugliotta of North Carolina State.

The Timberwolves, owners of the NBA's worst record this past season, are on record as saying they like Jackson. Personnel director Jim Brewer, a former star at the University of Minnesota, has called Jackson the best all-around player available in the draft.

But the Timberwolves also need a big man and the 6-11 Laettner could fill that need.

"The objective is not to go through another year like we did," Timberwolves head coach Jimmy Rodgers told reporters at the NBA lottery selection last month. "I want to move out of this lottery, and we'll use all means to do that."

Selecting fourth are the Mavericks, who are also in search of a dominating center, someone who can take the burden off former OSU star Herb Williams, who will be 35 years old next season.

But the Mavs would also like another guard to go along with Derek Harper, Fat Lever and Rolando Blackman. Despite the fact the members of that trio remain productive, they are all over 30 years old. In addition, Lever suffered a knee injury that limited him to just 31 games this season.

In fact, Blackman told *The Dallas Morning News* in its May 18 edition that he was convinced he would be replaced in next year's lineup by Jackson.

"It's great for the Mavericks' franchise because Jim Jackson is going to be a tremendous player, and I assume that is who they will take," Blackman said. "But I don't think it's so good for me. I really don't expect to be in Dallas next season."

"I'm not saying that I'll ask to be traded. But they're going to have to give Jimmy Jackson a substantial amount of time so that he can develop into the player they think he'll be."

Blackman led the team in scoring this past season, averaging 18.3 points per game. He was the subject of trade rumors last year involving the New York Knicks.

Mavericks vice president of basketball operations Rick Sund said that his team has not decided on the fate of any players, either present or future.

"I don't talk about trades," Sund told BSB. "We don't even know who we're taking with our pick, so it's too early to talk about that."

Sund did say that Jackson "has a chance to be a star in this league" and "I really like his leadership" before confirming Jackson would be one of three players the Mavericks would host for workouts prior to the draft. Laettner and Miner are the other two.

The fifth selection in the draft will be made by the Denver Nuggets, the only team in the top five that will not be looking for a big man. The Nuggets grabbed Dikembe Mutombo last season, and Mutombo turned out to be one of the top rookies in the league.

The sixth selection belongs to the Washington Bullets. They will be followed, in order, by the Sacramento Kings, Milwaukee Bucks, Philadelphia 76ers and Atlanta Hawks.

After that, it's the Houston Rockets, Miami Heat, Denver Nuggets, Indiana Pacers, Los Angeles Lakers, Los Angeles Clippers, Seattle SuperSonics, San Antonio Spurs, Detroit Pistons, New York Knicks, Boston Celtics, Phoenix Suns, Utah Jazz, Golden State Warriors, Los Angeles Clippers, Portland Trail Blazers and Chicago Bulls.

The New Jersey Nets and Cleveland Cavaliers do not have first-round selections this year. The Nets previously dealt the 13th pick to Denver, while the Cavs shipped the number 25 selection to the Clippers.

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A Retrospective Of Jim Jackson's Career

By Mark Rea

A retrospective regarding the college career of Jim Jackson could begin with any number of the 93 games he played for Ohio State.

But the game in which Jackson elevated his own status from good to one of the best was the double-overtime thriller against Indiana played Feb. 17, 1991, in St. John Arena.

During a contest that fans continue to talk about as though it were played yesterday, Jackson led the Buckeyes on a blood-pumping rush at the end of regulation.

The game was tied on 22 separate occasions and the lead changed hands 21 different times. The momentum swayed back and forth throughout the entire contest.

But when the game was on the line, it was Jackson who



As a fresh-faced recruit at St. John Arena



Defensive prowess makes him attractive to NBA

responded. Ohio State trailed Indiana 78-76 with seven seconds left in regulation when Jackson took the ball, dribbled three-quarters of the court to the lane, and laid the ball in over IU's Eric Anderson and Matt Nover to send the game into overtime.

Then in the second overtime period, with the game tied at 95, Jackson stepped forward again. Taking the ball down the court, he took a route to the basket similar to the one that had earned him the shot at the end of regulation.

This time, though, Anderson came up more quickly to defend, preventing Jackson from penetrating into the lane. The Buckeye star simply stopped and flipped a short pass to teammate Treg Lee, who caught it and put up a virtually uncontested six-footer with four seconds left to give the Buckeyes a 97-95 victory.

Jackson scored what was then a career-high 30 points in the game and also posted team-high totals in rebounds (11) and assists (six). He also played the point guard position for much of the game after Mark Baker injured his ankle less than 10 minutes into the contest.

The game put the exclamation point on a stellar career for Jackson.

Ohio State head coach Randy Ayers once said, "Jimmy is just a special player. I feel very fortunate to have had a player of his talents during my first three years as a head coach."

Buckeye fans echoed Ayers' sentiments. They felt very fortunate to have witnessed Jackson's exploits on the court for the past three seasons.

The 6-6 star, who came to the Buckeyes from Toledo Macomber-Whitney High School, helped to resurrect Ohio State basketball when the Buckeyes were floundering around in the middle of the Big Ten pack.

A three-time All-Ohio selection and recipient of the state's first two "Mr. Basketball" awards, Jackson led Macomber-Whitney to a 26-1 record and the 1989 Division I championship. As a senior, he averaged 30.1 points, 11.0 rebounds and 6.5 assists. He finished his prep career with over 2,400 points, was named to several prep All-American teams and played in both the Dapper Dan and McDonald's all-star games.

Before Jackson arrived at Ohio State, the Buckeyes hadn't won a Big Ten championship since 1971 and hadn't even finished in the conference's upper division in four seasons.

He was an instant hit, helping OSU to a 17-13 overall record and its first berth in the NCAA Tournament in three seasons.

That first season, he earned Big Ten freshman of the year honors after starting all 30 games and leading the Buckeyes in scoring, assists and minutes played. He also tied for the team lead in steals. His 482 points that season set a freshman scoring record at Ohio State, and he led the team in scoring in 14 games and topped the squad in rebounding seven times.

That season was only the beginning for Jackson. The following year, as the Buckeyes welcomed back their entire team for Ayers' second season, Jackson often saved his best for last during the team's drive to the Big Ten championship. The final few minutes of a game came to be known simply as "J.J. Time."

Jackson scored 211 of his 356 points (59.3 percent) in conference play in the second half. During those outings, he shot 55.2 percent from the floor and 78.6 percent from the foul line after halftime.

He scored eight of the team's final 14 points in a home win over Iowa, then matched that performance two days later in a victory at Michigan. Five days after that, his seven-for-seven shooting in the second half helped put away Northwestern easily.

Later in the season, he scored eight points in the final four minutes of a 66-59 victory over Purdue, totaled eight of the Buckeyes' final 16 points during an 81-65 win at home over Michigan and collected 20 of his 26 points in the second half to help overhaul Minnesota for a 63-62 victory.

Then, of course, there was the Indiana game in which he scored 15 of his 30 points in the second half, including the basket that tied the game at the end of regulation.

Jackson later helped the Buckeyes to the Sweet 16 of the NCAA Tournament and wound up averaging 18.9 points and 5.5 rebounds per game. Along the way, he became only the fourth player in OSU history to top the 1,000-point mark in just his second season. The others were Jerry Lucas, Dave Sorenson and Herb Williams.

After the season, Jackson was accorded first-team All-American honors by the *United Press International* as well as the U.S. Basketball Writers Association. He earned second-team honors from *The Associated Press* and was the consensus pick as Big Ten player of the year.



This was the shot that sent the Indiana thriller into overtime

As a tribute to his excellent play, Jackson was selected as one of the members of the U.S. basketball team that competed in the Pan American Games in 1991. He played both guard positions for the U.S. team and was the squad's leading scorer until he suffered a stress fracture in his left foot and missed the final two games of competition.

When the 1991-92 college season rolled around, Jackson was fully recovered from the injury and proceeded to pick up where he had left off the year before.

He continued his penchant for starring in the late stages of games. Leading the Buckeyes to a second consecutive Big Ten championship, Jackson scored 56.6 percent of his conference points in the second half, shooting 53.5 percent from the floor and 84.3 percent from the line after halftime.

Among the top outings during "J.J. Time" last season were three non-conference games. He totaled 14 of his 24 points in the second half to help OSU to an 82-75 victory over Cal-Santa Barbara. He then scored 22 of his 28 points in the second half, including 18 in the final 10 minutes of regulation and the overtime period, in a 79-77 loss to Southern Cal. Later in the season, he had 14 of his 21

points in the second half during a losing effort to Seton Hall.

In the conference, Jackson had 14 second-half points in a 68-58 win over Michigan, 22 in the second half during an 86-72 win over Wisconsin and 16 in a 94-63 victory over Minnesota. Also, during the Buckeyes' two losses to Indiana, Jackson totaled 18 points in the first halves of those contests and 37 in the second halves.

Three times during the season, he was named the Big Ten player of the week. That gave him seven such weekly awards in his career, more than any other player since the awards began.

For the second straight season, Jackson was selected as the Big Ten player of the year, becoming the first player to repeat since Scott May of Indiana won the 1975 and 1976 awards.

He earned first-team All-American honors from *The Associated Press*, *United Press International*, *Basketball Weekly*, the *Basketball Times*, and *Scripps-Howard News Service*. He was a finalist for both the John Wooden and James Naismith college player of the year awards and one of only four college players considered for the U.S. Olympic basketball team. Christian Laettner of Duke, Alonzo Mourning of Georgetown and Shaquille O'Neal of LSU were the others, with Laettner getting the nod.

Perhaps more important than those awards was the praise he received from coaches against whom he played.

"Jackson is a great player," said Indiana head coach Bob Knight. "He's one of the three or four best players I've ever seen in our league. He's one of those rare kids who can really play, obviously knows he can play, and has a lot of confidence in his play and doesn't act like it. I think the kid is a hell of an example of what a great college player should be. He's as good an example for kids to emulate as I've seen in the Big Ten."

After his team absorbed a 78-62 loss to the Buckeyes, a game in which Jackson had scored 26 points and grabbed 11 rebounds, Ohio University head coach Larry Hunter said, "I think the mark of an excellent player is how his teammates respond to him. They not only look to him to lead them, but they elevate their game because of him. Jackson is that type of player. He excels so much that he appears to inspire his teammates to achieve a higher level of play."

Iowa head coach Tom Davis watched Jackson play against his Hawkeyes for three seasons and managed only two victories in six tries.

"Jackson is the kind of player you wish you had on your team," Davis said. "He is so versatile that you can't concentrate on one thing. Plus, he is very strong. I haven't seen them all, but he certainly must rank among the best in the country."

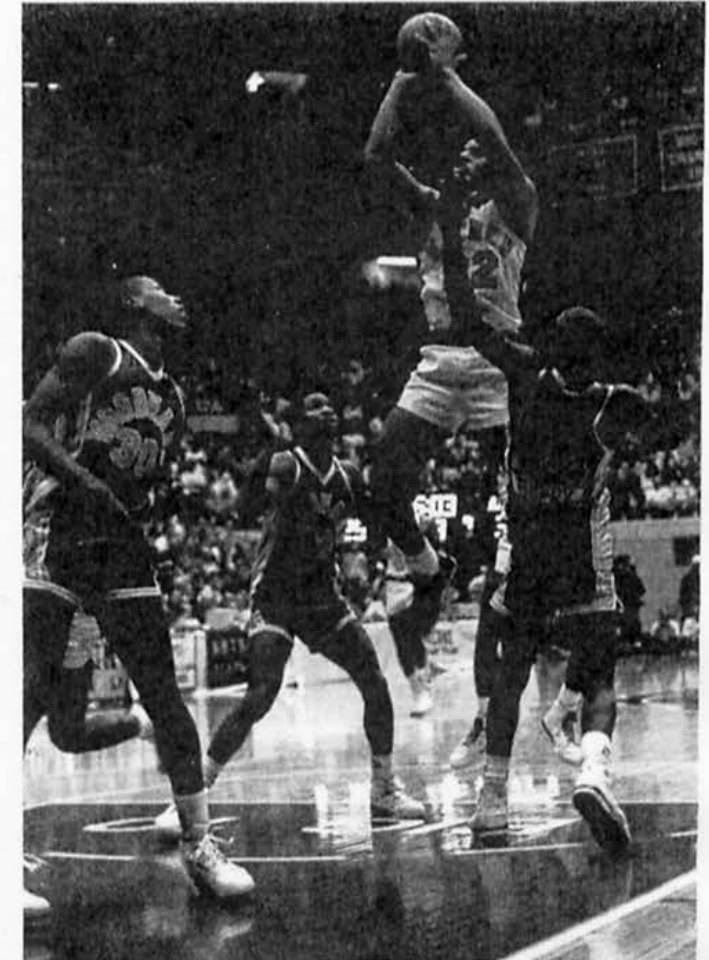
Minnesota head coach Clem Haskins, who defeated the Buckeyes only once in six games Jackson played against his Gophers, stated simply, "Jimmy Jackson, I feel, is the best basketball player in the nation. Not only is he the best basketball

player in the Big Ten, he has my vote for college player of the year."

Perhaps Ayers summed it up best when he stated, "I think Jimmy has been so good for so long that we kind of take him for granted around here. He has worked hard, both in practice and on his own, to make himself the talented player that he is today. Jimmy has done a lot for this university and our basketball program and I hope that people realize just how fortunate they have been over the past three years to have been able to have had the opportunity to watch a quality player the caliber of Jim Jackson."

OSU Top 10 Career Basketball Scorers

NAME	POINTS	YEARS	GAMES	CAREER AVG.	BEST SEASON
Dennis Hopson	2,096	1984-87	125	16.8	958 (1987)
Herb Williams	2,011	1978-81	114	17.6	617 (1979)
Jerry Lucas	1,990	1960-62	82	24.3	710 (1960)
Kelvin Ransey	1,934	1977-80	112	17.3	664 (1979)
Jim Jackson	1,785	1990-92	93	19.2	718 (1992)
Jay Burson	1,756	1986-89	122	14.4	625 (1988)
Dave Sorenson	1,622	1968-70	77	21.1	581 (1970)
Perry Carter	1,613	1988-91	126	12.8	468 (1989)
Robin Freeman	1,597	1954-56	57	28.0	723 (1956)
Allan Hornyak	1,572	1971-73	69	22.8	585 (1971)



Jackson made his first St. John appearance as prepster



Familiar sight; J.J. driving his way toward the bucket