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Feb 16 1975



Partygoer Frazier, microphone in hand, joins in the Fifth Dimension's act.

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Walt Frazier's life-style may be even more extraordinary than his basketball skill

# CLYDE

By Judy Klemesrud

They call Walt Frazier "Clyde" and "Mr. Cool" and "The Prince of Madison Square Garden," and most basketball buffs assumed that, what with old pros Willis Reed and Dave DeBusschere and Jerry Lucas hanging up their sneakers this season, Frazier would emerge as the undisputed superstar of the New York Knickerbockers. Well, frankly, so did the 29-year-old millionaire guard, and he rather relished the idea. First, Coach Red Holzman named him captain of the 1974-75 team. To celebrate, Frazier had his \$20,000 Rolls-Royce with the "WCF" license plates—for Walt (Clyde) Frazier—repainted in "more dynamic" shades of honey-beige and burgundy because so many New Yorkers had copied his old color combination of antelope over garnet. And then he went out and spent \$10,000 of his \$300,000-a-year salary in one day, mostly on a new white mink coat "for bouncing around town."

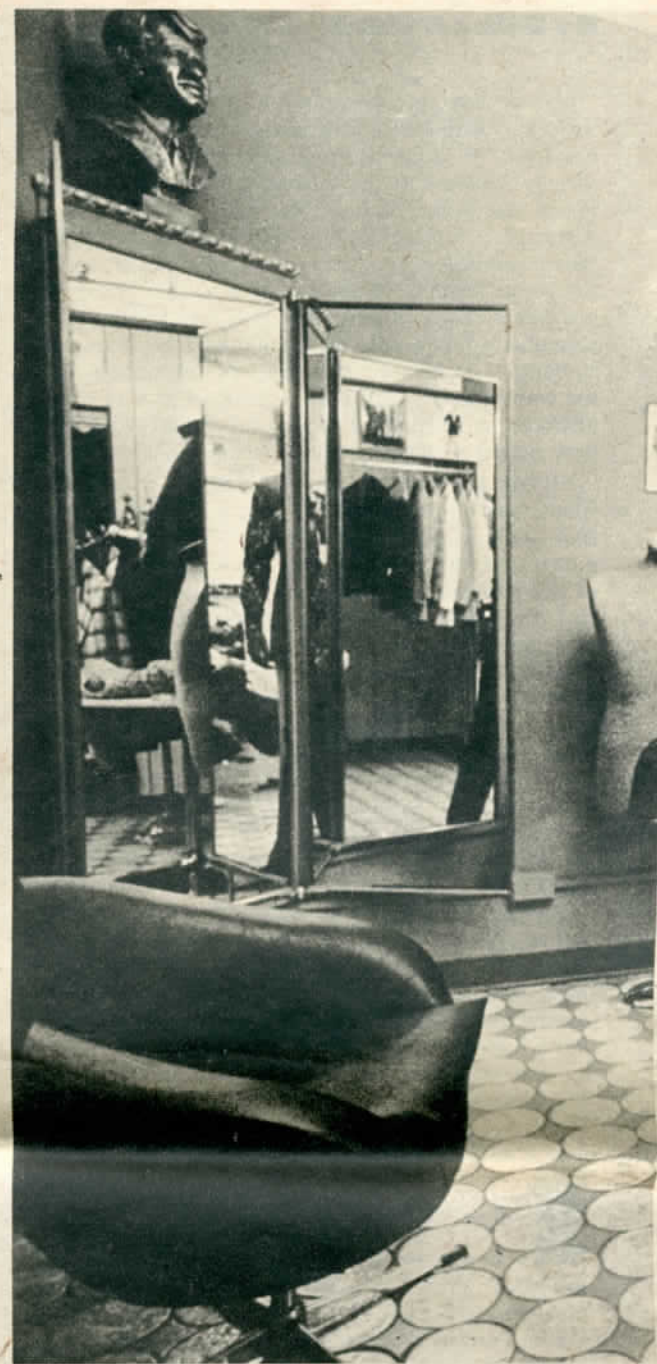
Yes, Walt Frazier was ready for a super season

Judy Klemesrud, a Times reporter, was an unspectacular forward for the Cubettes, her high-school basketball team, in Thompson, Iowa, in the late nineteen-fifties.

in the very best Clyde tradition. Never mind that the Knicks didn't have an experienced big man to rebound, score, and set screens and picks (a form of block) for him—the trade for 6-foot-10-inch center Neal Walk of the New Orleans Jazz, along with guard Jim Barnett, didn't come until more than half the season was over. And never mind that the basketball writers were predicting dire things for the once mighty Knicks, the world champions in 1970 and 1973.

For a while there, in the very beginning, even Frazier, the self-proclaimed "best all-round guard in the N.B.A.," began to have some doubts. You see, he missed the first two Knickerbocker games because of the flu, an illness he thinks might have been caused by the three-month delay he experienced in getting into his new \$130,000 co-op apartment in the Excelsior, a 47-story white luxury tower at 57th Street and Second Avenue. "It was a real hassle getting in there," Frazier remarked recently, in a slightly bitter tone. "The board of directors thought I might give wild parties, which I don't. I'm a partygoer, not a partygiver. Anyway, they ran a check on me, and it took them a long time."

When he finally did move in, the season was under way, and the smell of all that fresh white paint made him ill, and the speedy elevators made his ears plug up as he whizzed from the ground



As a college senior, he receives the 1967 N.I.T. Most Valuable Player award. As a \$300,000-a-year pro, he adds to his wardrobe at a Manhattan shop.



## By Gilbert Cant

Every man has one, and no woman has. It is an organ associated with sexual function. Yet it is not likely to excite pornographers or the prurient, largely because it is tucked away out of sight, inside the body, against the wall of the rectum. Although it is thus much less aphrodisiacal than the female breast, it appears remarkably similar, under the tissue specialist's microscope, to that conspicuous sex symbol. When it becomes cancerous, other resemblances emerge: Its disease is related to, and sometimes controlled by, the sex hormones. And the controversy regarding the treatment of the male affliction parallels that among breast surgeons over how radical a mastectomy to perform—if any.

"It" is the prostate gland, actually a group of lobes, partly glandular and partly muscular in nature. And in highly developed countries, this last quarter of the 20th century is, for the male half of the population, the age of prostatism. There are two main reasons for this. First, more and more men are living into those advanced decades in which prostate trouble is likely—and eventually almost certain—to develop. Second, a condition that used never to be discussed openly (except perhaps after stag dinners and in relation to sexual potency) is now freely talked about even in mixed company. More important, it is the subject of greatly intensified medical research. So far, the highest placed American public official who has allowed public notice of his prostate trouble—it was cancer—is Rogers C.B. Morton, Secretary of the Interior. But it is probably only a matter of time before we have a President making a similar disclosure, as we have had a President's wife freely discussing her mastectomy. And eventually, perhaps, we shall have wider understanding of the vital role played by the prostate's adjacent tissues in relation to sexual potency.

**I**t is almost an understatement to say that prostrate disorders are among the commonest afflictions of the modern male: 60 per cent of North American men over age 60 have some enlargement of the prostate, and the proportion rises to about 95 per cent by age 80. Simple or benign enlargement may produce no symptoms, but inflammation of the gland—prostatitis—is almost certain to do so in painful and embarrassing ways. If an active infection can be diagnosed and its bacterial cause identified, this form of prostatitis can usually be controlled, if not cured, by modern "wonder" drugs. But in many cases with equal distress, no infection can be demonstrated, and the diagnosis becomes noninfectious prostatitis or, as some specialists call it, prostatosis. By whatever name, any disorder of the prostate is likely to cause painful, difficult and too frequent or incomplete urination. This is because the urethra, as it leaves the bladder, passes almost immediately into a sort of tunnel through the prostate, where it can be squeezed by enlarged or inflamed tissue. With incomplete urination, the bladder may become infected or otherwise diseased, and reverse pressure may extend up from the bladder through the ureters to the kidneys, leading to severe renal disease, eventual kidney failure and ultimately death.

Of course, cancer is the most feared of prostatic diseases, and with good reason. Cancer originating in this gland is the third commonest malignancy

among North American males, and the third-ranking cause of cancer deaths among men. No fewer than 60,000 men in the United States will have prostate cancer diagnosed this year and 20,000 will die from the spread of the disease. Partly because the gland skulks out of sight, prostate cancer differs from breast cancer in that it is rarely detected in its earliest stages when a cure by radical surgery might be possible. Fortunately, however, a flurry of research advances in the last few years has generated an upsurge of hope among prostate cancer specialists. Dr. Gerald P. Murphy, director of New York State's Roswell Park Memorial Institute in Buffalo and chief of the National Prostatic Cancer Project, confidently declares, "We now have the biochemical tools to get the answers to prostate disease, including cancer—if we're smart. Twenty-five years of publicly financed research is beginning to pay off in exciting ways."

**W**hile much has been learned, Dr. Murphy readily concedes that the prostate remains an organ of mystery—even after 5,000 years during which the effects of prostatism have been treated, although its underlying causes have not been understood. Physicians in the Egypt of the Pharaohs recognized that fullness in the lower belly accompanied by inability to micturate, or urinate, indicated the retention of urine in the bladder, and they used reed stalks and devised ingenious tubes of copper or silver, which they inserted through the urethra to achieve drainage. This painful treatment worked, even though it had to be repeated, but the Pharaohs' medicine men did not realize they were treating an effect, not a cause, and that they were fortuitously enlarging the urethra where it passed through a constricting prostate. For they seemed to have been totally ignorant of the existence of the prostate, as were countless generations of their successors.

Hippocrates, the father of Greek medicine, had some constructive ideas about the treatment of prostatism, but they were forgotten for centuries, revived by Aulus Cornelius Celsus in A.D. 25, and promptly forgotten again for almost 1,800 years. Confusion is compounded by the fact that just above the prostate, and adhering to the rear wall of the bladder, are the seminal vesicles. Today's translators cannot be sure whether the *parastatus glandulus*, described by Herophilus of Chalcidion about 300 B.C., referred to these vesicles or to the prostate.

It is extraordinary that the ancients remained so ignorant of anatomy in this area, for tens of thousands of living men were literally cut to pieces in hideously torturous executions, and study material for the anatomist was freely available. The first visual representation of the prostate came in 1538 from Vesalius, who did not hesitate to dissect the bodies of executed criminals. But even he drew it in the shape of a dog's prostate rather than a man's. Sometime in the 17th century, it was named the prostate.

What has been established since then is that the prostate develops early in fetal life and is prominent enough to be palpable by the doctor's gloved finger in the newborn infant's rectum. After that, it seems to fade, and certainly does not grow, for a dozen years or so. Then, as a boy enters puberty, the gland enlarges and begins to secrete fluid which passes through the prostatic ejaculatory duct into the urethra and forms a major part of the discharge of nocturnal emissions, or "wet dreams." What switches on the prostate at this stage is not known. (Presumably, it is a converse of the delayed-fuse

mechanism that switches off the growth hormone a few years later in life.) Thereafter, the prostate can be expected to do its job so unobtrusively the next 40 years or so that a normally healthy man will be unaware of its existence.

But what is its job? One elderly urologist of the old school recently wrote in a magazine article addressed to elderly laymen: "The sole function of the prostate is to produce a lubricating fluid to transport sperm cells during sex relations." Not so, say Dr. Murphy and the younger generation of prostate specialists: The organ of mystery produces a number of substances, most likely enzymes but perhaps also hormones, whose chemical identity and physiological actions remain to be determined. (These are not the prostaglandins, which got their misleading name from the happenstance of being discovered in the prostates of bovines, and have nothing to do with the human prostate.)

Since the human species got along fairly well for millions of years in total ignorance of the fact that men have a prostate, and has multiplied for centuries in equal ignorance of how the gland works, it is more constructive for the immediate future to consider what is known about its workings, and what goes wrong with it, than to puzzle over its delicate biochemical behavior. The benefits of current research in that field will accrue to future generations.

What is already known about prostate function is complicated enough. In designing the male part of the human reproduction system, nature ignored the axiom about a straight line. Spermatozoa, instead of traveling a couple of inches from the testicles (where they are manufactured) to the penis (from which they will be expelled), take a route around Robin Hood's barn. Each testicle has its own individual distribution path, a rubbery tube called a *vas deferens* that carries sperm to the seminal vesicles above the prostate. There the sperm get a shot of fructose (fruit sugar) for quick energy. (The seminal vesicles are the only human organs that make this kind of sugar.) The vesicles then empty the vitalized sperm into the prostate, where they are launched upon a liquid vehicle, the prostatic fluid, to carry them on their way. Before they leave the prostate, the sperm get another shot of juice from Cowper's glands. Then, at last, they are ready to enter the upper (prostatic) urethra when a man approaches orgasm. The prostate is the gland where the bulkiest of these three ingredients is manufactured and where all are blended for export.

**A** man in the prime of life, defined for our purpose as between ages 20 and 50, is not likely to have prostate trouble unless the gland becomes infected. In the bad old days, perhaps the commonest cause of such infections was gonorrhea, and in the preantibiotic age that was difficult to treat effectively. Epidemiologists may argue as to whether gonococcal prostatitis is less common than it used to be, but there is no disputing the fact that it is infinitely more treatable—and, indeed, curable—thanks to that most wondrous of wonder-drug families, the penicillins. Since these are given by simple intramuscular injections, the treatment causes minimal discomfort.

Ironically, some of the most persistent and hard-to-treat infections of the prostate are caused by the commonest and least respected of bacteria—*Escherichia coli*, the colon bacteria counted by health officials to decide whether swimming is safe, and others often found in wounds or even in apparently healthy genitalia. In many cases, they reach the prostate by traveling up the urethra. This is always the case with (Continued on Page 64)

Gilbert Cant was for many years the medicine editor of Time magazine.



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level to the 45th floor. And when the flu finally went away, an Atlanta Hawk stuck a finger in his left eye during a game, and Frazier was out for two more games.

But, superstars being superstars, Frazier was soon back to his old play-making, ball-stealing, behind-the-back-dribbling, show-no-emotion-on-the-court self by the time the All-Star Game rolled around in Phoenix on Jan. 14. He had, by then, emerged as the Knicks' leading scorer, with a 21.4 average and, with the help of one of his friends, Earl (The Pearl) Monroe, he had turned the struggling Knicks into what seemed, at times, like playoff contenders. Sports writers praised Frazier and Monroe as "the dynamic duo," saying that perhaps they were the best backcourt combination in the history of the sport. Frazier said he didn't know about that, but that they were probably the first pair who ever owned Rolls-Royces.

Both Rolls-Royce owners made the starting lineup of the All-Star Game. It was Frazier's sixth straight selection, and he won more fans' votes—91,621—than any other guard in the N.B.A. He was No. 2 in the total voting, behind Bob McAdoo, the Buffalo Braves' high-scoring center, who had 98,325 votes.

The day of the All-Star Game, Frazier told reporters that he was going to be the game's Most Valuable Player. Then the silky smooth guard went

out, found that his slow-motion, h-a-a-n-g-i-n-the-air jump shot was right on target, scored 30 points for the East team (the game's high) and, indeed, was named M.V.P. He surprised Clyde-watchers in two ways that night: First, TV close-ups showed that he was sweating profusely. (Frazier, for some eerie reason, rarely sweats in Madison Square Garden, a fact that helps to further his "Mr. Cool" image.) And then, biggest surprise, he showed emotion as he accepted the mammoth M.V.P. trophy: He smiled. Broadly. "This is really a thrill for me," he said, quite humbly.

On the court, Frazier's style of play is like the flow of maple syrup—slow but very smooth. There is nothing herky-jerky about his play, even though his right big toe is often so sore from arthritis that he has to soak it in ice water for half an hour after a game to stop the swelling. When he goes to the basket, the result is more ballet than it is brawn as he floats up and hangs in mid-air for what seems like seconds. He doesn't dunk, spin or throw the fancy pass, which is more in the style of his backcourt partner, Monroe. And yet, almost effortlessly it seems, Frazier almost always manages to do what he calls "a decent night's work"—score 20 or more points.

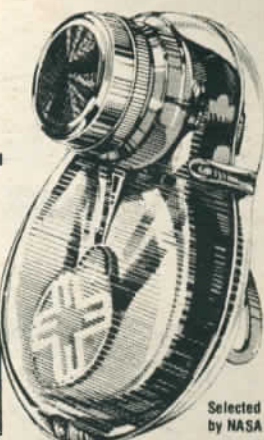
As the key man on offense, Frazier usually brings the ball down the floor for the Knicks, his face fixed in a heavy-lidded half-(Continued on Page 52)



Superstar: Lounging in his old apartment, inspecting his new one, polishing his Rolls (the old mink coat has been supplemented by a new white one).



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## Clyde

Continued from Page 17

asleep expression. For the first three-quarters of a game, he is usually not what could be called an exciting basketball player. Once in a while he may dribble behind his back, or make a steal, or perform one of his patented jump shots during which he first fakes, and then, when his man is in the air trying to defense the shot, jumps into the air and shoots in such a way that his man lands on him. The foul is usually called on the other player, and the play often results in 3 points for Frazier—2 if the jump shot went in, and 1 if he makes the foul shot.

There is no wasted motion in Frazier's play—either on offense or defense. When he guards a man, he does not flail his arms or jitterbug aimlessly. He crouches low, like a boxer, sometimes standing still and letting his opponent make the tiring moves. He seldom disputes a referee's call ("It's a waste of time and energy—the ref is not going to change his mind") and, perhaps as a result, he has never had a technical foul charged against him.

These last-minute heroics have happened several times this season, and one reason is that Frazier does his best work in the fourth quarter. He shoots more, guards more closely, attempts more steals (he is a contender for the No. 1 ball thief in the N.B.A. this season). He seems to thrive on heart-attack situations, such as a recent game with the Cleveland Cavaliers when his 20-foot turnaround jump shot in the last second gave the Knicks a 103-102 victory. Or the game with the Washington Bullets, in which his last-second jump shot gave the Knicks an 86-85 victory.

Frazier, like Joe Namath before him, has developed into what might be called a New York Jock Folk Hero. In fact, Frazier is sometimes called "the black Joe Namath," a label that makes him grin, but which he isn't about to reject. With Namath, the New York Jets quarterback, the stuff of sports stardom comprised a rifle arm, the watery blue eyes, the white llama rug, the penthouse and then the brownstone, and the legendary blonde-and-the-bottle-of-booze the night before the Super Bowl game. With Frazier, the elements are "the

fastest hands in the East," the 6-foot-4-inch, 205-pound, almost perfectly proportioned body; the Rolls-Royce; the million-dollar company, Walt Frazier Enterprises; the round bed with the \$3,500 beige mink bedspread; the fancy clothes; the beautiful women; the cool.

Fueling the Frazier mystique are the two books that the bachelor guard has written about himself, "Clyde," with Joe Jares, and "Rockin' Steady, A Guide to Basketball and Cool," with Ira Berkow. In both books, especially the latter, Frazier reveals that his life-style is perhaps even more extraordinary than his statistics. Both are pretty extraordinary, though. Besides being the Knicks' scoring leader in each of the last four seasons, Frazier also holds the team's all-time assists record (3,563 at the end of the 1973-74 season), and will probably surpass Willis Reed's all-time Knicks' scoring record (12,183 points) this season.

Frazier's life-style honors have included being named America's Best Dressed Jock (by Esquire magazine) and one of America's 10 sexiest athletes (by Pageant). In 1973, he was a judge at the Miss Universe Pageant in Athens. And now he has been immortalized in bronze: A Brooklyn company called Hero Arts, Inc. has come out with a 12-pound, 24-inch statue of Frazier shooting a jump shot. "Why Not Thrill and Surprise Someone? Give Clyde This Season," says the ad for the \$16.95 objet d'art in the Knicks' official program.

**D**espite all the recognition he has won, Frazier, I found, is a man of rather unusual contradictions. In the several days that I spent following him around Manhattan, I learned that he is painfully shy, pretty much of a loner, and has, he says, "only two friends." (One, David "Sweet" Baker, is a former college classmate of Frazier's at Southern Illinois University and an aspiring model who now works as Frazier's chauffeur; the other is Willie Austin, a social worker.) On the other hand, I found that Frazier loves barging into crowded East and West Side bars at night, where he drinks mostly

Chablis, holds court for his fans, and adds to his already impressive collection of telephone numbers while Baker sits outside in the driver's seat of the doubled-parked Rolls-Royce, ready to move it if the cops come along.

"I know it's kind of weird," Frazier told me. "I am a loner, but I still like people—after 8 P.M. Up until that time, I like to be alone. I'm Walt Frazier then, a nice, shy guy. But then at night, I turn into Clyde. I see myself living in a dream, and I like to go out and share it with people. Just being around me seems to make people happy. When we're out in the Rolls, we stop traffic, and little old ladies wave at me, and in the bars husbands come up and tell me how much their wives like to see me play. Now, that's really something. I really like it."

But no matter what he's doing, Frazier's voice rarely rises above the soft Southern drawl that he acquired in his native Atlanta, where he was the oldest of 9 children. He is extremely polite, has a wry sense of humor, and even when he is saying outrageous things—like "I have the best body on the whole Knicks team"—it's hard to hate him, because such bold statements are usually accompanied by several self-effacing laughs on his part.

My first day with Frazier was supposed to be "a typical day of the game" day. I met him at his 7-room, 5-bath apartment, which was practically bare except for several moving boxes, a black baby grand piano in the living room and, of course, the mink-covered round bed in the bedroom. The 45th-floor apartment, which has magnificent north, south and east views of the city, will eventually be decorated in \$50,000 worth of beiges, tans, browns, glass and chrome. There will be a pool table and a bar in one room and a sauna in another.

"Twelve closets!" Frazier says, incredulously, as he shows me around. "I won't have to crowd my clothes any more." But it will probably still take him the usual hour in the morning to decide what to wear, because the current Clyde clothing count goes something like this: 49 suits, 50 shirts, 50 "kicks" (pairs of shoes), 8 coats, most of them fur; 18 hats and a bracelet with "Clyde" written in diamonds.

The nickname "Clyde" was given to him back in 1968 when he bought a \$40 wide-brimmed brown velour hat





Bygone foods in bygone days: Meats and produce in a city market in 1924.

"fresh" fish brought from a distance. The speed of the airplane (but there is also the time consumed in loading, unloading and delivering) would not give confidence to such housewives as those of Oslo or the island of Elba, who buy no fish not still alive.

#### Flour

Lack of standardization among different brands makes it impossible for you to know exactly what you're buying, but in any case your range is not going to be very wide: try to get flour ground from Hungarian bearded wheat or spelt! Nutritive elements are removed from flour in milling as a matter of course, to stave off spoilage; some of them are later returned to bread in the form of chemicals. There is no loss of taste—the bakers say.

#### Fruit

The Comice, frequently called the world's finest pear, has almost entirely disappeared from the market and, consequently, is rapidly disappearing from orchards too. Why? It is so soft that it can be eaten with a spoon, delighting gourmets but not the merchants who have to transport it and display it in the market with minimum spoilage.

The painstaking efforts of Luther Burbank—and such contemporaries of his as gave their names to the loganberry, the boysenberry and the youngberry, to give us a wider gamut of tastes—are now being shoveled down the drain; it is unprofitable to handle too

many varieties. Nor can large-scale dealers be bothered with items in minor demand. Since when has your supermarket offered pomegranates, persimmons or gooseberries?

#### Grain

Wild wheat still grows in Turkey. It is reported to be twice as tasty as cultivated wheats, but it is not encouraged, for its yield is only one-half as great. The superior high-protein corn called Opaque-2, developed by the International Corn and Wheat Improvement Center at El Batán, Mexico, is not being planted "because its yield is slightly less than ordinary corn [and] farmers are paid for the quantity and not the quality of what they sell." (Are Indians more sensitive to taste than we are? A new strain of rice developed at Hyderabad, which increased yields by 50 per cent, was rejected by the public because it was "chalky and unpleasant to the taste").

#### Orange juice

A triumph of uniformity! You will never get a bad can of orange juice — nor a good one either. Orange juice concentrate is produced by means of a Rube Goldberg apparatus maliciously named the Thermal Accelerated Short Time Evaporator, acronym TASTE. "We have always had the flavor of fresh oranges to come up against," a concentrate producer told John McPhee, author of a knowledgeable book on the orange; but the difference was apparently not grave: "The public has very low taste

perception anyhow." Insufficiently low, it would appear, to prevent the market from foisting upon us an "orange" drink which is 100 per cent synthetic, none of whose ingredients has ever been nearer to an orange grove than a chemical factory.

#### Milk

The dairy-farm cooperative is an institution not only useful but, in our economy, indispensable and inevitable; nevertheless it prevents us from ever tasting our best milk, since the entire produce of any given region is mixed together in enormous vats, giving us a run-of-the-mill common denominator. (Similarly, the French wine cooperative has killed off scores of enticing vintages, produced locally in quantities too small for successful marketing today.)

#### Vegetables

You can freeze sweet corn and take it out of its container six months later garden-fresh, but the commercial producer can't—because you can get the crop of your two or three rows of corn into the freezer half an hour after it has been picked, but how long will it take the commercial producer to freeze the yield of 500 acres? Longer, certainly, than it takes for most of the sugar in his corn to turn into starch.

You can pick a fully ripe tomato off the vine and savor its fresh healthy goodness, but your supermarket cannot deliver you a ripe tomato. To avoid the risks of transport and of exposure in the market,

commercial food handlers not only pick the tomato unripe (and consequently tasteless), they sell it to you still unripe. It is red, but that is thanks to ethylene gas. (Ethylene is used to "ripen" bananas, too; on May 27, 1974, an air-tight fruit truck filled with bananas in an atmosphere of ethylene gas exploded in Tokyo; five passers-by were felled by flying bananas, possibly the only time that unripe fruit has caused damage when applied externally instead of internally).

The fact that the supplying of food is dominated not by gastronomic considerations but by economic considerations is demonstrated by the familiarity of the patterns imposed upon the marketing of food. We know them from economics. There is Gresham's law, for example—bad money drives out good money. It also works for apples. France possesses one of the world's tastiest apples in the Calville, whose growers held out stubbornly against beautifying it for the world market; they feared that they might get rid of a few warts—and all flavor along with it ("don't tinker with the ecology"). But you can't rebel against modernity. American fruitgrowers transplanted the Calville to California and there taught it the graces which would beguile the consumer. It gained the uniform quality called "dependable" in the food merchants' language and "mediocre" in mine. Re-imported into France under the name of the California apple, the standardized version has now all but driven

the genuine Calville out of native market.

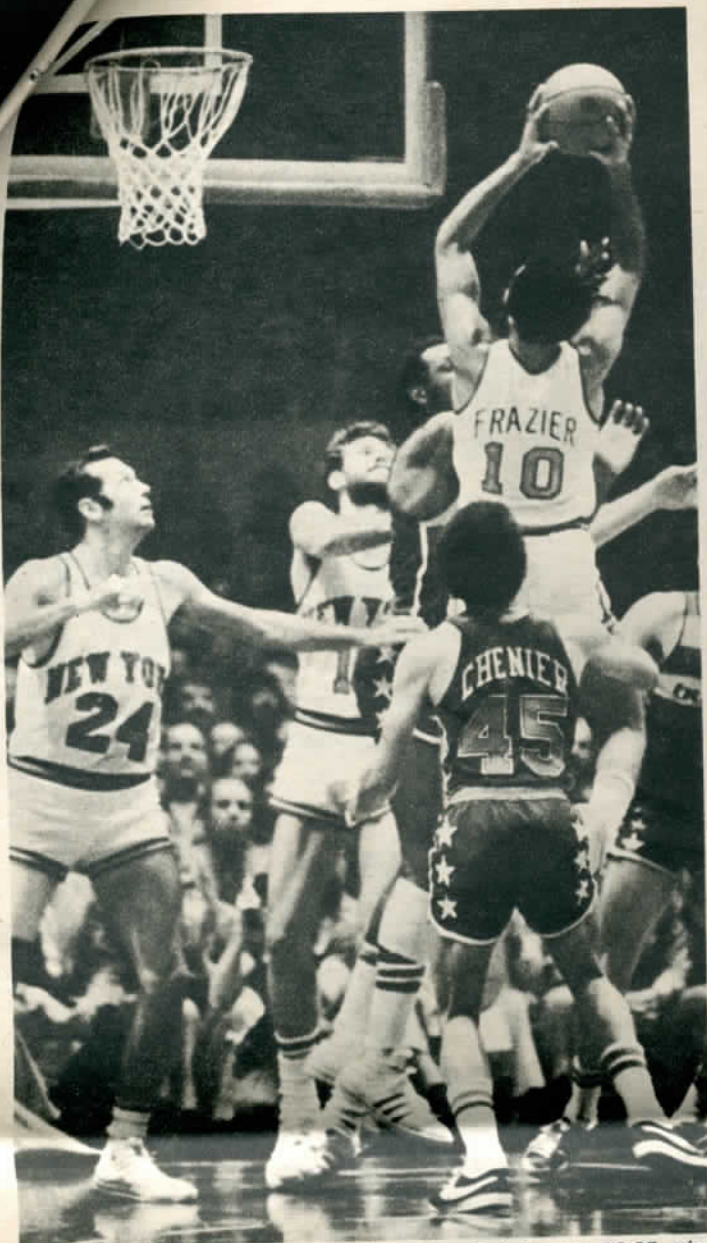
Once installed, an economic situation becomes a self-protective institution. Consider the case of the embattled Connecticut women who rose in wrath against our sawdust-like bread and began themselves to market a homemade loaf. A famished public fell upon the better bread with such avidity that the reformers found themselves swiftly in bewildered possession of a mass commodity, reduced, by the imperatives of large-scale marketing, to a quality barely distinguishable from that of the bread they had meant to supplant, but in possession of a highly exploitable trademark. Nothing fails like success.

An apparently inseparable outgrowth of our economy is the conglomerate; it has seized upon the food industry. Can we expect better bread when the ultimate decisions regarding its manufacture are entrusted to the hands of managers who are not particularly interested in making bread, but only in making money? It happens that the nation's largest manufacturer of bread, the Continental Baking Company, is owned lock, stock and barrel by International Telephone and Telegraph.

I suppose the story of Chicken Little had a happy ending; most children's stories have. Adult stories are less predictable. Can there be a happy ending for this tale of taste, which seems to be shrouded in undispellable gloom? Let us bring optimism to bear, and perhaps we can arrive at one. Thus:

The sense of taste, like all human senses, requires education to operate effectively. Today only our oldest generation (or perhaps our two oldest generations) are able to appraise our food on the basis of the education their taste buds received long, long ago from the rich flavors of bygone foods. The younger generations must look upon them with pity, as dotards easy to please, when they vaunt the richness of chicken, a food which the youngsters know is without interest. No matter. Wait one generation more, or at the most, two generations more, and nobody will be left alive who remembers what foods used to taste like. Ignorant of what was once possible, they will be blissfully unconscious of what they have missed. Consumers unresponsive to taste will be married to tasteless foods. There is no reason why they should not live happily ever after. ■





Frazier's last-second basket gives the Knicks an 86-85 victory over the Washington Bullets at Madison Square Garden.

during a road trip to Baltimore. Danny Whelan, the Knicks trainer, decided the hat made Frazier look like Clyde Barrow, or at least like Warren Beatty playing Clyde Barrow in the then popular movie, "Bonnie and Clyde."

Our first stop of the day is at Carriage House Motor Cars Ltd., on East 73d Street, where Frazier has come to pick up his freshly painted Rolls-Royce. Before leaving, he writes "Clyde" several times on a piece of paper so Michael Schudroff, the firm's 29-year-old owner, can have the name transferred to the Rolls's new hand-tooled carriage irons on another visit.

"I promised Clyde I wouldn't paint anybody else's Rolls this color, and I won't," Schudroff tells me. "He wanted it changed because people came in and said, 'What color's Clyde's? Paint mine that way.'"

Our next stop is at Pagano of Italy, on West 57th Street, where Frazier is fitted for a

new red plaid sport coat. "I don't know how to put this, because I endorse Ripley Clothes," he says, as he looks at himself in the mirror, "but I do wear other clothes." Frazier finds it very difficult to lie.

Our last stop is at Dewey Wong's on East 58th Street, where Frazier often eats around 3 P.M. on the day of a game. By eating then, he says, he will have digested the food by game time, 7:30 P.M. As we walk a block to the restaurant, people in cars and on the sidewalk yell greetings of recognition at Frazier, and some try to shake his hand. "Clyde, hey Frazier," yell a group of blue-jeaned teen-agers. Frazier smiles, gives them the thumb-up signal, and keeps walking. "That's the secret, never stop walking," he says softly. "Once you do, you're done for."

At the restaurant, Frazier orders beef and Chinese vegetables, and I ask him if we can talk about basketball for

a while. He agrees, even though it is obvious he'd rather talk about his lifestyle; it's as though even he can't believe the way he lives.

I ask him how his game has been changed, if at all, by the fact that there is no longer a Willis Reed to set picks and clog up the middle like a Sherman tank, and by the fact that the Knicks are no longer the powerhouse club they once were in the days of Reed, DeBusschere and company. As of a few days ago, the Knicks were barely above .500, with a record of 27 wins and 25 losses.

"It's frustrating at times," he admits. "It's no fun when you start blowing games like we have. I think I try harder now than before, because I know the team is counting on me more. I shoot more, whereas I used to pass off more to the big guys. It was so much easier when I had Reed setting picks; I would gamble more, knowing he was back there. Today nobody sets a good pick, so I can't do that. But adversity is a true sign of the makings of a man; you can see what a ballplayer's made of when he's always been on a winner and now he's on a loser. But hey, I think we're still a good team to watch. The Pearl is very exciting. And myself. And Phil Jackson is very exciting, too. You never know what he's going to do, if he's going to stand up, or fall down, or what."

The change in the Knicks' fortunes has affected Frazier's private life, too. "I probably don't go out as much," he says, between bites of Chinese vegetables. "Usually when we're winning, you can find me all over town. I was all over town the years we won the championships. But I don't go out so much now because there's not as much to be joyful about. I don't feel like it as much, and there's a tendency that even I might lose my cool when people say, 'You stink.' I can do without that aggravation."

The legendary Frazier cool is a trait he thinks he has had all his life, but he first remembers making use of it when he had to change his baby sisters' diapers and burp them. Somehow, he said, he had the guys in his Atlanta neighborhood conned into thinking it was the "he-man" thing to do.

But his trick of showing no emotion on the basketball court was stolen from Elgin (Continued on Page 58)

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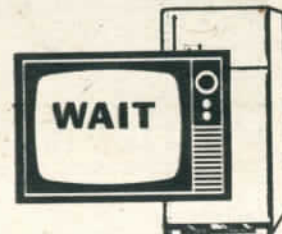
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Continued from Page 53

Baylor, the former Los Angeles Laker. As Frazier remembers it, he was somehow more emotional in his rookie year (1967-68), and one night, while waving his arms and gritting his teeth to pressure Baylor, the all-star forward looked at Frazier and said, "Hey, youngblood, what you think you doin'?" Then Baylor went into his moves as though the rookie weren't even there. Frazier was so impressed that he has been Mr. Cool ever since.

One of the most famous Frazierisms—sitting down on the floor for a long time after he's been fouled and knocked down—is part of that cool. "What I'm doing is cooling off, relaxing my body," he says. "This is especially true under pressure, when I might be tensed up. I'm getting my head together for the free throw. I know there's no hurry to get up. So I cool it. And when I walk to the line I'm mentally ready to drop the ball in the hoop."

Why does Frazier think he's the best all-round guard in the N.B.A.? "Because I take pride in being good," he says, without hesitation. "I want to be the best, so I make the sacrifices, I have the talent, and the rest is just being physically and mentally ready. That means getting the proper rest and taking care of your body, knowing when to stay out late and when not to, knowing when to have sex and when not to. I never have sex before a game. I like to be 100 per cent ready, and I wouldn't be ready for very many games if I had sex before a game. But sometimes I get an offer I can't refuse. . . . [Smile]. But I think it's more mental than anything else. Afterwards, you tell yourself you're going to be tired for the game, and you are."

Frazier feels that his biggest talent is his play under pressure. "Some guys are just pressure players," Frazier says, "and I happen to be one of them. There's just a feeling in my body in a pressure situation, something that snaps. I get the feeling that I can score whenever I want to and nobody can stop me, or that I can steal the ball any time that I want to. Sometimes, during the early stages of a game, my mind wanders, but in a pressure situation I really concentrate. I'm determined to make it."

But his favorite part of the

He is sometimes called 'the black Joe Namath.' That makes him grin—but he doesn't reject it.

ball—especially when the steal leads to two points for the Knicks. "Stealing is something I set up as the game progresses," he says. "I keep watching my man, watching his habits and how he dribbles. I stay back from the guy I'm guarding, not too close. That way I can keep him guessing where I am. It's like I'm playing possum. I'm there, but I don't look like I'm there. He gets more relaxed than if I was there pressuring him all the time. That's when he gets careless, and I flick the ball out of his hands."

**O**n the day of a game, Frazier does nothing in particular to "psych" himself up. In fact, he says he doesn't even think about the game until the opening tip-off, because he doesn't want to get "keyed up." Instead, he might spend the day sleeping—teammates say he sometimes sleeps 18 hours straight when the Knicks are on the road—or watching television, or shopping for clothes.

He arrives at the Garden about 6:30 P.M., and tapes his ankles while he's still in his underwear, because he wants his uniform, No. 10, to be "crisp and fresh" when he goes out on the floor. Then he spends 10 minutes in front of the mirror, working on his mustache, muton-chop sideburns and beard so not a hair is out of place when he goes out on the court for warm-ups. At this point, he concentrates on other things to keep thoughts of the game out of his mind: "I might think about a sweater I just bought, or a suit, or something that happened that day. If I thought about the game, my mind would get clogged, and I want my mind to be clear when the game starts."

Sometimes, though, his mind wanders to the man he'll be guarding that night, especially if it happens to be one of the guards who give him the most trouble: Phil Chenier of the Washington Bullets; Randy Smith of the

bald of the Kansas City-Omaha Kings, and Austin Carr of the Cleveland Cavaliers. "In my head, I keep a little notebook on those guys," Frazier says. "Like Phil Chenier has a temper problem. I try to distract him, try to block his shot, anything to get him working against himself. . . . [Pause] But I'd better not give any more of my secrets away."

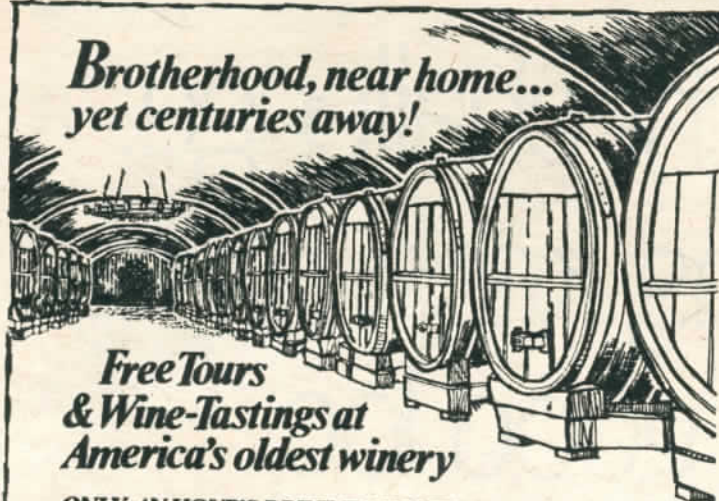
It is obvious that Frazier is getting tired of talking basketball. When I ask him his most exciting moment in the sport, he starts to say, "The first championship in 1970 . . ." but then abruptly changes the subject. "I have very few exciting moments," he says, rather impatiently. "The most exciting was when I became a father in 1967. It was the first time I ever got drunk. I wanted a boy so bad and I got one. I think every man wants a son."

Walter 3d, now 7, lives with his mother, Marsha, a schoolteacher, in Chicago. In the summer he visits his father, and the two spend time together at the boys' basketball camp that Frazier runs in New Jersey, or at his summer house near Monticello, N. Y. The Fraziers, who were married while students at Southern Illinois University, separated shortly after the baby was born. "My wife was overly jealous," Frazier says. "I'm trying to get a divorce, but she wants me back."

As he sees it, there will be no more Mrs. Walt Fraziers until his playing career is over. "There are just too many temptations. While I'm playing, I can't be true. There's no one special now, but I've got a few candidates, about five or so. Girls are like suits; I don't know how many I have. I do know that if I see a woman once every two weeks, that's good—for her." He laughs.

What about the groupies who flock around professional athletes wherever they go? "I don't knock them," Frazier says, over his dessert of coconut ice cream. "I can see getting turned on by what somebody does, if they do it good. Usually, they're very bold—they come right up and knock on your hotel door. It's like, 'Here I am.' I haven't bothered with them lately, but when I was younger, I didn't pass hardly anything up, because it was new and exciting. But now I think I want the best—some nice, strong, independent woman with a sense of humor."

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leaves the restaurant, gets into his Rolls-Royce and drives to Madison Square Garden. He should have stayed home. It was the night an Atlanta Hawk jabbed a finger in Frazier's eye, causing the Knick guard to miss the next two games.

**W**alt Frazier Enterprises, at 101 Park Avenue, is a company that handles athletes' contracts, endorsements and investments, including Frazier's. It is a three-partner operation, with Frazier as president, fellow basketballer Billy Cunningham of the Philadelphia 76ers as executive vice president, and Irwin Weiner, a former garment-industry salesman, as secretary-treasurer.

The firm's reception room is decorated like an A.B.A. basketball, in red, white and blue, with stripes on the carpet and stars on the wall. Sitting there one day, I kept expecting "The Star-Spangled Banner" to start blaring on the Muzak.

Weiner, who is 42 years old, red-haired, and has the boyish face of a Jewish leprechaun, runs the operation, and so well that Frazier refers to him as "Wonder Weiner." In fact, the white shirt Weiner was wearing with his expensive looking gray flannel suit the day I visited his office had the word "Wonder" inscribed on the cuffs. Among his "wonders": A \$3-million deal for Julius Erving over eight years with the New York Nets; somewhere between \$2.5 and \$3-million for George McGinnis for six years' service with the Indiana Pacers; and \$1.5-million for Frazier for five years with the Knicks.

"When I first met Clyde in 1968, he had only \$2,000 or \$3,000," Weiner told me. "He'd spent the rest on clothes and a Cadillac. Guys like Clyde have a dream: When they come out of the ghettos, they want to buy a car and beautiful clothes. And they do."

Weiner, in 1968, was running a small-time operation called All-Star Sports, in which he booked New York ball-players for such things as shopping-center openings, B'nai B'rith dinners and radio and TV appearances. He got several bookings for Frazier, but thought at the time that the Knick guard didn't like him. "Whenever I would pick Clyde up to take him to an engagement, he would say 'Hello' and then he would sit back and fall asleep. At the



Besieged by young fans, Frazier keeps his "Mr. Cool" image.

end of the day, he'd say 'Good-by' and that was it. It went on that way for six months.

"Then one day he came in and said, 'I want you to manage me,'" Weiner recalled. "He was negotiating a new contract, and I didn't know one thing about negotiating. So I told him, 'Listen, I want you to go to a big law firm.'" But Frazier insisted, and Weiner went over to Madison Square Garden, where he haggled with the Knicks' management for two weeks and somehow came back with a contract offer that was \$200,000 above the sum that Frazier's lawyer had negotiated.

Frazier repaid Weiner, who was then heavily in debt, with a check for \$40,000 and the orders to "clear your name, man." A few weeks later, Frazier came by with another check, this one for \$50,000, and told Weiner to put it in the bank, "so nobody can call you a deadbeat."

"Clyde's a beautiful guy—he really made me," Weiner said. "I was pretty much broke, zero plus, and he really gave me a chance. I love him like a brother."

Walt Frazier Enterprises has a staff of 12, including lawyers, controllers and secretaries. Weiner said that each of the 40 athletes the company manages has his money in a custodial bank, "and nothing is done with the money without the athlete's approval." In addition, each athlete has a checking account that is handled by the company to pay all of his monthly expenses, from fur-coat bills to Rolls-Royce payments, and the athlete receives a monthly statement for same.

There is also an investment fund to which the athletes contribute from \$200 to \$400

each month. This money is used "conservatively," Weiner told me. "We have apartments in New Jersey, office buildings in New Jersey, land in Detroit and tax-free municipal bonds. And we're ever so slightly into the stock market."

**T**he athletes receive extra money for their commercials, endorsements and appearances, Weiner said. In the case of Frazier, his speaking fee is \$1,500 to \$2,500, "depending on where and what," Weiner said. "And he won't touch any endorsement unless it's five figures."

Walt Frazier's life isn't all money, money, money. He recently did a freebie. The invitation was in the form of a brown paper basketball and it read: "Walt Frazier and his friends, the New York Knicks, invite you to meet The Fifth Dimension." The supper party, at Jimmy's, was to celebrate the vocal group's opening at the Uris Theater, and Frazier had agreed to host it free because he is a friend of Lamonte McLemore, a member of the group.

"If I don't like the person, I wouldn't do something like this," Frazier told me when we met a few days later, at the party. "But I like going to parties and meeting people. This isn't like the usual parties I go to. Here you got the president of this company and that company." Then he went off to pose with Elliott Gould.

Walt Frazier was born March 29, 1945, in Atlanta, the oldest child of Walter and Eula Frazier. Two years later, Mary came along, and then Brenda, and Janice, and twins named Brezita and Renita, and Ethel and Phyllis, and Keith. Frazier grew up in a two-family house in northeast

Atlanta, with his grandparents living in the apartment next door.

"We weren't poor," his mother, Eula, told me when I called her in Atlanta, "but we weren't middle-class, either. Sort of lower middle-class." Her husband worked on the Ford assembly line, but was also involved with the numbers racket, she said, confirming what her son had told me earlier. For the past three years, Mrs. Frazier said, her husband has been in a hospital with "a nervous condition."

Today, Frazier's mother, four of his sisters and his brother, still at home, live in a \$58,000 five-bedroom ranch-style house he bought for them in southwest Atlanta. He pays all of the family's household expenses, and sends both his mother and his grandmother a weekly allowance. For Christmas, he sent each of his eight brothers and sisters \$50 and his mother, \$150.

Young Walt spent most of his waking hours on a bumpy dirt playground three blocks from his home, where he learned how to dribble and shoot baskets at the age of 9. When he was 11, he was shooting baskets for nickels and dimes against the older boys—and usually winning.

Frazier attended an all-black high school, David T. Howard High, where he was voted the Most Popular Boy and the Most Athletic Boy in the Class of '63. He got there via sports: He was the star guard of the basketball team, catcher of the baseball team, and quarterback of the football team, leading Howard High to the Atlanta schoolboy title in his senior year.

"Football was my favorite sport," he told me, "and I had more scholarship offers for football than for basketball. But I decided to concentrate on basketball, because I wanted to be a pro athlete, and there were no black quarterbacks in the N.F.L. at the time."

He went to Southern Illinois University in Carbondale on scholarship, was named to the Little All-America second team in his sophomore year, then sat out his junior year because of scholastic ineligibility. "I just didn't go to class," he recalled. "I had a ball. Every night I'd order pizza and watch the late movie. Then I'd go to the rec room in the morning and shoot pool. I got all incomplete the end of my sophomore year."

He was back in uniform his senior year, and led his team,





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the Salukis, to the 1967 N.I.T. championship in Madison Square Garden. He was also named the tournament's Most Valuable Player. The Knick brass was impressed: It made Frazier its No. 1 draft choice that year.

Sam Goldaper, a veteran sports reporter who covers basketball for The Times, remembers Frazier that year as "a shy kid with a bald-looking head who spoke so softly you couldn't understand what he was saying. Now he's the most quotable player on the team. It's something he works at. He buys books of quotable quotes, and then he sits all alone in the front of the team plane, reading them."

As Goldaper sees it, Frazier is by far the best guard in the N.B.A. Does he have any weaknesses? "Well, he may be a little selfish at times," Goldaper said. "He doesn't always pass the ball when he should. Sometimes I'll say to myself, 'Why doesn't Frazier pass the ball? That guy's open.'"

One of Frazier's most vocal critics at home games this season is Dan Sawyer, an insurance underwriter from Jersey City who has a season ticket and sits in a courtside seat, under a basket. More and more this year, Sawyer has found himself yelling such things as, "Did you come to play tonight, Clyde?" at Frazier, who he feels is overrated. "People always used to say Frazier saved his energy for the play-offs, or the big game, or the last quarter," Sawyer said. "But if he had been playing the way he should have in the rest of the game, he wouldn't have to have these last-minute heroics."

"He's supposed to be the best defensive guard in the league, but everybody, I mean everybody, goes by him," Sawyer went on. "He gets beaten by everyone, and most guards can score at will against him."

Teammate John Gianelli, who also happens to be Frazier's roommate on the road this year, tends to confirm Sawyer's complaint about Frazier's defensive play. "I don't think Clyde plays the defense as tough as he used to," Gianelli told me. "I think he's let up a bit. He doesn't work as hard as he can. He's complacent. He reached the top and is considered the best in the league, and now it's easy to sit back and watch."

On the other hand, Gianelli praised Frazier's "great abil-

When his playing career is over, Frazier says, 'I'd like to get into fashion, or maybe broadcasting sports events. One thing I know I don't want to be is a movie actor.'

ity to perform best when the pressure's on." Coach Red Holzman lauded Frazier's "great body control." And teammate Phil Jackson poetically likened Frazier's game to that of "a feline animal." "He has cat moves," Jackson explained, "and he's very graceful, and he kind of slinks around, and he has that half-lidded look. He uses just the right movement at the right time, and he doesn't over-exert himself. He conserves himself during the game until he really has to exert his body."

Randy Smith, the quick Buffalo Braves' guard who gives Frazier headaches, didn't waste words when asked his opinion of Frazier. "I think I'm the best guard in the N.B.A.," said Smith, whose Rolls-Royce is green and sand.

While praising Frazier's offensive and defensive ability, John Havlicek, the Boston Celtics' superstar forward, also said he thought that playing in New York had probably helped put Frazier in the public eye. "If he were playing in Cleveland or Kansas City, it would be difficult for him to have the kind of press he has had," Havlicek said.

"But there is room for one like him in every sport," added Havlicek, who is married and the father of two. "You have Derek Sanderson in hockey, Joe Namath in football. They don't epitomize what most people look for in an athlete. A guy with a family wouldn't tell his son, 'I want you to be that way.'"

**F**razier says he is used to criticism, both from fellow players and fans, and also from blacks who say he is not doing enough to help black people. "I don't have rabbit ears any more," Frazier says. "Rabbit ears" means you hear everything. I'm the star of the team, and I have a rather unusual life-style, and people are gonna say things. There was a time I'd get uptight about it, but no more. A lot of people are jealous of what I have and who I am, so why

degrade myself?

"I suppose I could be doing more for black people. I guess in an indirect way I give black kids inspiration. They know I didn't come from an ideal situation, and I made it. I'll rap to kids on the street. Sometimes I go to Harlem and give basketball clinics. I give money to fight sickle cell anemia, and I'll lend my name to a charity if I believe in it. But a lot of those things are just rip-offs."

My final meeting with Frazier is supposed to be "a typical night out on the town." The ground rules are that I will stay in the background and observe while he operates as he always does in his favorite haunts. Frazier is dressed casually but elegantly for the evening: a white turtleneck sweater, black-and-white checked pants, a \$200 gold Aries necklace with a diamond in it, and a new raccoon coat, about which he says jokingly, "I'm a coon in a coon."

With David "Sweet" Baker along to do the driving, we head for one of Frazier's favorite restaurants, the West Boondock Lounge, a soul-food place in the West Village, where he orders roast beef, collard greens and black-eyed peas. I ask him if he has thought about what he wants to do when his playing career is over, and he shrugs his shoulders. "I never think about it," he says. "You can only spend so much money. I don't want to work all my life. I don't think I'd like to do just nothing—but close to it. I think I'd like to get into fashion, or maybe broadcasting sports events. And I always liked working with kids in my basketball camp. One thing I know I don't want to be is a movie actor."

After dinner, we begin what Frazier calls "bouncing": visiting bar after bar. We hit Broady's and Rust Brown on the West Side, and Friday's, Maxwell's Plum, Mr. Laff's, Tittle Tattle, Dorie's, Play Street, McMaster's and The Twinkle Zone on the East Side. If a bar looks lively,

Frazier orders a drink and chats with the customers; if not, he turns around and walks out.

At almost every bar, beautiful women—black and white—stroll up to Frazier and make a fuss over him. He is friendly, and takes some phone numbers, but doesn't seem interested in any of them. "I can tell in a minute when I find someone I like," he says. "I call it 'sweet vibrations.' The only problem is, I'm discriminating now. I'm looking for more than a one-night stand. I'm looking for someone I can communicate with, a good conversationalist. If I'm not interested in a girl, I'll ask her for her number. If I am, I'll say, 'Why don't we go to the Hippo and dance?'"

I notice a fault of Frazier's while he's standing in the various bars: Like many athletes and show business celebrities I've observed, he doesn't make any effort to pay for his drinks. Bartenders have been foisting free drinks on him for so long that he doesn't even offer to pay for them any more. As one bar owner told me, "A lot of people come here because Clyde comes here, and that means more business for me."

The "bouncing" ends around 2:30 A.M. at P. J. Clarke's, where Frazier orders a chef's salad and orange juice, which the manager insists are on the house. Frazier has not encountered any "sweet vibrations" at his haunts, and it is too late for him to call any of his woman friends, he says. And so, after eating, Frazier goes home—alone. And it doesn't seem to bother him a bit.

After all, he is Clyde, and there are those who say he rules New York. Frazier even said it once himself: "When people think of New York, they think of Frazier." They think of him because, in a city based on Making It, he Made It big, and he did it his way, and then he flaunted it. And they think of him because in a city where people are always losing their cool, he never does. Oh, his clothes might sometimes border on the pimpish, and there is no doubt that he lives too extravagantly, and perhaps he shouldn't accept free food and drinks, and maybe he could do a lot more to help black people. But all that doesn't seem to matter very much to him, or to his fans. Because he's Clyde, and that, right now anyway, is enough. ■



~~Sports - Wednesday~~

March 1974

Durslag col.

You noted in a game between the Los Angeles Lakers and Golden State Warriors that two technical fouls were called on players determined to prove to the referee that they knew how to cuss.

Then you saw where a man with the Chicago Bulls punched Kareem Abdul-Jabbar ~~in~~ in the eye, <sup>After</sup> ~~an~~ act that hasn't yet become legal. ~~basketball~~

Engaged in a game demanding restraint, too many basketball players lose their composure these days, a fact that surprises Walt Frazier, the celebrated guard of the New York Knicks.

Frazier has a startling record for tranquility in combat. Now in his eighth year in the NBA pits, he never has been called for a technical.

And, of course, fighting is regarded by Walt as something for the baseborn, a vulgar, uncouth ~~pursuit~~ pursuit.

"I haven't been in a fight since I was in the eighth ~~grade~~ grade," he says. "I was ~~running~~ running through the hall and grabbed the coat of the class bully. He was a big guy. He challenged me to fight in front of the girls.

"When he started to take off his coat, I jumped him and wrestled him to the floor. The girls cheered me like some kind of hero."

It might be pointed out that jumping a guy while his coat is halfway down his arms is an act one doesn't learn at English boarding school.

But whatever its morality, it was the last time Frazier ruffled his garments in a scuffle. He has since dedicated himself to bottling his emotions. He rarely talks to the opposition, never addresses a referee.

"Basketball is a very demanding game," explains Walt. "There is no way you can play it if you can't control your emotions. I have made a calculated point of calming myself



down. You do this by regulating your life in general."

Frazier, for instance, is the last man to leave the airplane. When it draws up to the ramp, others scramble to debark, for no reason Walt is able to understand. He remains in his seat until the passage is clear.

Nor does he ever hurry to leave the locker room. When the game ends, he sits awhile in silent reflection, drinks an apple juice, showers slowly, dresses and departs in an easy stride.

You get a fascinating insight to <sup>Frazier's style</sup> ~~the life of a professional athlete~~ from the book he has done with New York sportswriter Ira Berkow titled, "Rockin' Steady."

Walt reveals that when he awakens every morning, he gets out of bed and bends low from the waist to stimulate the flow of blood.

"Then still in that position," he continues, "I give my head a finger-tip massage. Then I pull my hair and knead my scalp...I use the 100-stroke system with the brush. I take a lukewarm shower, then a cold shower. I dry my body with a stiff towel and use short brisk movements...But I use a soft towel on my face and I dab. I don't rub. That irritates the skin."

~~Now~~ Now Walt is just warming up.

"I don't use much soap on my face...Soap dries out the skin. Every morning I ~~use~~ squeeze a towel with water as hot as I can stand on my face. Then I use a cold towel. I rotate this two or three times, a minute for the hot, a minute for the cold.

"I slap cologne all over my body...I do facial exercises. I stretch my mouth...I blow up my cheeks. I also squinch my eyes very tight, and then I open them wide. That relaxes the eyes."

All of the foregoing may do something very special for



Frazier, but it strikes ~~xxxxxx~~ us as a hell of a tough way to start the day. If Walt rolled out of bed, staggered and brushed to the bathroom ~~xxxxxx~~ his teeth with half-closed eyes and poured himself a ~~xx~~ cup of coffee, he might not look as pretty, but would live a lot longer.

But coolness is his ~~xxxx~~ hallmark, and it isn't easy to argue with someone who has become the best guard in basketball.

We are intrigued, however, by the growing number of athletes in ~~xxxx~~ football, baseball, hockey and basketball who are confiding in their books that they sleep in mirrored bedrooms. Frazier is among them.

The only conclusion we can draw is that these people see themselves as such consummate artists in bed, such performing virtuosos that they can't resist watching themselves.

The next step is to hire Carnegie Hall.



2/10/75

# AND STILL A CLASSIC OF COOL

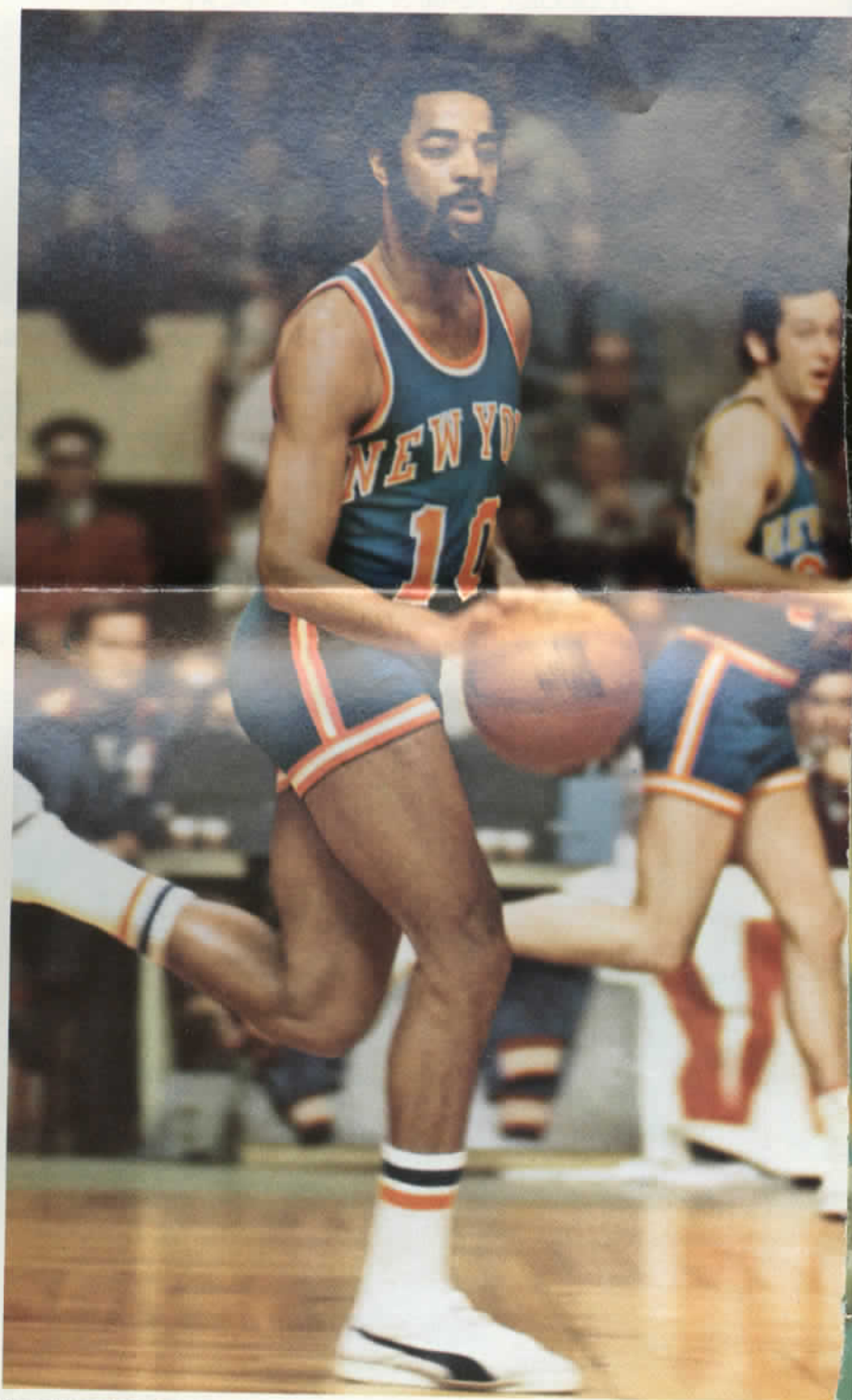
In his eighth pro season the pressure is on the Knicks' Walt Frazier as never before. But he remains basketball's best guard, and while his life-style is less gaudy, the thermometer is steady **by JERRY KIRSHENBAUM**

The New York Knicks had just lost to Golden State, but Walt Frazier, as usual, had things well under control. Back at the Oakland motel where he and his Knick teammates were staying, Frazier joined some friends in the cocktail lounge. He finished off a glass or two of wine and danced with one of the women in the group, a comely brunette. The party was still going strong when Frazier abruptly got up and announced grandly, "I'm going to have a bowl of granola and go to sleep."

Now you see him, now you don't. Same thing on the basketball court. He goes half-speed for a few steps and you think you have a fix on him, and then suddenly he has the ball out of your hands or is past you for two points. He is Clyde, remember, the Knicks' wily, wisecracking man about town. It is scarcely any secret that Walt Frazier drives a Rolls-Royce, that not long ago he moved into a 45th-floor apartment on New York's East Side, a 7½-room spread that he is now sprucing up with a pool table and sauna. The apartment has a dozen closets which are already so crowded with velour suits, flowing capes and the like that Frazier has to hang his \$5,000 black ranch mink coat in one of the bathrooms.

On the other hand, there are intriguing signs that Frazier is reducing the voltage of his storied life-style. In recent months he has taken to smoking a pipe. He has also been seen now and then wearing neckties. His new apartment is done in beiges and browns, a far cry from the dominant lavender of his previous place. He still sleeps in a mink-covered round bed, but the nine-foot mirror that was on the ceiling of his old bedroom is gone. As for choosing granola over brunettes, Frazier allows, "After playing one game in an evening, I sometimes don't feel like playing another."

The fact is that Walt Frazier will turn 30 next month and he is starting to look, sound and act just a tad venerable. Standing the other evening at his living-room window, his trimmed beard silhouetted like a hedgerow against the illuminated Manhattan skyline, Frazier said softly,



FRAZIER AT WORK, MOTORING DOWNCOURT, AND (RIGHT) AT PLAY, STRIKING A POSE



"I've always picked my spots. I still like to rip and run but I know I can't go like I used to and still play good ball."

Now in his eighth NBA season, Frazier has reached a crossroads of sorts. With the retirements this year of Oscar Robertson and Jerry West, it is permissible at long last to say unequivocally that he is the best all-round guard in pro basketball, stature he underscored by winning the MVP award in last month's NBA All-Star Game. And with the departures of Willis Reed and Dave DeBusschere, Frazier is the most prominent link to the Knick teams that won two NBA championships and awakened fans—or at least New York sportswriters—to the joys of team defense and hitting the open man. Just now the Knicks are barely above .500 and struggling to make the playoffs. But thanks largely to Frazier, enough of their old mystique remains to pull big crowds both at Madison Square Garden and on the road.

A fixture on every list of best-dressed or most-eligible athletes (he was married while attending Southern Illinois but has been separated for seven years), Walt Frazier is also the personification of cool, this both by his own estimate and that of the sneakered youngsters who collect outside dressing rooms in all the NBA cities and slap palms as Clyde glides into view. Frazier picked up his nickname when he was wearing wide-brimmed hats like those in *Bonnie and Clyde*, and the handle now seems dated. Groping for something better, some compare him to Shaft, who is also black and cool, while George Morrow, the foghorn-voiced manager of a hangout next to Madison Square Garden called Harry M's, speaks of him as "the Frank Sinatra of the Sports World."

"The women love Walt Frazier with a passion," rasps Morrow. While the Frank Sinatra of the Sports World dined in Harry M's one night, Morrow brought over somebody who wanted to meet him, a stout, middle-aged woman whom Frazier kissed on the cheek. The lady jumped up and down, squealing delightedly.

"You all right?" asked Frazier.

He is a habitué of such East Side haunts as P. J. Clarke's and Hippopotamus, yet he insists that the only time he ever had too much to drink was the night his son, Walter III, was born, eight years ago. "Walt takes better care of himself than any athlete I've ever known," affirms Knick Forward Phil Jackson, a

former roommate. And the Knicks' Bill Bradley, known for being squared away himself, says, "Clyde's got his feet on the ground. He knows where he's going." Before Frazier could get into his new apartment, his personal life was investigated by the building's board of governors, one of whom worriedly asked him, "What about these wild parties you give?"

"I don't give wild parties," Frazier replied evenly. "I go to them."

On a recent flight to Portland, Frazier pointed to a page in the book he was holding and said, "If a girl complains I'm giving her a hard time, I can use this." The book was a paperback collection of quotations and an underlined passage read, "That which we achieve with the most difficulty, we retain the longest."

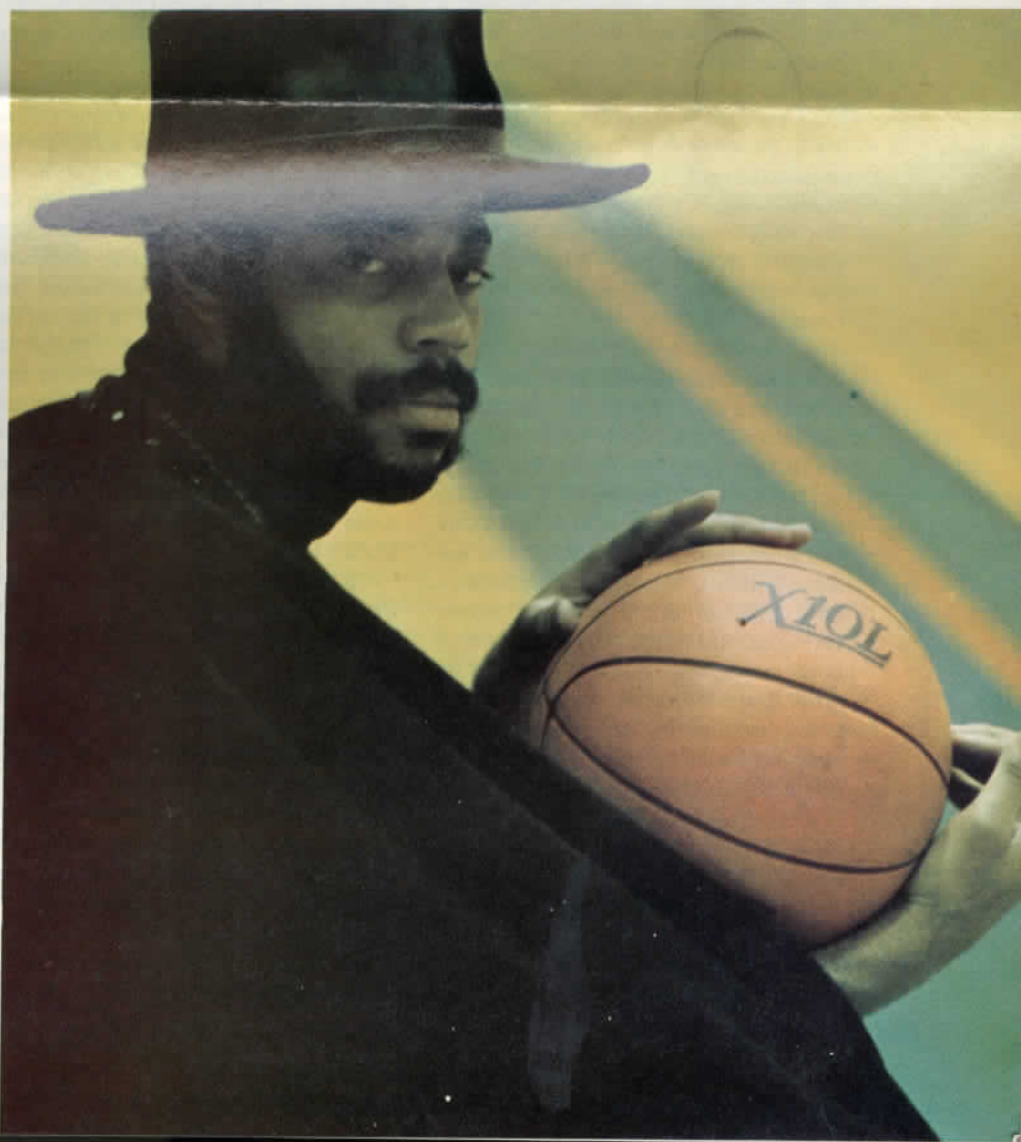
Books of quotations are Frazier's favorite reading matter. He has gone through dozens of them, memorizing entries as though they were lines in a play—

which, in a sense, they are. "I use the quotations in speeches and everyday conversation," he says. One quotation he has favored is the Shakespearean business about all the world being a stage. "Why don't you catch my act at the Garden?" he asks women who strike his fancy. "If you're lucky, you can catch my act off the court, too." He refers to himself as though he is giving stage directions: "Clyde can come on cold and even cruel, but usually he's only teasing."

Growing up in Atlanta, Frazier took a while to get his act together. "I always had exquisite taste," he says, referring to clothes. "I just didn't have the money." The eldest of nine children—Eula and Walter Frazier Sr. ran a cafeteria—he often scolded his various younger sisters for messing up the house and he remembers getting angry at his mother one evening because she took so long to dress that they missed a wrestling match.

These boyhood outbursts contrast

*continued*





with the utter self-control that Frazier exhibits today. The transformation impresses Yale Professor Robert Farris Thompson. He has made Frazier's brisk-selling instructional, *Rockin' Steady*, a text in an introductory Afro-American studies course. Subtitled "A Guide to Basketball and Cool," the book reflects Frazier's fastidiousness in the minutest details of his life, from his wardrobe "stats" (49 suits, 50 shirts, 50 pairs of shoes) to his pregame ritual in which "I pat down my 'burns, I mash down my 'stache—so the little hairs won't stick up and tickle my nose." Thompson says, "People who don't understand black culture sometimes assume that 'cool' comes naturally, that it's a matter of just bopping along. But it can be a learned thing, requiring great discipline."

Frazier was already displaying his composure by the time he reached Atlanta's David T. Howard High School, where he was a star football quarterback and baseball catcher as well as a whiz in basketball. "The other guys looked to me for leadership," he says. "I realized it didn't help if I was flustered." Frazier succeeded Reed as Knick captain this year, but he is hardly the holler-guy type. Except for his flashing eyes, imprisoned in a stolid mask, Frazier's only lapse into demonstrativeness is the clenched fist he occasionally raises after a big play. He has never come close to receiving a technical foul in the NBA. "Why argue with the refs?" he asks. "Ever see one change his mind?"

A playmaker who controls the tempo of a game much the way Robertson did, Frazier is a perennial 20-point scorer. He has been an NBA All-Defensive selection six straight years. At 6'4", tall as guards go, he was second among all NBA guards in rebounds last year, with 6.7 per game. His work load is even heavier this season. Without Reed and DeBusschere, both skilled at setting picks and maneuvering into the open, New York's attack now consists essentially of Frazier or the artful Earl Monroe, the team's other All-Star guard, taking turns going one-on-one. "We have to work a lot harder to get our shots," says Frazier. With defenses keying on them, he and Monroe are often forced to heave up low-percentage shots just as the 24-second clock runs out.

If Frazier sometimes appears to be resting, it is partly explained by his economical style: small head fakes, sleight-of-hand passes, subtle changes of speed.

But Frazier acknowledges that at times he is resting. Phil Jackson says, "Everybody steals little rests, and the best time to do it is on offense. Even John Havlicek occasionally stands there and lets Dave Cowens go one-on-one. But we don't have a Cowens. Walt controls the ball so much that his rests are more noticeable."

Reed and DeBusschere are also missed on defense, where their ability to switch men and clog up the middle freed Frazier to leave his man and go after steals. After leading the NBA in team defense in five of the last six years, the Knicks have fallen to sixth this season, and Portland Guard Geoff Petrie says, "When Frazier leaves me to gamble now, it's possible to take advantage. It's easier to get into the open." But Frazier currently ranks second to Golden State's Rick Barry in steals, and ex-teammate Reed, who once called Frazier's hands "quicker than a lizard's tongue," says, "With Clyde the threat of a steal can be as damaging as the steal itself. It makes the other team protect the ball more. Clyde is as intimidating in his way as Bill Russell was."

During the flight to Portland, where the Knicks were to meet Petrie's Trail Blazers, Frazier took time out from his volume of quotations to discuss his defensive strategy. "I start out by giving my man room. That keeps him guessing where I am. As the game goes on I start tightening up on him, so gradually that he doesn't notice. I'm setting him up for the kill." The next day Frazier happened to walk into a Portland coffee shop just as Knick telecaster Cal Ramsey was discussing a steal that Frazier had made in overtime a few days earlier against Phoenix' Charlie Scott. Frazier went in to score an easy basket that sealed New York's 117-113 win.

"It was the best steal I've ever seen Clyde make," said Ramsey. "Scott was dribbling, protecting the ball, but Clyde somehow got a hand in to poke it away. Now comes the amazing part. Scott was leaning toward the loose ball, with Clyde right behind him. Clyde somehow spun around him to get the ball."

As Frazier listened, a smile played on his lips. "I still don't know how I did it," he said. He almost made it sound unrehearsed.

With kids, like this one at a summer basketball clinic, Frazier reveals an unexpected warmth.

Not long ago, leaning against a podium in a student lounge at Manhattan's Bernard M. Baruch College, Frazier imparted a confidence. "I drove my Rolls here today. What I'm getting paid to answer your questions won't cover the gasoline." His 200-odd listeners laughed.

Frazier, in fact, was receiving \$1,000 for the appearance, but he can be forgiven for pretending to treat such sums cavalierly. He is midway through a five-year, \$1.5 million contract with the Knicks and he pockets another \$100,000-plus annually for endorsing clothes, basketball shoes, stereo sets and other products. He picks up loose change staging basketball clinics. Frazier, his agent, Irwin Weiner and Billy Cunningham are partners in Walt Frazier Enterprises, a firm that handles the business affairs of such players as Julius Erving, Bob Lanier and George McGinnis.

To his many ventures Frazier brings an appreciation for a dollar that extends to his private life as well. One afternoon, as Frazier drove away in his Rolls, a parking attendant looked at the quarter the basketball player had just given him and snarled, "Some big shot." Unruffled by such incidents, Frazier says, "I tip at the going rate. I don't want to be treated special and I'm not treating anybody else special." Asked why, then, he would buy

PHOTOGRAPHS BY WALTER IOOSS JR.





a Rolls-Royce, he replies, "It was a good investment."

Frazier shrugs off other criticisms too. He has offended black-is-beautiful sensibilities by publicly calling Sophia Loren his "ideal woman" and has come under fire from feminists simply for being, well, Walt Frazier. One of his business interests is a liquor store he purchased two years ago in Harlem. He seldom goes into the neighborhood without being upbraided by black activists who feel he could have found more beneficial ways to invest in the community. Recently he decided to put the store up for sale, explaining, "It's too much of a hassle." But, he adds, "The store hasn't been profitable anyway."

Given a choice of roles, Clyde might prefer *The Misanthrope* to *The Playboy of the Western World*. He calls himself a loner, insists that "my own happiness comes first," helpfully traces the origins of this self-interest to his days at Southern Illinois. "At first people on campus couldn't have been nicer," he says. "Then I lost my eligibility one year and everything changed. The coach even refused to give me a ride in his car. That's when I realized you have to look after yourself." Frazier eventually made his grades (though he still lacks 40 credits for graduation) and led SIU to the 1967 NIT championship. But his avowed view of the human race is summed up by the pearl-handled .22 pistol he kept under the front seat when he drove up from Atlanta to join the Knicks.

Still, Frazier may not be quite the iceberg in muttonchops he pretends to be. He is sensitive enough about racism, for example, to slip into speeches wry references to the times he has been mistaken for the chauffeur of his Rolls. He is also loose enough with the purse strings to have lavished a \$65,000 ranch-style house near Atlanta on his mother—she and Walt's father are separated—and, more recently, to have bought a new Nova for his brother Keith, a high school basketball star in Atlanta. Frazier says with obvious sincerity, "My success has been like a dream. The best part is being able to do things for my family."

A low point in Frazier's career came in the early going of last year's NBA playoffs when, playing sluggishly against the Capital Bullets, he was jeered by the Madison Square Garden regulars. The event was headlined in the next day's *New York Post* as THE NIGHT THEY BOOED

CLYDE. Outwardly Frazier shrugged it off. "The fans are fickle," he said.

His true reaction, however, has been described by a young woman who has dated him off and on for four years, a TV makeup artist named Toy Russell. "Walt was very hurt by the booing," she says, "and he was very worried about the way he was playing. He had insomnia and wouldn't answer his phone. He just wanted to concentrate on basketball. Walt Frazier is a very private person, but he is also very gentle and sensitive. That's why I hate the whole Clyde image."

If only because he is convinced that they at least are not fickle, Frazier shines around children. Stopped by a young autograph-seeker in Seattle last year, he wound up taking the pop-eyed boy to lunch. Another time he was approached at the Garden by a pudgy kid of about 10, who asked, "Will you sign my program, Clyde?"

"It'll cost you \$2," Frazier said.

The boy drew back. Frazier, realizing he had been taken seriously, said soothingly, "You look like a nice kid. You can pay me later."

Frazier also has a winning way with sportswriters, who flock around his locker after games to be fed one-liners, insights and, when appropriate, quotations from Bartlett's. Of Jerry Sloan's pawing defense, Frazier once quipped, "Being guarded by him is like going through a tunnel of love." After Earl Monroe arrived from Baltimore, Frazier said, "Earl didn't have to give us the Bullets' plays. He was their play." Of their conflicting styles: "Earl's fire and I'm ice." And why is Frazier always sitting there with his foot in an ice bucket? "I've got an arthritic toe," he deadpans. "It hurts after every game, win or lose."

At Baruch College there was more sting in the exchanges. "Why'd you buy a liquor store?" demanded a young black man in goatee and wire-rimmed glasses.

A hush fell. Frazier said, "Why don't you ask other guys who own liquor stores?"

"Because you're in the forefront, brother. You're Walt Frazier."

"What about the junkies who keep robbing the store?" said Frazier.

The man glowered. "If I were a junkie, I'd burn it down," he said, and left the room.

Frazier kept his cool. "If he burned it down, I'd get the insurance." A few peo-

ple chuckled but now Frazier became serious again. "I've been criticized for not doing enough, but in my own mind I know I'm doing things." He mentioned his contributions to sickle cell anemia funds, the United Negro College Fund and the Police Athletic League. "They help not just blacks but all kids," he said. But he never mentioned that he was thinking of selling his store. When the session ended, he received a standing ovation.

The occasion was supposed to be a sure-fire promotion, a chance to meet the author of *Rockin' Steady*, but John Girolamo, manager of Aldines' bookstore in suburban White Plains, was miserable. A hinge on the front door had been torn loose and glass from a broken window was strewn across the floor. Waves of teen-agers charged through the aisles, knocking over racks and trampling books. The bespectacled, wavy-haired Girolamo scurried around, crying, "It's a disaster—an absolute disaster."

In a corner of the store Frazier sat behind a desk that separated him from the pressing mob. Everybody seemed to be shoving and shouting. "Is it really Clyde?" somebody called from the rear, and a girl's voice offered assurances, "Yes, and he's beautiful." Those in front pleaded for autographs, but Frazier, ignoring them, lifted himself onto the desk. The crowd grew quieter when it saw him, quieter still when he announced, "Unless you get organized, I'm leaving."

A moment later Frazier was out in the crowd, moving people around with the quiet authority he exercises on the basketball court. Some he shooed toward Biography and Literary Criticism, others in the direction of Birthday Cards (Relative). The boys gawked and some of the girls giggled, but everybody cooperated. Returning to the desk, Frazier commanded, "Now come forward. Single file. One autograph each. Then leave that way."

Frazier's felt-tip pen went to work. In less than an hour the crowd had thinned to a handful. Taking a breather, Frazier put down his pen. Like sportswriters in the Knicks' dressing room, Aldines' clerks and the remaining teen-agers gathered around him. As usual, Clyde came through. Turning to one of the bookstore's employees, he chided, only partly in jest, "You shouldn't have underestimated my popularity." **END**



## Change of pace

# Don't downgrade Knicks

By Phil Elderkin

Despite a frame which doesn't quite reach 6ft. 4in. guard Walt Frazier of the New York Knicks may well be the most talented player in pro basketball.

Not the most valuable — for Frazier cannot compete with the game's seven-foot centers when it comes to blocking shots and controlling the backboards. But for doing everything else that's needed to win — and doing it well — Walt is very nearly in a class by himself.

If only Frazier's team could find things as easy. Ever since the season started the Knicks have been hit by one injury right after another.

Earl Monroe, who ordinarily starts with Frazier in the backcourt, has yet to put on a uniform this year. And both of the team's centers, Willis Reed and Jerry Lucas, have missed at least 15 games between them.

Has this put extra pressure on Frazier, who is the club's floor leader?

"It hasn't because I won't let it," Walter explained. "There is a tendency, when two regulars or even one regular is missing, to try to make up for their loss by scoring more points yourself."

"But if I were to do that, I'd have to control the ball so much of the time that too many other guys on the team would be standing around," he continued. "And if a man works to get free and then seldom sees the ball — well, after a while he stops working. It's only human nature."

"I figure my job is to do what I've always done — bring the ball up, look for the open man and then, if he's not there, try to put the ball in the basket myself. And, of course, to play the tough defense."

While the Knicks have been



Walt Frazier

having their problems, the Boston Celtics have opened up a huge lead over New York in the NBA's Atlantic Division race.

"But the Celtics still haven't proved they can beat us in the playoffs when we've got everybody healthy," Frazier said. "They're handling us without too much trouble now because, with Reed out, we don't have anybody who can take over the middle and block shots. But nobody can convince me at this point that we won't win the playoffs again."

Asked about the fine play of the Milwaukee Bucks this season, Walter replied:

"To me, the Bucks are the same team they were last year, except this year they haven't had any big injuries. They were a good team then and they're a good team now. But they've got two problems they can't do much about."

"One is Oscar Robertson and the other is Bob Dandridge. Robertson is not a young man anymore and by the playoffs he's going to be tired. It happened last year and it will happen again this year."

"Dandridge isn't old and he certainly knows how to score. But at the same time he isn't what you'd call a power forward. He'll also be tired by the playoffs. A good team will exploit things like that and we're a good team."

Frazier even feels that some good has already come out of the injuries which sidelined Reed, Monroe and Lucas.

"Normally our bench wouldn't get this much playing time," Walt said. "But because some of our reserves have been forced into clutch situations, they've improved. Most fans might not see that right now, but rival teams are going to feel it in the playoffs."

Frazier, who has a mod apartment in New York where the pot calls the kettle chartreuse, also drives a Rolls-Royce.

"But I'm looking for something better," Walter said. "Well — maybe not better, but newer than the '65 I've got and definitely a convertible."



SPEAKING OUT

## Walt Frazier: Another Oscar?

MILTON GROSS

BALTIMORE.

The Knicks are a team in a hurry. When the bus transporting them to the airport and on to their third straight Eastern Division playoff victory over the Bullets was late, they chafed at the delay.

"Come on, Captain," somebody said to Willis Reed, "hustle us up some transportation."

"I'm not in charge of that detail," said Willis and he turned to Walt Frazier, who stood beside him in the rain, and said, "Clyde, steal us a bus."

Frazier feigned indignation. "Not me," said the Knick guard who so rapidly has begun to resemble Oscar Robertson as the NBA's best roundball quarterback, "I only steal small objects."

With all due deference to Frazier and Reed, for that matter, Clyde didn't steal a small object yesterday as the Knicks, 16 points ahead at one point, 10 behind at another, ran over the Bullets to win 119-116 for a commanding lead in the best-of-seven series that could end at the Garden Wednesday night. They bagged the big one and ran.

Willis with his 35 points, 19 rebounds, a key block of an Earl Monroe shot with 42 seconds left and the Knicks ahead 115-114, may have put the finisher on the Bullets.

"We can win it at home," said Reed, "and that's the way he want it—four straight."

Said Frazier, whose 26 points, 17 assists and some moves on the move with the ball which are impossible to believe: "They know they're in trouble. When we're 16 up and then 10 down and then we caught them, the pressure of our first two victories seemed to catch up with them. They couldn't shake us and they seemed to become dejected, as though they were saying to themselves, 'What can we do to win?'"

Apparently there was no answer, certainly not the way the Knicks, driven by Frazier in the back, bulwarked by Reed and Dave DeBusschere in the front, play the game as no other Knick team has ever played it.

There is no way to depreciate the contribution of any of the Knicks in what they have accomplished to this point. Surely not Bill Bradley, who hit 10 of his 12 field goal attempts as he scored 22. Or DeBusschere, who has enough bone chips floating around in his right ankle to sound like a dice cup, yet yesterday came up with 24 points, 15 rebounds and five assists.

But the truest perspective on the Knicks may be seen in retrospect in what could have been the key play of the exciting victory, a mistake by Frazier, backed up by the way Reed bailed him out. Which is the name of the game for the Knicks—helping out.

The ball had been passed to Monroe and as it came to him, Frazier turned his head away from the Pearl.

Reed virtually came out of nowhere, if one can imagine a 6-10 man being a wraith. "Monroe had already begun his move," said Willis, "and didn't see me at all. Imagine he was thinking about Clyde."

How could the Bullets not have had Reed and Frazier on their minds? Willis, with a half-dozen of the key rebounds down the stretch as the Knicks took the lead they were not to lose, again (113-111) on DeBusschere's 22-foot jumper with 2:23 on the clock. Frazier, with his career and the Knicks' playoff high of 17 assists and some snaky manipulations for goals.

Two baskets, for instance, particularly have to be described. On one Walt hung in the air as though defying gravity, displaying the magnificent body control which marks all the great ones, including Monroe. This time Earl was the victim, not the victor. As the Pearl came over and hit him, Frazier shifted the ball from one hand, on Monroe's side, to the other, away from him. He was hit and he hit, counting on a three-point play to climax an eight-point run which moved the Knicks from 99-108 to 107-108.

Less than four minutes later, Walt came up the middle again, penetrating deeply. He had his man beat when Wes Unseld picked him as Clyde launched himself up in the air. Houdini couldn't have managed the legerdemain any better. Frazier shifted the ball from his right hand to left, banked it off the board and it dropped clearly through the net.

"I had to bring back some of my Southern Illinois moves," said Walt, his large teeth gleaming in a self-satisfied smile. "Unseld was on my right, and when he moved up to get me, I was caught on the wrong foot. I had to shift that ball up there and let it go."

For a moment, it looked as though Frazier might have let too much go when he fouled Monroe on a shot with 35 seconds left, two points apart. "I thought I messed it up," he said. "I should have held him, but I thought I fouled him before the shot."

The Pearl missed both and then it was down to the last five seconds when Kevin Loughery shot and missed, and Reed grabbed the rebound.

"Keep me in there, Captain," said Frazier. And Reed said: "On our team, the ball belongs to Frazier. He just lets us play with it once in awhile."



FRAZIER



11/7/77

*Walt Frazier was the idol of New York Knick fans until the last two seasons, when the affair soured. Now he has a new home, if not yet a house, in Cleveland*

## Clyde, laughing Cavalier



Back in the Garden again, Clyde puts on a show.

The night brought back memories. The 19,694 in Madison Square Garden, the first capacity crowd since the Knicks' championship year of 1973, worked itself into a lather as the game seasawed through the fourth quarter and into overtime. Then, right on cue, Walt Frazier—"Clyde"—did his patented last-minute clutch number, just as he so often had. When his team's six-point lead suddenly shrank to three with 1:50 left, Frazier took the ball upcourt and went straight for the basket, spinning in a layup, drawing a foul and converting the free throw for a three-point play. Then, just to make certain, he leaped up on defense and deflected a pass to a teammate, and as the final seconds ticked away, raised his fists in triumph and grinned broadly. The crowd went wild. Another classic Frazier finish.

Except that for the first time in 11 seasons at the Garden, Frazier was dressed in an enemy uniform, and his vintage game—28 points, eight rebounds, five steals, four assists—produced a 117-112 victory for his new team, the Cleveland Cavaliers, over the New York Knicks, whom he had helped win NBA championships in 1970 and 1973. Seventeen days earlier the Knicks had sent the quintessential New Yorker off to Cleveland as compensation for signing 28-year-old free-agent Guard Jim Clemons.

Before the game Frazier admitted having butterflies—uncharacteristic for the original Mr. Cool. "I never thought to check when I'd be coming back to play in New York," he said. "I had no idea it would be this soon until I got a letter from a friend that said 'See you next week.' I thought, 'Wow, I'm not ready for that yet.'" The seven-time All-Star, once the cynosure of all New York, or so it seemed, had heard boos in the

Garden in the past two non-winning, non-playoff seasons, and he was not sure how the crowd would greet him. But even before his name was called in the introductions, the cheers swelled to a deafening pitch, and Frazier got a three-minute standing ovation. The cheers, the attention and then the game left Frazier ecstatic.

"I thought the ovation would go on all night," he said afterward. "Tonight I was the greatest. They still love me."

After the game Clyde's fans and friends filled his old haunts—Harry M's, P. J. Clarke's, Maxwell's Plum—waiting for Clyde to come celebrating, as he always had after a triumphant night. But this night Frazier was no more than a visitor to the city. After talking to reporters for nearly two hours he went straight to the apartment he still keeps on East 57th Street and—exhausted and alone—went to bed.

The next morning, as he was sauntering through LaGuardia Airport to catch the plane back to Cleveland, a man approached him and asked facetiously, "Aren't you Reggie Jackson?"

Frazier laughed. "Today I am." Then he caught himself. "But I'm not a New Yorker. I'm a Clevelanders."

He had with him half a dozen pieces of luggage, filled with whatever items from his legendary wardrobe he had been able to stuff into them. "Just casual things," he said. "Leathers, slacks, shirts, some shoes. No suits. And two furs, for when it snows. I want to be ready."

Left behind in New York: the burgundy-and-beige 1965 Rolls-Royce, which was being overhauled ("I wasn't sure how good the service would be out there," he said), the famous round bed with the \$3,500 mink spread, the pool table, the closetsful of clothes, not to mention the \$150,000 seven-room, five-bath 45th-floor co-op apartment.

Until he finds something to replace that layout, Frazier is living with Cavalier Center Jim Chones, his wife Elores and their 16-month-old daughter Kareeda in a four-bedroom split level in suburban Beachwood, 25 minutes from the Coliseum, which itself is some 25 miles

*continued*



ed the issue, which is a pity, because it is fundamental and profound: Are wild animals to be treated as individuals, with kindness, or as a resource to be harvested, like corn? The trappers are not cruel men. They love their dogs. But their concern is for the welfare of animal populations and not with Rocky Raccoon or Alvin Chipmunk. That is what has come out of numerous debates, such as one held recently in the Cleveland suburb of Avon Lake. The speakers might as well have addressed each other in Greek.

Speaking for Issue 2 was Bill Brown, a 53-year-old NASA research engineer. In 1975 he had tried unsuccessfully to get a leg-trap bill through the Ohio legislature, one of whose members asked him, "Do animals feel pain?" Because Ohio is one of 23 states whose constitution can be amended by petition, he took that route this year. The International Fund for Animal Welfare (the group fighting the baby harp seal hunt in Newfoundland), of which Brown is a member, contributed \$350,000 to the pe-

tition drive and campaign, and Brown and his wife Carol led the drive, getting the required 420,000 signatures. Now, in the Avon Lake United Church of Christ hall, Brown was saying, "If we win, fox trappers will lose some money, but it will encourage the invention of more humane traps. And we will be extending the pity and compassion we give to domestic animals to wild animals."

Clyde Simmerer, a state wildlife biologist, did not respond to Brown's statement. "These animals," he said, "are not endangered in Ohio. But their natural enemies are gone, the large predators. The alternative to trapping is crowded habitats, starvation and disease."

Brown replied, "I have found no scientific evidence that trapping is necessary to control populations. But I represent the cause of individual animals. They feel pain. Someone has to consider that, and I object to calling the killing of animals a harvest. It makes them sound like grains of corn."

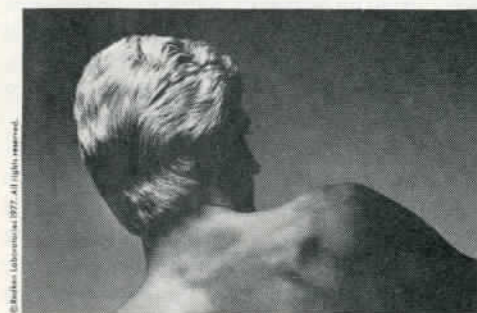
Simmerer responded, "I see no rea-

son why people shouldn't profit from trapping," thus—considering what had been passing for debate in Ohio—putting the logic of both sides on the line.

In the days following the debate, the campaign began heating up. One pro-trapping group distributed flyers from an organization called Kindness In Nature's Defense, one of which observed that "mosquitoes are part of nature's plan," and urged its readers not to kill them. Another said, "If you know people who just won't give up fishing even when you tell them it's not right to kill anything 'just for fun,' ask them to use artificial flies instead of living worms, which have feelings, too."

These, obviously, were scare tactics designed to link the Kindness organization to the anti-leg-trap people and to convince a wary electorate that if Issue 2 were to pass, fishing and hunting would be the next to go. The election was fast approaching. The voters of Ohio deserved less inflammatory material with which to make up their minds. **END**

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southeast of Cleveland in the town of Richfield. Chones, who barely knew Frazier, rescued him after three nights in a Holiday Inn.

Such gestures, plus the respect shown him by the young Cavaliers and Coach Bill Fitch, have made Frazier feel wanted for the first time in two years. Relaxing at the Choneses a couple of days after the game against the Knicks, he talked about his circumstances, accepting them without complaint but still not understanding the Garden boos or why the New York press had made him the whipping boy for the Knicks' failures.

"I guess the cool image started working against me," he finally said. "When we won, people said, 'Frazier's cool, he never shows emotion.' When we lost, they said, 'Look at Frazier, he doesn't care.' The whole team changed into a group of individuals. I was the star, so I got the blame." Frazier laughed. "I was damned if I did and damned if I didn't."

The problems began two seasons ago when Frazier missed 23 games with various injuries. "It was mind blowing," he said. "I was down and out and every time I picked up the paper I saw 'The Knicks are 4-1 without Clyde.'" Upon his return Frazier became almost reclusive, practicing yoga at home, changing his diet to include predominantly fruits and salads laced with wheat germ oil and powdered calcium, eating meat only on game days. Since then, he maintains, his mind and body have never been better conditioned.

But his once idyllic relationship with the press began to deteriorate. Last February he lost his starting job temporarily, then resigned the team captaincy. Reporters, fans, even his own teammates felt that he was sulking. "The way I play, it sometimes looks like I'm loafing," said Frazier, "but I want to win. I was unhappy, but it was because I was forced into keeping quiet. That's not me."

In training camp this season with the Knicks, Frazier was in shape and performing well. But on the day it was announced that Frazier was going to Cleveland, his backcourt mate Earl Monroe acknowledged that it was probably best for the team. "Maybe it isn't good for the rookies to have him around," said Monroe. "Maybe they should get rid of me, too."

There is no lingering bitterness on Frazier's part. "It was a perfect marriage,"

he says. "They got two championships and I got fame and fortune. What more could I do in New York?"

A senior team official did not feel so bad either. "We should have gotten rid of Frazier two years ago," he said. "If we still had him, we'd be the same team we were last year." The Knicks wanted to move Frazier badly enough to agree to assist Cleveland in paying his \$400,000 annual salary for the next three years—that in addition to paying Clemons \$275,000 a year.

The way things have worked out delights Fitch. "In my opinion Frazier is one of the five best guards ever to play the game," he says. "The worst that can happen is that Frazier will never beat me again. He is perfect for our game, which is a setup offense and team defense, the way the Knicks were. I have no doubts about him. You look at a classic Rolls-Royce with lots of miles on it and you know it doesn't want to be put away in a garage. He's my Rolls-Royce, and I think you'll see him rolling with the best for a long time yet."

Fitch says the first time Frazier practiced with the team "my assistant and I walked away feeling like we'd been to a coaching clinic. He showed everything he can do. Everything." Frazier's role is to steady the young Cavs and take charge in crucial spots, just as he did in the game at New York. Fourth-year Guard Fouts Walker is the ball handler—"I like that," says Frazier, "anybody gives me the ball I give it to Fouts"—while Clyde takes his man low and shoots off picks set by Forwards Campy Russell and Jim Brewer, using his classic haaang-in-the-air pullup jumpers.

He hit 19 points a game in the Cavs' first six games, right around his career average, playing just under 38 minutes. He will take points away from veteran shooting Guard Austin Carr and swingman Bingo Smith but his passing will probably mean more points for Russell, now hitting at a 22.3 clip. So far everyone is glad to have Frazier, and Fitch is convinced that he, Fitch, is a genius.

Not that the way has been totally smooth. "I hope I prove Fitch right," Frazier said before Thursday's game against Kansas City. But that night he made Fitch look like a dunce as the Cavs staggered through a 119-104 whipping by the Kings. Frazier's shooting was off in the first half, and in one 17-second stretch he committed two sloppy fouls. Fitch had

to sit him down. In the second half Frazier scored 11 points but was repeatedly burned on defense.

"Frazier looked like walking death to-night," said Fitch. "If he went out to-night he'd get mugged. By a one-armed cripple." But two nights later against Boston he was the old Clyde again, giving the Coliseum folks a 22-point show as the Cavs knocked off the Celtics 103-98.

By week's end Frazier still had hardly seen anything of Ohio except for the Coliseum, the airport and Chones' house. He had not been anywhere near a night-spot or downtown Cleveland. Such time as he had, he spent house hunting. "People in New York make Cleveland out to be Siberia," he was saying, "but I'm going to like it here. When I think about it, what is there in New York to miss? The traffic? The concrete? The hassles? The cost of living and the taxes are lower here. I'll save money. And I'm a different Clyde now. I'm not the guy who's into night-clubs every night. I like being by myself. I'm into nature now."

An attractive real-estate agent took him on a dizzying tour of houses and condominiums in suburbs like Beachwood, Shaker Heights, Lyndhurst and Pepper Pike, all of which are at least 25 minutes from the Coliseum and 45 from the airport. "But right near the freeway," she kept saying. "I can see I'm going to have to get me a chauffeur," said Frazier. She showed him a \$150,000 ranch house. "Couldn't get half my furniture in there," he said. Then another, on a one-acre tract. "I thought I'd be able to get some land, have some room. Man, 150 grand in Cleveland and this is all you get?" She suggested he might want to look at Senator Howard Metzenbaum's palatial home, a steal at \$550,000. "Three years. That's how long I plan to be here. Not a lifetime," said Frazier. Finally he looked at one of the area's plushest condominiums. "No closets," he said. "In New York I have a dozen closets. Couldn't get the round bed through the door." He was still smiling.

"Ah, but look at the view," she said, ushering him to a window overlooking magnificent red- and golden-hued rolling woods.

"You call that a view?" said Frazier. "I'm used to looking out on the greatest city in the world."

"Wa-alt," said the woman a trifle impatiently. "This is not New York."

"I'm hip," said Clyde.



## sports

# Surprise! Knicks emerge as quality product

By Phil Elderkin

Prior to the start of the current National Basketball Association season, you must have read a dozen times that the New York Knicks were going to be a second-rate product. It wasn't hard to believe. Dave DeBusschere and Jerry Lucas had retired, injuries ended Willis Reed's career, and Dean Meminger had been lost in the NBA's expansion draft.

There was talk that Wilt Chamberlain would be signed as a free agent to play center. But that's all it every was — talk. And there

## Change of pace

was an attempt by the Knicks to pirate 6ft. 11in. George McGinnis away from the ABA Indiana Pacers. But that move has been delayed for at least a year and possibly will never happen.

What's right with the Knicks is their coach — Red Holzman — who comes very close to being the best in the business. Holzman is no interview. He strings clichés together the way playground children string beads. The next time he explains his strategy to reporters after a close game will be his first.

But he is a genius at getting five men to play as a team, cutting down on mistakes, gearing his defense so that it creates his offense and knowing when to substitute.

With Reed and DeBusschere gone, the Knicks' scoring emphasis has shifted to their backcourt, where Walt Frazier and Earl Monroe between them have been good for roughly 45 points a game.

Frazier, at this particular time in his career, has no rival among NBA guards. He can bring the ball up court and, if the shot isn't there, hit the open man. Or he can penetrate or rebound or control the last five minutes of a game almost as well as Oscar Robertson used to.

Even his quick hands are the same — so fast they can remove the hubcaps from a speeding car.

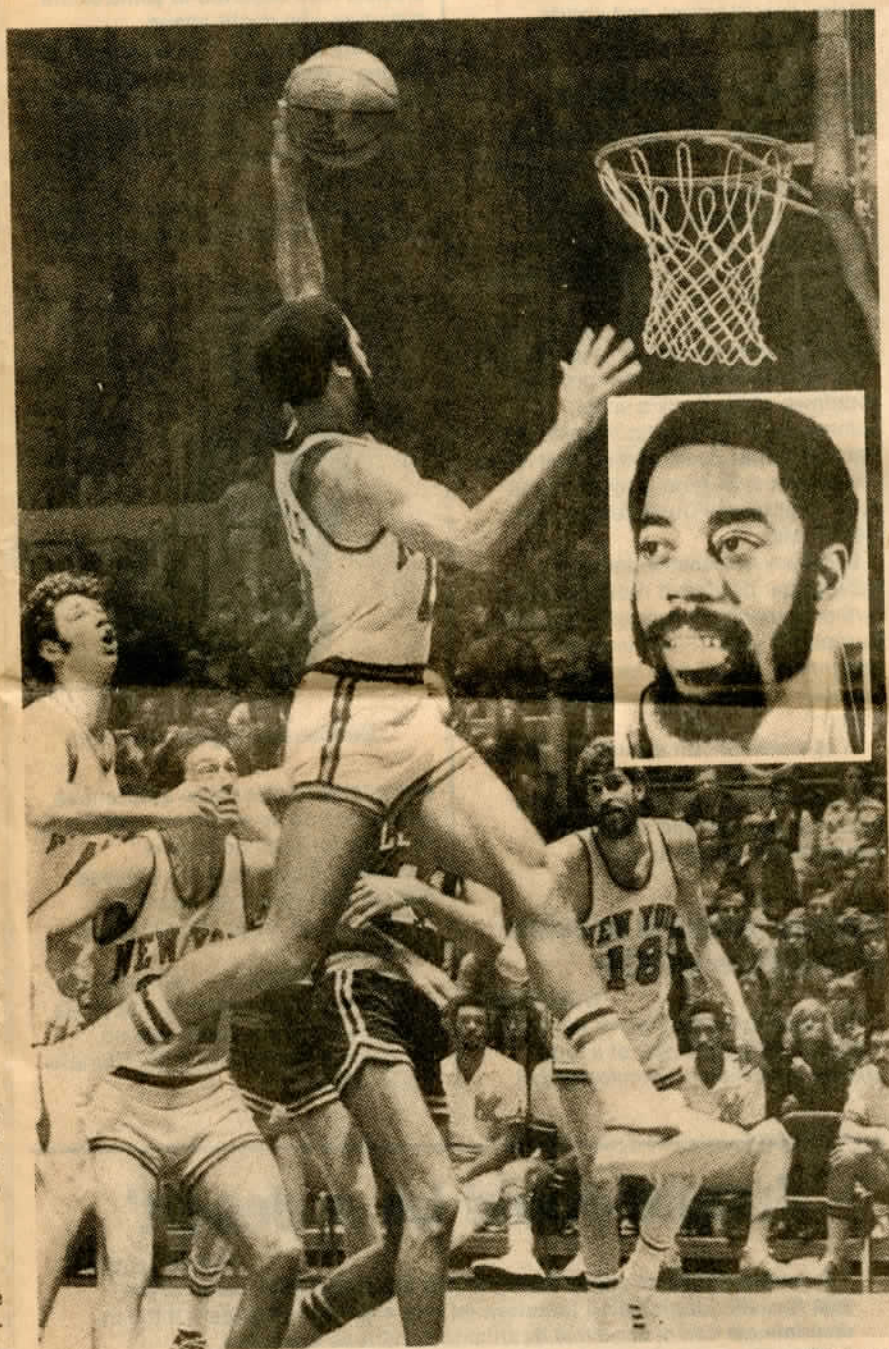
Frazier, has always been able to score. But this year Earl has taken his ho-hum defense and put teeth in it. Frazier and Monroe are literally a Rolls-Royce backcourt and have the wheels to prove it.

In fact, Walt hires two spaces in a Manhattan garage and parks

those next to him can open their car doors without scratching his.

Holzman's other three starters are center John Gianelli and forwards Phil Jackson and Bill Bradley.

Until this year, Gianelli has been known mostly for his inconsistency and lack of aggressiveness, particularly on the defensive board. And there is still no



AP photos

## Walt Frazier en route to the basket

powering centers like Kareem Abdul-Jabbar and Bob Lanier.

But when Gianelli blocks out, Jackson is often able to slip in and get the rebound. Bradley has also become more at home on the boards and his 15.2 scoring average is the third best on the club.

Holzman has also been getting terrific mileage from a bench that is talented but not really that experienced. Henry Bibby, the team's third guard, has done consistently well in pressure situations. And Harthorne Wingo and Mel Davis, up front, have provided a nice balance between scoring and rebounding.

"At first I thought it would take us longer to regroup as a team," Frazier explained. "Too many new guys and you affect the system — the tempo of the game. But Red is a cool guy. He has been pushing the right buttons and we've been winning. And when you start to win a lot of good things happen. Holzman has this strange intuition for almost always making the right moves at the right time."

Bibby put it another way.

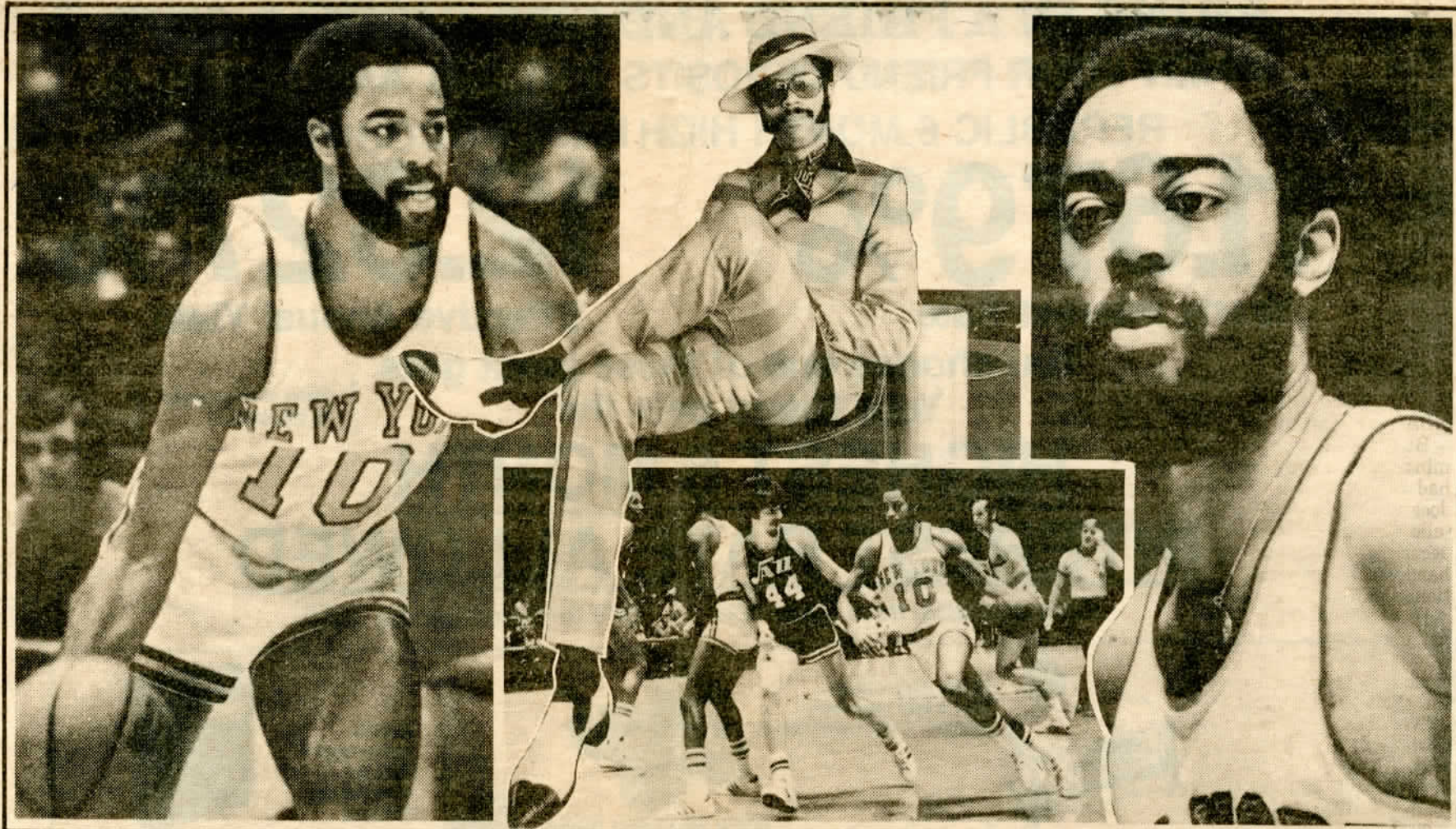
"My first two years with the club Red didn't coach this much. His veterans knew the system and he sort of let you learn from them," Henry said. "But ever since training camp he's been selling the young guys his concepts of team offense and team defense — and they've been buying. We practice longer and we go over the films of our games a lot more than we did, but I don't hear anybody complaining."

The Knicks, of course, are in a tough division. In order to make the playoffs they have to beat out either the defending world champion Boston Celtics or the most improved young team in the league — the Buffalo Braves.

At the one-quarter mark in the NBA schedule, New York was ahead of Boston and Philadelphia in its division, but trailing Buffalo.

The feeling here is that if Frazier and Monroe continue their super backcourt play, the Knicks have a chance to sell some post-season tickets.





Walt Frazier and his two roles in New York: A champagne guard, smooth and effortless, who didn't seem to perspire, and a cool Clyde, dressed in wide lapels and hat

# Walt Frazier's Nights to Remember

*Tomorrow night before the Knicks-Celtics game, Walt Frazier, who played for 10 seasons in Madison Square Garden, will be honored by the Knicks.*

By Pete Alfano

He never was in any hurry to leave. Besides, the Garden was as much Walt Frazier's home as the storied penthouse on the East Side with the revealing mirror above the bed and Rolls Royce in the garage. The Garden was more middle-class than posh, but cozy, and Frazier would dawdle after a game. Bars might be packed with Saturday night Romeos and Juliets, and the streets could be teaming with traffic, but the nights were long in New York and they would not really begin until Frazier turned out the light and locked the lockerroom door behind him.

First, there was the postgame ritual to attend to. He placed his feet in a tub of ice, never once flinching. Clyde took his time in the shower. He pampered himself with oils and powders. He dressed in the latest finery. If wide lapels and hats were in fashion, Frazier's wardrobe reflected it. When the look was casual and players wore jeans, his back pocket bore a designer's name instead of a patch.

He rendezvoused with his favorite person in front of a mirror where he meticulously combed every whisker on his chiny, chin chin.

Then he wrapped himself in a fur coat and made his exit to join a friend or special lady. More often than not he left with a smile. These were, as Frazier called them, festive times.

For 10 years it went on that way. Walt Frazier cultivated two roles in New York. Off Broadway he was a champagne guard on one of the NBA's most glamorous and written-about teams. He was smooth. Everything he did came effortlessly or at least that is what Frazier would have you believe. He did not seem to perspire.

He was young, available and well paid. None of that works against you in Manhattan. Women wanted to meet him. Men wanted to be like him. When someone suggested he was the black Joe Namath, Frazier thought it over and decided, "He's the white Walt Frazier."

"When people think of New York, they think of Walt Frazier," he said in a tribute to himself. But Frazier wore his ego as well as he wore his clothes. He was charming. Irrepressible. He was not saying all of that; Clyde was.

Frazier never tired of telling reporters how good he was and that did not particularly please his teammates. They objected to self-praise. They probably took him too seriously. Frazier knew he had to play to an audience whether it was the fans or a bunch of guys taking notes. Ask Frazier to say it again, and he would embellish anything he had said previously.

A couple of his teammates knew how to make Frazier's ego work for them. They would pump him full of praise in the final weeks of the regular season knowing he would read every newspaper account. Frazier's considerable talents could earn them a bigger playoff check.

Frazier not only liked reading about himself, he enjoyed looking at himself more. During one season, Sports Illustrated ran a cover photo of Frazier guarding Dave Cowens of the Celtics. Slick, glossy and in color. Frazier purchased a copy at an airport newsstand and tucked it into a manila envelope. On the plane ride, when he thought no one was looking, he slid the magazine out of the envelope and stared at the cover, admiring himself.

The Knicks of the early-and-mid-'70s were a team of celebrities—high-salaried, established players, who were known for their teamwork. Off the court they went separate ways. If 10 of them were in a hotel coffee shop, chances are they would be sitting at 10 tables. It was amusing to see Frazier and Dick Barnett sitting one stool apart at the counter without exchanging a word during breakfast.

Later, when Frazier turned to health foods, he would take a jar of honey from his carrying case and place it on the table.

The Knicks were humble in print, perhaps to a point of false modesty. Not Frazier. Well, not Clyde, anyway.

When Earl Monroe joined the Knicks in the 1971-72 season, there were rumors that Frazier might be traded. At best, people wondered how he would react to another all-star in the backcourt. If Frazier felt threatened, he kept it to himself. He and Monroe adapted. The way Frazier viewed it, Monroe's flamboyance complemented his own low key manner. "Earl's fire, I'm ice," he decided.

The Knicks and Bullets played many memorable postseason games often decided in the final minutes. If the Bullets had the ball, Monroe had it. And Frazier would be guarding him.

Thus, when Monroe joined the Knicks, Frazier assessed the trade this way: "Earl knows all our plays and when he came here, he brought all of theirs."

Frazier could back up most of what he said, too. He enjoyed having the outcome of a game in his hands. He did not mind taking the last shot. Every time. "Near the end of games," he once said, "you see a lot of the back of uniforms."

He was capable of sulking, though, if he did not receive the credit he thought he deserved. When the Knicks won their second championship in 1973, Reed—the gimpy-kneed captain—was named the most valuable player. Frazier was disappointed and it showed.

That was a side to him that rarely was seen.

Frazier enjoyed a long run in New York and he envisioned ending with fanfare instead of a rejection notice. The funny lines and harmless boasting eventually wore thin. Buildings take time to build but they are torn down in a day.

It was not Frazier's fault that Willis Reed and Jerry Lucas and Dave DeBusschere and Bill Bradley and Dick Barnett got older and retired. Frazier and Monroe were left with memories.

Without Reed and DeBusschere waiting threateningly under the basket, opposing guards scooted past Frazier without as much as an apology. His defensive reputation was built on steals and the steals were fewer and fewer. Frazier, who averaged 20 points in his prime, could not add the additional 10 that were now needed. He no longer could play up to his billing, to a reputation that was bigger than it should ever have been. Despite what was said and written, however, he was not quite that bad either.

"People build up heroes and the heroes get torn down the fastest," teammate Phil Jackson said. No one was cheering anymore. Reporters who once chronicled his exploits turned critics. The Knicks became losers and Frazier took the brunt of the fans' displeasure.

He became a recluse, speaking little to reporters or teammates. He retreated to his penthouse. He did not get around much anymore. He gave up the captaincy of the team, a symbolic gesture perhaps, but evidence he did not identify with his new teammates.

He claimed not to know this fellow named Clyde. His one-liners were, "No comment." Never, though, did Frazier become hostile. He was hurt, little-boy hurt. No, it was not his fault the others had retired, but he should have understood. He was willing to take the credit but not to accept the blame.

The final indignity was the trade—to Cleveland of all places. He suffered in silence, refusing interviews for three days. He finally was persuaded to call a Monday news conference. Like an old actor playing a favorite role, he gave reporters the best of Walt Frazier—a reunion with Clyde.

"It was a perfect marriage for 10 years," he said. "I got fame and fortune and the Knicks got two championships."

He lives in the Virgin Islands where there is little need for fur coats, an extensive wardrobe or a Rolls Royce. There are no reminders of the past. A disc jockey lives in his penthouse. Ray Williams plays in his position.

Frazier has returned to be honored on his night. He will listen to the tributes from those who traded him. He will revel in the applause from those who once booed him. He might recall that not long ago, every night was like this. Then, he will return to the Virgin Islands, a place Clyde would never go.



DEC 24 1977

# Yoga Given Big Assist by Clyde the Cavalier

By BILL NICHOLS

RICHFIELD, O.—The posh pad, mink coats and a Rolls-Royce have set Walt (Clyde) Frazier apart from the other millionaires in the National Basketball Association, but what really has him marching to the beat of his own drummer is his passion for the Hindu philosophy of Yoga.

Frazier, who was symbolic with the success of the New York Knicks and later blamed for their failures, no longer performs in The Big Apple, opting for the slower pace of Northern Ohio as an employee of the Cleveland Cavaliers. Although he has changed addresses, Clyde still practices Yoga on a daily basis.

"I'm not into it as I was," said Frazier, "because if you get too deep, you seem to mellow out. And that's what was happening to me. I lost my aggressiveness and was becoming a recluse."

"I'M STILL INTO it, but I do it to help me as an athlete."

The flamboyant Frazier, who has mellowed out in Ohio, has been practicing for two years and hopes someday to get so involved that he will visit a Guru in India. "That will come after I retire as a player," he added.

There are some 200 exercises in Yoga and Frazier practices about 20 on a daily schedule.

"Two years ago, I had a bad back and none of the doctors gave me any relief," recalled Clyde. "Then I found Yoga did help and eventually all the pain disappeared."

"That's the time when my troubles in New York began—with the press and everything."

"But that was then. Now, I feel fine in Cleveland. I'm relaxed here. Basketball is fun again," he added.

FRAZIER recalled how former New York teammate Butch Beard used to kid him about Yoga, but it didn't stop Clyde. "Butch gave me the business, but now he's into it, too," said Clyde.

The new floor leader of the Cavaliers said that Yoga is a way of not growing old. "What's great about it," he continued, "is you use nothing artificial that would harm your body."

"My body is very important to me as an athlete and with Yoga you find you stand taller and you're more alert."

Frazier, who does Yoga exercises twice daily, said he is not the swinging individual painted by the media. Then, how does Walt Frazier see Walt Frazier?

"Well, let me answer it this way," he said.

"When I was growing up in Atlanta, I was shy. Then when I made it with the Knicks, an image was created. In fact, when I'd go home to see my mother and sisters, they would treat me sort of strange. They would watch me, but didn't get close."

"Then one day I was talking to my mother and she said, 'Walter, you're really the same boy you've always been. You haven't changed at all.' And she's right, I'm still shy."

"OH, THE CLYDE will come out once in a while," he quipped, "but I'm shy."

"People, though, think I'm aloof. I'm not. I just like to size things up before I jump in."

Frazier's teammates on the Cavaliers warmed up to him immediately after his arrival in Cleveland about a week before the season began.

"I knew I still could play basketball," said Frazier, "so my biggest doubt coming to Cleveland was being accepted by the players. It turned out there was no problem. These are dedicated guys on this club."

Frazier has helped the Cavaliers get off to a good start this season with an 18-point-per-game average, court savvy and the ability to blend into a team that basically has been together for several seasons.

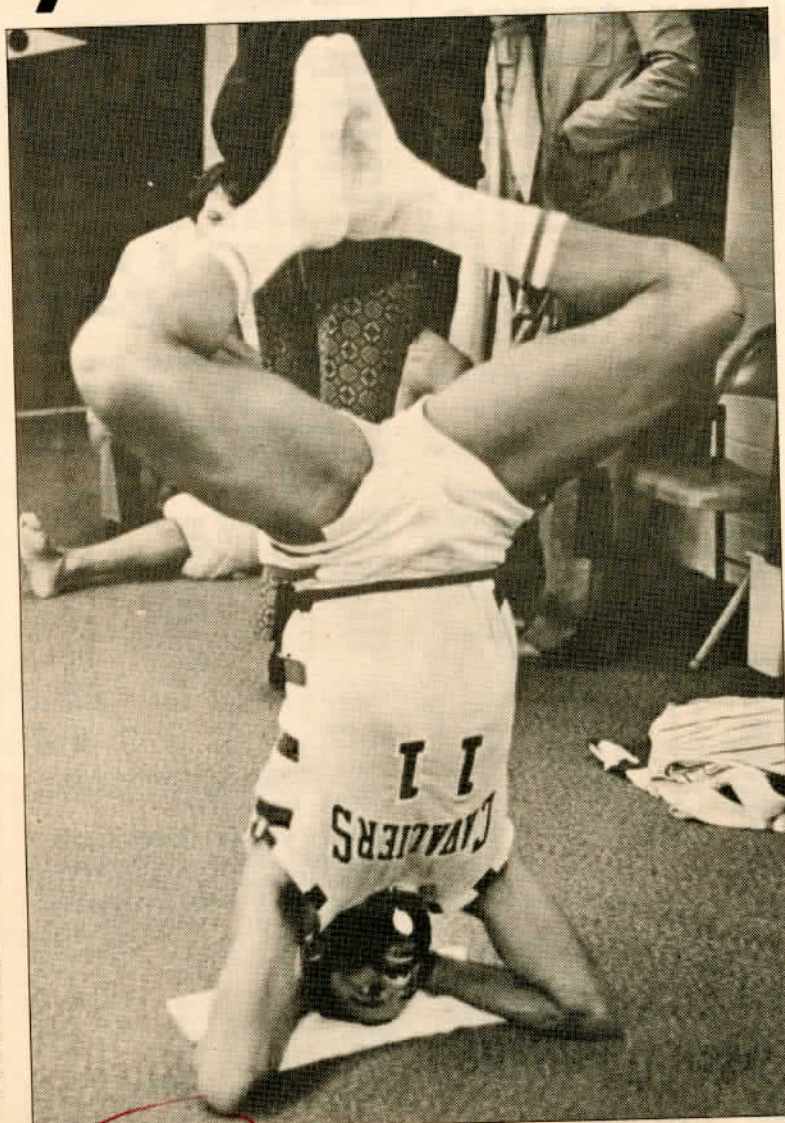
"Everything is great here and it can only get better," he predicted. "I know I can play better than I have been. We're winning and I'm not playing as well as I know I can."

FRAZIER, 32, calls this the twilight of his professional basketball career as he moves into his 11th NBA season.

"This is exciting for me," he added. "I'm in the right place at the right time. Cleveland's future is now and I enjoy being a part of it."

Frazier is excited and so are the Cavaliers' fans, who drive to the northern Ohio countryside to see him perform at the Coliseum, which is located in the cornfields somewhere between Cleveland and Akron.

A new environment along with the continuing practice of Yoga keeps Walt Frazier relaxed, but not too relaxed. "I don't want to mellow out too much," he concluded.



Walt Frazier . . . Pre-Game Concentration

## walt loses Clyde but finds himself

By STEVE GOLDSTEIN

HE LOOKS THE SAME, a bright smile twinkling in his black beard. The left foot, he says, is fine. He is enthusiastic about this, his last season. But he is different in so many ways.

In the twilight of a brilliant career, Walt Frazier has found himself.

"Money no longer makes me happy," he said softly. "Material things no longer make me happy. I know what I am as a person."

Is this Clyde Frazier speaking? Clyde Frazier of the full-length mink coat, the showy Rolls-Royce, the lavish apartment with the mirrored ceiling? Cool Clyde, with the best moves off the court as well as on?

Yes, yes and yes. Walt Frazier Jr., age 34, superstar, has gone through some changes. He is coming off a lost season, a season in which he played but 10 games for the Cleveland Cavaliers and was publicly accused of jacking it by his coach, Bill Fitch. The pain in his left foot is gone now, but not the memory. He wants to play, to play like the Clyde of old, to make everyone remember how good he was. But he has other things on his mind, too.

"I TELL MY FRIENDS," he said, "that the two best things that ever happened to me were coming to New York and leaving New York. Being in Cleveland, where you have a lot of time to sit and think, you really get to know yourself. In New York, I was up here." He raised a hand high above his head. "Cleveland was a come down, it brought me down to reality. I think right now I just want to help other people, particularly kids, because they made me what I am. My life is in order. I can go on helping other people."

Frazier paused, uneasy with this outburst of humility. He is in New York to take part in Give Something Back Day, an event sponsored by the National Basketball Players Assn. Tomorrow, at the National Tennis Center in Flushing Meadow Park, the players will run a clinic for the kids and stage their own version of an All-Star game. Now, Frazier, dressed in a pair of white slacks and a blue dashiki, patiently sat in the Players Assn. offices at Columbus Circle and answered questions. He said he had been playing a lot of tennis to get in shape. He can run without pain.

"Last year, when I got to camp I could hardly walk after practice," Frazier said. "I'm feeling pretty good now. I'm coming in like a rookie, I feel enthusiastic. But unlike a rookie, I know what to expect."

Fitch is gone, hired by the Boston Celtics. Frazier hasn't spoken with the new coach, Stan Albeck, a former assistant with the Lakers. "I know nothing



Frank Russo/Daily News

Money no longer makes Walt Frazier happy

about him," Frazier said. "My attitude is I don't care who the coach is. I follow the rules. I'm playing for myself."

But Frazier didn't enjoy playing — what little he did — for Fitch.

"The problem was, when he traded for me, I was the greatest," Frazier said. "After I got hurt, I wasn't the greatest. Once, I was sitting in the whirlpool, trying to ease the pain in my foot. He walked in the room, looked at me and turned his head away. He never spoke to me about it."

"You didn't get along with him?"

"He didn't get along with me," Frazier quickly replied. "Regardless of what I did with Fitch, I was going to play the first and third quarters. He used me

wrong. When the game was on the line, in the last four or five minutes, he never put me in."

"I know I've lost something, but I can be a good player if I'm used right. I feel if I play 22-25 minutes, I should score 13 or 14 points. I can't say anything about assists because I'm not getting the ball as much."

There was a time, not so long ago, that Frazier could not be denied the ball. With the Cavs, he would be without the ball for two or three minutes at a stretch.

"That's new to me," he said. "Running set play, shooting behind picks. I was used to running and putting it up. Now I'm like the designated hitter. You're not part of the action. I've got to find different ways of getting into the flow of the game. Otherwise I'm just jogging up and down the floor."

"But this style is good. It's saved me. I probably can't go back to the other way."

FRAZIER FOLDED HIS HANDS together, the hands that produced so much magic in the Garden, and the big championship ring glinted in the light. There were two championships here, the ring is from the last one. "You know," he said, "I remember 1969 as yesterday, but 1973 is so vague to me. Maybe because '69 was the first." And then he was talking about being the complete player and how he wanted to be remembered that way, and how his former team, the Knicks have floundered.

"Whether I have a good season or not," he said. "I feel I've had a great career. If I only average five points a game, I won't be unhappy. How many guys become superstars in New York? I went the whole spectrum, man."

Frazier lives in St. Croix, the Virgin Islands, now, the result of a vacation he took in March with his 12-year-old son, Walt 3d. It has made him even more introspective.

"In St. Croix I wear shorts and T-shirts all the time," Frazier said. "And I drive a jeep. The Rolls is here in New York. I'll be here for four or five days and I don't even know if I'll use it."

"I'll live there after I'm done playing, but I'll travel around for WF Sports, recruiting college players. I don't want to devote too much time to making money. I want to make money and relax—keep a happy medium."

He was asked if he was set for life financially.

"I've got money, but I've cut down on my spending. You may not believe this, but since I was traded from New York a year and a half ago, I haven't bought any clothing."

"I think," he said with a smile, "the people who were sorriest when I was traded were my tailor, my furrier and my shoemaker."

Guess again, Clyde, guess again.

DAILY NEWS, FRIDAY, AUGUST 10, 1979





## Frazier speaks out

*Mystery Man eager to play, discusses past, blasts Fitch*

By DOUG CLARKE

Well, The Man's back. Says he wants to play some ball, too. He walked into the Cavaliers' office today, shook hands for the first time with coach Stan Albeck and everything was cool. Surely, Judge Crater cannot be far behind.

For the past two years people have been working on mysteries without any clues as to the whereabouts of one Walt ("I'm no longer Clyde") Frazier.

**That he is here is news. It's a start, a beginning, a jumping off point, anyway.**

Last year, Walt Frazier played 12 games. Count 'em. Twelve games. If he wasn't on the bench, which was seldom, he was hiding in the whirlpool — or in New York, or at his house in Aurora.

An enigma, they called him. He had a bad foot, he said. Bill Fitch intimidated it was in his head. In time, the fans' questions of "Where's Clyde?" changed to "Who cares?"

**"He (Fitch) said he would punch me. I told him to go ahead. We didn't fight, but we came close."**

— Walt Frazier

What a way to go out. The classiest guard of the 70s, the man who made those wonderful Knick teams go, was leaving the game without a whisper of class. People would say, "He tokened it the last year."

Yesterday, Walt Frazier sat in the New York office of his agent Irvin Weiner and talked on the phone with The Press on many subjects — his injury, 'tokening it', Fitch, last season and his goals.

His voice conveys sincerity.

"Listen," he says, and now it is evident that Frazier is eager to tackle the ghosts, to dispel the shadows of doubt.

**"There were rumors that I didn't want to play last year. That was ludicrous. I was injured. Period. If I didn't want to play this year I could say, 'I can't play. I'm hurt.' And they'd still have to pay me. That's a plain legal point. But it's not going to be that way because I want to play."**

"The people in Cleveland think I'm arrogant. I do like my privacy and I don't hang out with the guys, that's true. But it wasn't out of any arrogance. I just felt out of it.

"I would be in a whirlpool before every game and writers would come in and ask Fitch, 'How's Walt?' Hey, I was right there. Why didn't they ask me? I'm not

the kind of guy to defend myself so I stayed out of it. I let Fitch tell his side of things."

The problems between Fitch and Frazier began two years ago, when the Cavs were about to play the Knicks in the playoffs. Frazier had just injured his foot and couldn't play. The Knicks won the series in two straight games.

Fitch, meanwhile, was hinting to the papers that Frazier was dogging it, that he wasn't really hurt that bad. Fitch's comments cut Frazier deeply.

**"No, it didn't make me feel worse. I couldn't feel worse because no one felt worse than I did about being injured. I wanted to play against the Knicks, to beat them in The Garden,"** says Frazier.

Then came The Portland Incident. On a West Coast swing early last season, Frazier, who had reinjured his foot in San Diego, told trainer Charlie Strasser he felt well enough to play against the Trail Blazers. At the time, the Cavs were one player over the limit. Fitch put Footsie Walker on the injured reserve list.

"The day of the game, my foot felt awful. I told Charlie to tell Bill I just couldn't play. He hit the ceiling," says Frazier.

The ceiling was in the locker room and Fitch, sources say, told Frazier to step

outside into the hallway.

"He said he would punch me. I told him to go ahead. We didn't fight, but we came close," says Frazier.

After that, the bottom fell out. Feelings between the two degenerated into open mistrust — if not total animosity.

"The problem I had with Bill was that he would sit down and talk to me, tell me one thing, and then go to the newspapers and say something entirely different.

"It was like he was lyin' to my face. I lost all respect for him," says Frazier.

**"I don't think it was just Walt Frazier. Bill doesn't hit it off with anyone. He wasn't prejudiced against me. I think he would have done the same thing with any player."**

"It was a long season."

He's hoping this one might be a little different.

"I'm looking forward to playing. I'm always optimistic this time of year. If everyone stays healthy, we should do okay. Albeck seems like a nice guy."

After spending most of the summer at his house in the Virgin Islands, he says he's in top shape.

Please turn to Page C 5



...or Howard Cosell —  
or wrong — cannot be ignored.  
Baltimore Colts have spent  
st year trying to dispel an er-  
us report concerning Joe  
ngton, a running back of no  
ability. Since both the Colts  
ashington will be here Sunday  
t the Browns, it might help to  
ne air once more.

**Day night football aficionados  
call Cosell expounding on the  
for Washington wearing gog-  
a game against New England  
ago this weekend.**

with the halfback gaining 112  
returning kickoffs, plus rush-  
53, adding another 41 on  
and scoring two touchdowns,  
ngton was on camera most of

ceiving, and finished second to the  
Browns' Keith Wright in AFC kick-  
off runbacks.

In th  
Washing  
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Jack  
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Adams  
healed,  
can star

Sunday. The injury  
back to Balti

## How they scored

Fourth Inning

Detroit — Terminal doubled, Morales doubled.

## Walt Frazier speaks

Continued from Page C 1

"I feel great. The foot is fine. I spent the summer in the water; sailing, snorkling, stuff like that. It's a great place. I did a lot of jogging on the beach. When I retire, that's where I'm going to live."

This summer, when Nick Mileti was shopping for a coach, Mileti told Frazier he wanted to talk to him. Frazier flew up. Mileti had a message for Frazier. The message was: Go out with class, Walt. Do it right. Make 'em remember you.

"I felt great about that," says Frazier. "I was delighted that the owner of the team showed concern over me. I listened to what he had to say."

Today, this minute, Walt Frazier has it in his mind to go out of the NBA in style. To be, even if it is just for 20 minutes a game, Clyde Cool one more time.

"What I want," says Frazier, "is to change their conception of me. I want them to remember Walt Frazier, the basketball player."

19 years for the hit, taught by experience and patience it would somehow arrive, sobered by the realization it would be harder to

World Series instead of lose it."  
Yastrzemski's hit — off Jim Bea-  
tie, trivia fans — came long after  
the actual game was decided. The  
Red Sox had built up an 8-2 lead  
to on to win 9-2. Jim Rice  
irleson each had two RB.  
Boston attack.

however, belonged to  
ame was interrupted so  
presented a plaque. He  
teammates, his parents,  
And he thanked Manager  
er and owners Haywood  
d Buddy Leroux, who all  
lustily.

**pennant races**

as remained one in the



## VIEWS ON SPORT

# Recalling Walt Frazier: Style on Court and Off



YOUNG FRAZIER, STAR OF 1967 N.I.T.

With Walt Frazier every move had a meaning. There was a beauty and a balletic style in the way he played basketball and the way he used his body. Frazier conveyed his style with anticipation and his deception. Except for his flashing eyes, the expression on his bearded face was an austere blank. He did things quickly and quietly, was seldom ruffled, rarely worked up a sweat and never disputed an official's call. But when he didn't like the way things were going he would have an "injury," and let it all calm down while he lay on the court, "recuperating."

Frazier traveled a long road, from the Atlanta schoolyards where he earned nickels and dimes shooting basketball with the bigger kids, to a \$400,000 annual salary. Off the court he was a fashion advertisement. They called him Clyde and they said he was New York, although he was never in New York before the 1967 National Invitation Tournament. He quickly conquered. He danced on the court when his Southern Illinois won the tournament. Later, he danced on the court when his Knicks won National Basketball Association championships in 1970 and 1973.

He controlled the game using his superb body to superb ends. He was the leading scorer, the leading defender and the leader in cool. Willis Reed, the team captain, said, "The ball belongs to Frazier; he just lets us play with it — sometimes."

In his career — 10 seasons with the Knicks and two-plus with the Cleveland Cavaliers — he played 825 regular-season games, scored 15,581 points, had 4,830 rebounds and 5,040 assists. His career scoring average was 18.9. Eight of his 10 Knick seasons ended in the playoffs. Seven times he was an all-star. On Saturday night before the Knick-Celtic game he will be honored at Madison Square Garden, where he ruled the court and delighted the fans for so many years.

## THE DISCOVERY OF A FUTURE STAR

By EDDIE DONOVAN

small-college team with Frazier as its leader. The Salukis came to Madison Square Garden to play in the 1967 National Invitation Tournament. When the New York press caught a glimpse of Frazier's game, surely, the publicity would follow. The cat was out of the bag.

We hadn't discovered Frazier during the N.I.T. We knew about him for a long time, waiting, watching and hoping for three years. Following his performance in the N.I.T., we thought we might never get our chance.

He did it all in the tournament's championship game. Southern Illinois trailed by 13 at the half. And that's when it happened. Frazier scored, stole passes, rebounded and Southern Illinois beat Marquette, 71-56. We would have to sweat it out when the draft came.

Ours was the fifth pick that season. Detroit opened the draft by selecting Jimmy Walker. Next up was Baltimore, a team very much in need of a guard. The Bullets selected Earl Monroe (not a bad choice). Chicago chose Clem Haskins and Detroit took Sonny Dove, giving us the opportunity we had been waiting for. We knew right then that we were on our way.

Frazier's anticipation, his sense of always knowing where the ball was and his ability to cut off the lane were the keys to the defense of Southern Illinois. He would do the same for us.

From the first day of camp it was obvious we had something special. He wasn't the type of player who would go out and just score. Walt took pride in his defense and always found the open man. He had a special, quiet charisma. You knew when he was on the court.

And so did the opposition.

Eddie Donovan is general manager of the Knicks.

## MAKING DEFENSE INTO AN ART FORM

By EARL MONROE

**W**HEN I first came to the New York Knickerbockers in November 1971, I was rather apprehensive about coming to the one team that I had deemed an enemy. One of my apprehensions was how I would fit into the backcourt of the Knicks. They already had, in my mind, a really formidable backcourt. First, there was Dick Barnett, who I thought was the steadying force.

Then there was Clyde.

Clyde was different. Clyde seemed to take all the risks. Dick was steady. Clyde made defense a national pastime. Defense was a part of the game that was less glorious and less satisfying than offense. It is to Clyde's credit, as flamboyant as he was off the court, that he took defense, a non-glamorous part of the game, and made it an art.

We really didn't get to play together that much until my second season with the Knicks. Even though he was already considered a great player, Clyde outdid himself in 1972-73. I've learned that one can develop respect for another's ability when you see each other day in and day out. Clyde's game seemed to rise to the occasion of every game we played. He did some amazing things, his defense seemed to get better, his offense was unique.

By the end of the season we were rolling, we beat a tough Washington team in the playoffs,

## OPPONENT'S VIEW

By RED AUERBACH

**P**REPARING to play Walt Frazier was always extremely difficult because he was close to being unstoppable as a one-on-one player. He could go to the hoop with either hand, and he also liked to take one dribble and go up with a jump shot or use a screen for a jumper. His rate of success with both maneuvers was so great that there simply was no formula against him except hard work and luck.

Frazier had the reputation as a great defensive player because he was so smart, had great anticipation and outstanding peripheral vision. Yet, his assignment was generally to take the other team's weaker offensive guard, leaving Earl Monroe or Dick Barnett the job of taking the tougher man. But this was excellent strategy since Frazier's ability to help out resulted in innumerable steals, and he always had the ability to make the big defensive play in crucial situations.

Walt Frazier was unquestionably one of the

great guards of his era. He was a premier player because he understood that basketball is a team game and he used his abilities within a team context. As a result, the Knicks were winners. He did not have great speed, but when the moment called for it, he was very tough to catch. He was an outstanding pure shooter who hardly ever forced a shot because he understood what the Knick system would give him and played within those limits.

In looking back on the great Knick teams of the early 70's, it is often difficult to separate the individual players — Reed, DeBusschere, Bradley, Monroe, Frazier, Barnett — were all crucial to the Knicks' success. But what stands out about Frazier is that no matter how furious the action or how tense the situation, he was always Mr. Cool, always seeming above the pressure.

Red Auerbach is president and general manager of the Boston Celtics.

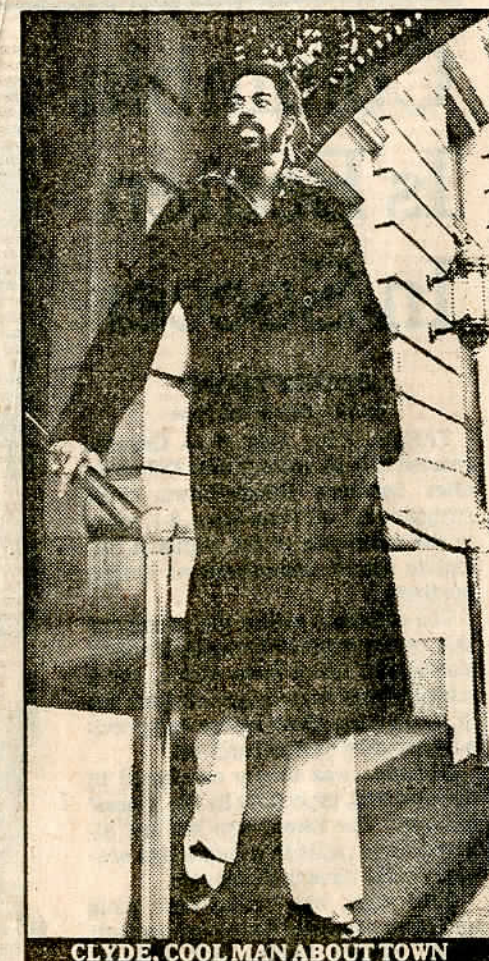
## CLYDE OVER THE YEARS

By PHIL JACKSON

**T**HE basketball moved around the perimeter methodically. I moved up next in the sequence of a play. The ball never reached me. A honey-toned forward guarding me blew by and scored an easy hoop for the Salukis. The next two minutes saw two more steals and a close National Collegiate Athletic Association Division II semifinal game between the University of North Dakota and Southern Illinois University was over. I am no genius at making predictions, but as a young college player I knew I had played against an exceptional athlete.

My next contact with Walt Frazier came two years later. Following an outstanding N.I.T., which Southern Illinois won with Frazier getting the most valuable player award, Walt was the first draft-choice of the Knicks. I was chosen in the second round. We roomed together in the training camp. Our relationship, separated by vast social and geographical distances, was a slow journey toward friendship and respect.

We shared rookie problems: an unhappy team, spotty playing time, road-trip mishaps. The next season we bloomed as a team and as players. While I missed 30 games of the season and the whole next season because of an injury,



CLYDE, COOL MAN ABOUT TOWN

the Knicks became champions and my former roommate became Clyde, a star.

Events, told too often, had brought together a team, coach and 19,000 magic-making fans that changed the N.B.A. The championship of the 1970 Knicks was a drama no movie could top. Game seven, with Willis Reed on an injured leg and moving like Long John Silver, clinched Walt's celebrity. He scored 36 points, had 19 assists, seven rebounds and a number of steals. It was the most exciting sporting event I've ever witnessed.

Clyde's star rose rapidly following that championship season, with an agent, cool looks, fine clothes, and a great team for a cast. Basketball buffs, who perennially argued the Robertson versus West case, began to understand there was another top dog at guard.

The next five years there was no other player as great with the ball in the closing moments of a tight game. In one classic Knick-Celtic play-off game, on Easter Sunday in 1973, he scored 25 points in the fourth quarter and the two overtimes to rally the Knicks to a victory. It was a work of art. He went at the whole Celtic team, on the break, with a screen, or one-on-five.

I have an image of Clyde that must have happened dozens of times. He is dribbling the ball, as cool as ice, knowing he is in control — just letting the situation develop in front of him. He's holding off the guard defending him as he looks over his shoulder at the clock and then at his teammates moving to free themselves. He glides surely to his spot, makes a move, turns, shoots, — the game is won. Then there is the first expression of pleasure, a raised fist, a yell, an ear-to-ear grin and the race to the victors' locker room.



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By EDDIE DONOVAN

**W**E always knew that the team with the best defense would develop into the team with the best record in the N.B.A. With Walt Frazier, the best defense would not be far behind. For a while, Walt was our well-kept secret. We knew what his capabilities were. He played for Southern Illinois at a time when the Salukis were not noted for basketball. There was a possibility, we thought, that Frazier would go unnoticed. But no team with Walt Frazier would go unnoticed.

Southern Illinois became the country's No. 1

You knew when he was on the court. And so did the opposition.

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By the end of the season we were rolling, we beat a tough Washington team in the playoffs, and against Boston, Clyde carried the team to the final against Los Angeles.

Clyde had a tremendous series against L.A., and we won the championship. I am happy I had an opportunity to play both with him and against him. For years to come, there always will be comparisons made, but there will never be another Walt (Clyde) Frazier.

I have but one bone to pick with Clyde: He rode the crest of the seas and left me with the TITANIC.

Earl Monroe of the Knicks played the backcourt with Walt Frazier for seven seasons.

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the Knicks became champions and my former roommate became Clyde, a star.

Events, told too often, had brought together a team, coach and 19,000 magic-making fans that changed the N.B.A. The championship of the 1970 Knicks was a drama no movie could top. Game seven, with Willis Reed on an injured leg and moving like Long John Silver, clinched Walt's celebrity. He scored 36 points, had 19 assists, seven rebounds and a number of steals. It was the most exciting sporting event I've ever witnessed.

Clyde's star rose rapidly following that championship season, with an agent, cool looks, fine clothes, and a great team for a cast. Basketball buffs, who perennially argued the Robertson versus West case, began to understand there was another top dog at guard.

The next five years there was no other player as great with the ball in the closing moments of a tight game. In one classic Knick-Celtic play-off game, on Easter Sunday in 1973, he scored 25 points in the fourth quarter and the two overtimes to rally the Knicks to a victory. It was a work of art. He went at the whole Celtic team, on the break, with a screen, or one-on-five.

I have an image of Clyde that must have happened dozens of times. He is dribbling the ball, as cool as ice, knowing he is in control — just letting the situation develop in front of him. He's holding off the guard defending him as he looks over his shoulder at the clock and then at his teammates moving to free themselves. He glides surely to his spot, makes a move, turns, shoots, — the game is won. Then there is the first expression of pleasure, a raised fist, a yell, an ear-to-ear grin and the race to the victors' locker room.

For all the great moments and basketball joys, I think the most pleasure I've had in knowing Walt is his growth as a man. The past few years, the star trip over or under control, he began living with the same measured pace with which he played basketball.

Clyde's public star may have come to the end of its life. But it is not one bit sad because, on another dimension, there is a rising light in the private life of Walt Frazier.

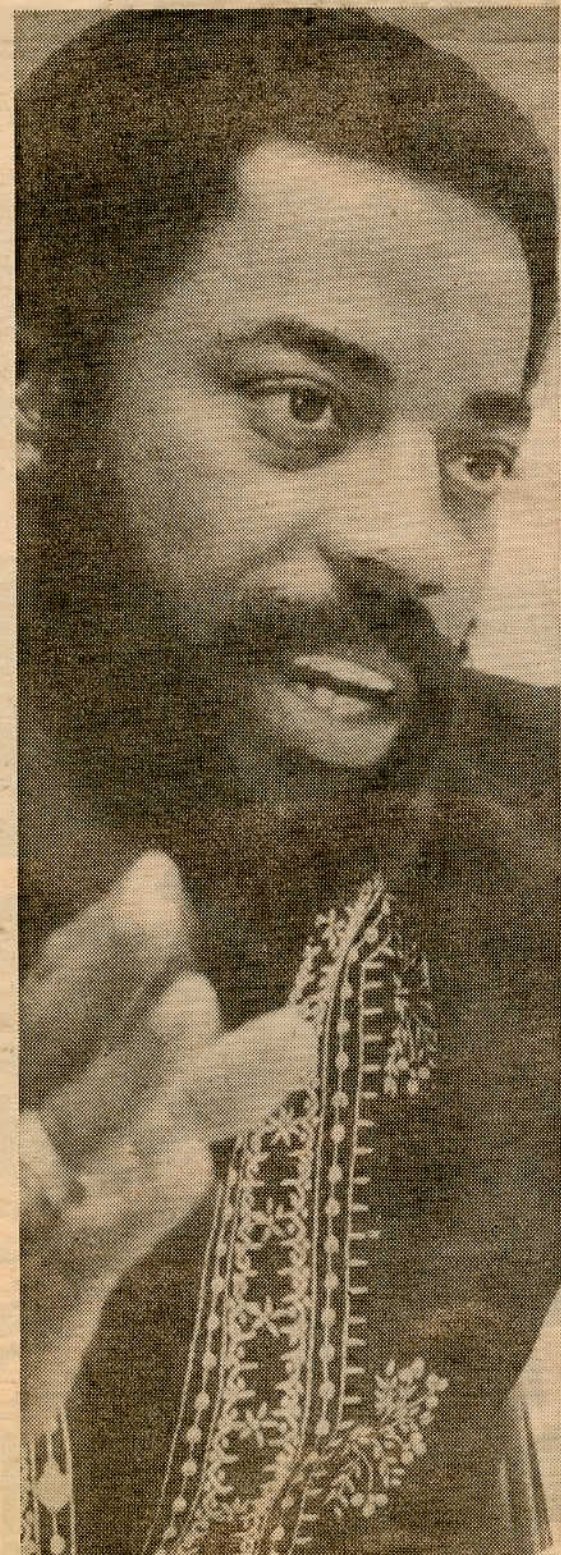
Phil Jackson is assistant coach of the New Jersey Nets.



They called him Clyde and they said he was New York. "The ball belongs to Frazier," said Willis Reed, "he just lets us play with it — sometimes."



Dec 1979



Walt Frazier — returns to scene of former glory

# Clyde, star of golden era, returns for final curtain-call

By BILL VERIGAN

**T**HE NBA draft in 1967 was not loaded with talent. A general manager had to go into it praying for a choice that would not prove embarrassing in years to come. Jim Walker, Earl Monroe, Clem Haskins and Sonny Dove were already gone when Eddie Donovan called out Walt Frazier, two words that altered the course of the Knicks for more than a decade.

During the ensuing years, he became a symbol of the Knicks' success. There were other symbols, to be sure. Willis Reed, the captain, symbolized brute courage, Dave DeBusschere unselfishness, Bill Bradley brains. However, Frazier represented the confidence and swagger of the team. Frazier became Clyde and Clyde became the Knicks. He was Rolls Royces and fur coats and penthouses. He was a winner.

What Joe Namath was to the Jets, Walt Frazier was to the Knicks. And like Namath, Frazier wound up getting blamed in great part when the glory years ended and his team declined.

**HOWEVER, THE BOOS** of those later years have been buried for a celebration on Saturday night in Madison Square Garden to honor him in retirement. Only the cheers from his 852 games and two NBA championships with the Knicks will echo through the place, raising up the memories.

He was a loner. He tried marriage and had a child when he was still a kid himself, a Saluki at Southern Illinois University. Probably, he could not get close enough to anyone to be a family man.

The first season in New York was spent in the aloofness of a midtown hotel. He was not pleased with the way his career started, and he pondered about his game a great deal. Another guard, Earl Monroe of Baltimore, had virtually clinched recognition as rookie of the year before Frazier cranked up his act in the middle of the season.

Their careers would intertwine through the years. One of their most memorable moments had to be in the opening game of the 1969 playoffs. That game was a duel that both Frazier and Monroe can savor. It served as an omen of what was to come in the ensuing seasons. Frazier had 26 points (on 61% shooting), 11 assists and seven rebounds in 47 minutes; Monroe had 32 points, three assists and three rebounds in 40 minutes.

They played many a great game against each other; they later played many a great game with each other.

However, the game that Frazier called "the top of the world" is best remembered for the performance of another player, Willis Reed. "The top of the world" was reached when the Knicks won their first champ-

ionship in 1970 against Los Angeles in the seventh game.

Reed was not expected to play. He was crippled. Fragile knees supported his mighty body. However, two minutes before the game began, he trotted onto the court to a booming ovation, then hit his first two shots. His point well made, he did not have to do any more. However, Frazier remained to play the game of his life.

**HE SCORED 36 POINTS** and handed out 19 assists (still a Knick playoff record) against the Lakers and their great backcourt, Jerry West and Gail Goodrich. Reed has gotten the credit for providing the inspiration, but Frazier provided the rest, giving the Knicks their first title in 24 seasons of trying.

Before the next championship in 1973, Monroe joined the Knicks, and the two of them, Clyde and the Pearl, became the solid gold backcourt. One by one, the other players from the championship years drifted away until only they remained.

Triumph was replaced by mediocrity. Journeymen and selfish superstars replaced champions. The Knicks decayed. Someone had to be blamed, and that someone turned out to be Frazier. Like Namath, he grew old and injuries overtook him. He came out of his shell less and less often. Stony silence replaced his smile after the mounting losses. He would sit crosslegged contemplating blank space. He sought to regain what he had lost with health foods and yoga, but he couldn't bring back his youth or the players that once surrounded him.

Not long after Reed returned as coach, Frazier was sent into the snowy exile of Richfield, Ohio, to play for the Cavaliers. Reed and Frazier were so different that they probably never understood each other. In the days when they played together, Reed once said that "the ball belongs to Clyde. He only lets us play with it once in a while." It could have been a compliment or a cut.

The injuries tracked him down and followed him to Richfield, and after spending most of last season on the injured list, he received the final cut this season.

**ANYONE WHO FORGETS** what he once was need only flip through the pages of the Knicks' record book. He was twice named the best defensive player in the league and was an all-star nine times. Here are a few of the club career regular-season records he still possesses: Most games (759), total minutes (28,995), field goals attempted (11,669) and made (5,736), free throws attempted (4,017) and made (3,145), assists (4,791), points (14,617). His playoff records are even more impressive, including averages of 6.4 assists, 7.2 rebounds and 20.7 points.

FEB 14 1970

## Frazier 'Could Steal Hubcaps from a Moving Car'

By PHIL ELDERKIN



**WALT FRAZIER** and Willis Reed, acknowledged sartorial sharpies of the Knicks, are fitted for seal fur coats.

NEW YORK, N. Y.—"Hey, man, you gotta be kidding," exclaimed one of Walt Frazier's friends in the lobby of the Marriott Motor Hotel in South Philadelphia. "Man, those threads are too much!"

Frazier, the All-Star guard who plays for the New York Knicks, was about to leave for a pro basketball game at the Spectrum. If he didn't stop traffic with his black seal-skin coat, he was sure to trap a few tourists with an eight-button suit, bell-bottom pants, and patent-leather shoes with gray silk uppers and buttons up the side.

Frazier has this thing about clothes. He dresses the way he feels. On this particular night he looked like the menu in a Chinese restaurant with overtones of the NBC peacock.

Talk about Ken Harrelson's wardrobe. Frazier spends more money on scarves. And when he wears a necktie, it's as wide as the New Jersey Turnpike.

"I guess my big interest in clothes comes from my father," Walt said. "He was a sharp dresser. He was just about the most stylish man in our neighborhood. After he'd gone to work sometimes, I'd go in and try on some of his shoes and shirts. I was just a kid, but I liked to do it."

"I've always liked to dress the way I feel," Frazier continued. "When we lose, I dress kind of conservatively. When it rains, I wear old things. When we win, I like to splash on the colors."

### Whirlwind on Defense

Next to center Willis Reed, Frazier is the most important man on the first-place New York Knicks. He keys their defense and oversees their offense. On those occasions when there is absolutely no one open for a pass, Frazier makes the basket himself.

A year ago, Walter was voted the NBA's top defensive player, a super honor when you consider that Bill Russell was still active. Frazier isn't tall enough to block shots. But, as teammate Nate Bowman once said: "Man, that cat's hands are so fast he could steal the hubcaps off a moving car."

"Actually, there is nothing that gives me more pleasure

than separating somebody from the ball," Walter explained. "Sometimes, when I click for a few quick steals early in the game, that noise makes me feel like I can do anything."

"I like crowd reaction, and all that screaming and cheering you get on a thing like this makes me kind of jingle inside. It really does something for your confidence. I get the feeling I'd like to try and guard the whole team myself."

### Too Much Ball Control?

If Frazier has a weakness, it is that he sometimes controls the ball for too long at a time, thus leaving his teammates with nothing to do. Instead of bringing the ball up and then making his decision of what to do with it at the foul line, he'll reverse-dribble and sacrifice his team's penetration. Yet few guards in the NBA are more gifted at running the fast break.

"His philosophy is a lot like what we had on the old Celtics," said Boston's John Havlicek, a pretty good clutch player himself. "Nobody cared what they scored as long as the team won."

"I've noticed that when the Knicks win big, Walter's point totals aren't that impressive. But when the game is close and you need a lot of baskets from somebody, he's the guy who gets them."

As a team, the Knicks do not have any real size. Center Willis Reed, their biggest man, is only 6-10. The San Francisco Warriors, for example, start two forwards (Clyde Lee and Jerry Lucas) who are just as big.

But New York does have an unusual sense of team responsibility. The Knicks are especially tough on the man who controls the ball for the foe. Frazier, in particular, often forces the person he is guarding to pass the ball before he is ready and then capitalizes on his mistakes.

"We need Reed to score, to get us the ball and clog up the middle on defense," said the Knicks' coach, Red Holzman. "But we also need Frazier to run things."

Most of the time, Walter is as slick as his sealskin coat.





SPEAKING OUT

## Walt Frazier— A Believer

Feb 1968

MILTON GROSS

Soon after Red Holzman took over as coach of the Knicks, he called in Willis Reed for a private conversation. "Willie, what about Frazier?" Holzman asked his team captain. "Did I make a big mistake in my scouting report on him?"

"I don't think so," said Reed. "I think he's just got to be made to realize that he's better than he thinks he is. If he doesn't believe it he's not going to think much of himself and he won't do much for us."

When the Knicks visited Philadelphia, Holzman made the opportunity to corner Walt Frazier, the rookie from Southern Illinois. "He told me," said Walt, "that I'm a better player than I was showing."

It took some time before the mustachioed backcourt man was able to persuade himself that Holzman wasn't just attempting a con job. "I wasn't doing things then that I'm doing now," says Frazier. "I was doubting myself. The team didn't have faith in me. You can sense it. And I didn't think I could play in this league."

In the few weeks which have passed, the haunted Saluki has become the hunter. He is the hound after the hare and Reed puts Frazier's metamorphosis in the basic terms that a pro best understands and appreciates, meat and potatoes on the table and points in the hole.

"The forwards and center basically live off the guards," said Reed. "If the guards don't give the big men the ball in the right spot we're not going to be able to produce. Frazier's doing it well for us. Besides, we got a guard out there with (Dick) Barnett able to score and keep the players happy."

Happy players don't necessarily mean productive players, but it's worked out that way for the Knicks, who finally reached the .500 level last night in their first game in new, new, new Madison Square Garden and tightened their grip on third place in the NBA's Eastern Division with a 114-102 win over San Diego. It was their fifth win in their last six games and 17 out of 26 since Holzman decided to give Frazier the opportunity to earn his salary. Frazier is doing that. With 22 points, 15th straight loss. He started the first half with two baskets. 13th straight loss. He started the first half with two baskets. He opened the second half with another. He was beautiful.

Red protests it is not he who made Frazier. "All I told him," said the coach, "is that we trust him. We do want him to handle the ball. The fact that he's out there doing things, passing off, is a testimonial from the guys more than from me. The players have a feel for that. They know he's looking to hit the free man first. He penetrates."

\* \* \*

What this means is that Frazier bores into the defense as he did on one three-point play last night, forcing it to react to Walt's initiative and Frazier has two chances—go for his own shot or give such as Reed and big Walt Bellamy the pass-off for the relatively easy hoops.

"They tell me I have a good knack for hitting guys in the air," says Frazier. "Now I'm driving to the free throw line, going into the basket more than I did before. Any time a guy drives down the middle the first move the defense must make is to stop the guy. I've been getting a lot of assists off it. It feels good to get encouragement from Reed and Bells. When they say, 'Way to go, rook,' it means something."

"He's not a rookie, at least he doesn't play like one, although he's young in the league," said Reed. "For instance, he won't take the bad shot. He has the knack to pick the shots he wants. In that way, he's like O (Oscar Robertson). He doesn't take the shot you give him. He takes the shot he wants."

\* \* \*

Oscar and Frazier in the same breath seems like an exercise in hyperbole. But Willis went back to the Knicks' impressive victory over the 76ers last Saturday. There haven't been many games like the one in which Frazier scored 23, had a career high of 15 assists and took down 15 rebounds.

"A couple of times in that game," said Reed, "Walt forced Wilt (Chamberlain) to commit himself and you don't see that often. Frazier went up in the air and held himself up there until Wilt had to make a move. Wilt felt he was going to shoot. Instead, Frazier laid the ball off to Bells, who had a dunk shot. That makes the game easier for us big guys. We shoot most of the time with a man's hand in our faces. When we get the layup or the dunk that's a luxury we have to appreciate."

"What you got to like about this kid is if you get to the open spot he's going to hit you with the ball. You know he's going to be looking for you," said Reed. "What it's come down to lately is that we've learned to respect each other's ability more."

Call it maturity. Call it confidence. Call it a response to Holzman, who is described by Reed as more of a teacher than a coach. Anyway Red came into his office, where, on the wall, is a prominent sign that warns in red, "Smoking Prohibited In These Premises."

Red lit his cigar and blew the smoke defiantly at the sign. He had a right. His team had won its first game in the new, new, new Madison Square Garden. The spark had spread from 49th St. to 33d. The town may go up in flames next, if not from Frazier, then the Garden's malfunctioning electrical system.



FRAZIER

May 1972

## Change of pace

# Fashioning a leader

By Phil Elderkin

Los Angeles

Any discussion with all-star guard Walt Frazier of the New York Knicks invariably winds up in his clothes closet.

Frazier has a bigger wardrobe than Central Casting. He doesn't exactly know how many suits, jackets, slacks, etc., that he owns. But he remembers paying \$4,000 for two sealskin coats and \$900 for one made of elephant hide.

"I've always liked to dress the way I feel," Walt explained. "When we lose, I'm more apt to wear dark colors. And I want something the people can see."

When the Knicks won big against Los Angeles here in the opening game of the NBA championship finals, Frazier

Willis gone, we'd be out 25 points a game and that somebody would have to get them back for us. So I went out and tried to compensate for Reed's offense and I was wrong.

"Not only did I fail to score that much, but my over-concentration was affected to the point where it was hurting the rest of my game. I should have known that the points always come in basketball, no matter what five men you have on the floor."

Why have the Knicks done so well against Boston and Los Angeles in the playoffs and why has Frazier had so much success in stopping Jerry West?

"Our strong point has always been our team defense," Walt replied, "and right now we're playing our best defense of the year. What we can't do alone, we try to do together. We know where certain players on the Lakers like to get the ball and we just try to take those spots away from them on the floor."

\* \* \*

"As for West, I think he's hurting a little right now. He isn't making the shots he usually does and I'm sure it's got him worried. And I'm not helping him by sticking my hand in his face everytime I think he's going to shoot."

"Ordinarily you're never able to stop a shooter like West. All you can do is try to make him work for everything he gets and try to get some of his points back by scoring more yourself."

Frazier, of course, is a defensive marvel. He isn't tall enough to block shots, but he can make a rival guard waste precious seconds bringing the ball into the forecourt. As one of Walt's teammates once said: "Man, that cat's hands are so quick he could steal the hubcaps off a moving car."

"Actually, there is nothing which gives me more pleasure than separating somebody from the ball," Frazier said. "I'd rather do that than score a basket, especially if it's late in a game where we need the ball more than the points."

John Havlicek says that Frazier's philosophy is a lot like what exists on the Boston Celtics.

"Nobody on our team ever cares what they score as long as we win," Havlicek explained. "I've noticed that when the Knicks win big, Walter's point totals aren't that high. But when the game is close and you need a lot of baskets from somebody, he's the guy who gets them."



Walt Frazier

looked like a Hawaiian printout, with overtones of the NBC peacock.

He topped off his outfit with an eye-catching \$20 gold piece, which hung around his neck like a medallion.

But Walt Frazier is also a leader. When Willis Reed was unable to play for the Knicks this year, it was Frazier who stepped in and ran the ball club. His multiple of skills are such that he always provides a wonderful all-round game — shoot, pass, run, hit the open man, rebound and play the tough defense.

\* \* \*

Whatever New York seems to need most at the time, Walter is invariably able to provide.

"Actually, I panicked when Reed got hurt," Frazier said. "I realize now I didn't think the situation through before I acted."

"All I could think of was that with

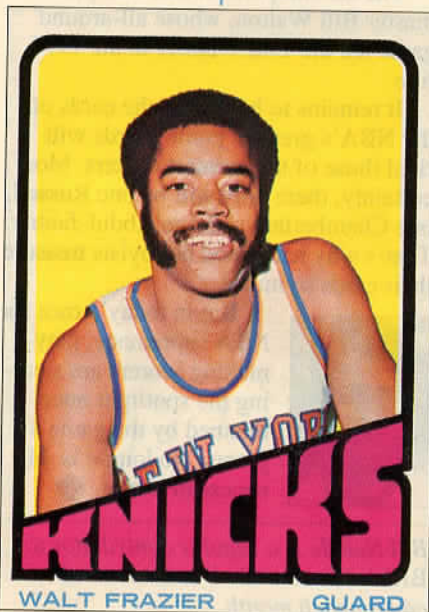


# Stardom with Style

A clotheshorse  
with a taste for  
the outlandish,  
Walt Frazier  
was just as dazzling  
on the court

by Bill Kreifeldt

Frazier was a popular player and New York fashion plate when his 1972-73 Topps #60 card was issued.



In his prime, Walt Frazier was known almost as much for his nickname and outlandish taste in clothes as he was for his Hall of Fame skills on the hardwood.

While his adoring fans called him "Clyde" and loved to gawk at his mod 1970s outfits, NBA players watched in awe at his All-Star defensive play, pinpoint passing and explosive scoring.

Walt's prime time persona both on and off the court has attracted a considerable hobby following. Frazier's RC (1969-70 Topps #98) is as eye-catching in a binder as his clothes were on the streets of New York City.

"My specialty was trying to turn games around by intercepting passes and poking the ball away from opponents as they dribbled," the former Knicks great said. "Nothing would shatter a team's morale faster than a steal.

"Stealing a ball and making a pass that led to a basket were the parts of basketball I loved most," he added.

A 1986 inductee into the Hall of Fame, Frazier played 10 seasons with the Knicks before finishing out his career in 1980 after three seasons in Cleveland.

## Made for Broadway

In the Big Apple, Frazier was at his best. His flair for the dramatic coupled with center Willis Reed's strength were a championship concoction in 1970 and 1973.

It was in New York where Frazier picked up the Clyde nickname from teammate Nate Bowman, who likened Frazier to one of the lead characters in the hit movie *Bonnie and Clyde*.

Once he began drawing an NBA paycheck, Frazier also started building his wardrobe.

"I guess I inherited my fondness for clothes from my father," Frazier said. "He was a sharp dresser. When I went to New York and was making good money with the Knicks, I started buying the kind of things I'd always wanted. I spent a lot of money on clothes, but I don't think I blew it."

In his Knicks uniform, Frazier was one of the slickest guards in the league's history:

- A seven-time All-Star, Clyde earned MVP honors in the 1975 game with 30 points and four steals.

- He was a charter member of the All-Defensive Team, which was started in 1969.

- He averaged more than 20 points for six straight seasons from 1969-70 to 1974-75.

- In 93 playoff games, Frazier averaged 42.5 minutes per game, shot a sizzling 51 percent from the field and averaged 20.7 points.

The 6-4 guard dazzled fans in Madison Square Garden even before he donned his familiar No. 10. As a college senior in 1967, Frazier was selected MVP in the New York-hosted National Invitational Tournament for guiding Southern Illinois to the title.

As a result of his play in the tournament, he was a popular first-round pick (fifth overall) by the Knicks later that spring.

## Topps of His Game

The 1969-70 NBA season was a landmark campaign for both Frazier and card collectors. Frazier, playing in just his third pro season, sparked the Knicks to their first world title.

That same season Topps revived its basketball card line by issuing its oversized 1969-70 set — the first basketball cards available since the 1961-62 Fleer set.

Frazier's RC in that set brings back a flood of memories for him.

"Kids must have bought up the Topps cards fast," Frazier said. "It seemed like every other slip of paper put under my nose for an autograph was a Walt Frazier card. I use to wonder how many Walt Fraziers it took to trade for a Willis Reed."

Wonder no longer, Clyde. In today's market, it takes nearly two of Reed's cards (#60) from the 1969-70 Topps set to equal the value of a single Frazier card.

Frazier, 46, retired 11 years ago. Fans are still treated to his All-Star outfits when Walt works behind the microphone on Knicks games.

That shouldn't surprise anyone who's followed Frazier's dapper career. Clyde's style, his taste in clothes and his consummate game will never go out of fashion. ●

Bill Kreifeldt is a freelance writer in Santa Monica, Calif.





**WALT FRAZIER** and Mike Battle go through a dry run as hair stylists, using Frazier's favorite accessory, a basketball, as a model for their efforts.

## Man Can Get Sauna, Pedicure, Hairstyle at Mike, Walt's Place

By **MURRAY JANOFF**

NEW YORK, N. Y.—Mike Battle and Walt Frazier are partners . . . and New York may never be the same.

Take a hard-nosed football kid like Battle, the Jets' kick return specialist, and a quick-handed, flashy guy like Clyde . . . that's what they call Frazier in the Knicks' basketball world . . . and you'd expect anything except what they've done.

First, you'd never figure they'd get together. But they did, and it was on the 13th floor of a Manhattan office building, deep in the heart of the Garment Center. There is an establishment there called "Battle and Clyde's Penthouse."

Okay. Now guess what kind of penthouse it is. It's not a bar or a restaurant or anything as easy as that. It is a men's hairstyling salon.

That's right, a men's beauty parlor, if you will.

It's easy to spend a few bob there, too. You can get a hair-styling for as little as \$7. Or maybe just have your hair combed out for \$5. There are 22 items, like a manicure for \$3 or a pedicure for \$8. You even can enjoy a sauna and massage for \$10 or take your hairpiece (that's a wig in our language) in for servicing (what ever that means) and that costs only \$10.

### A Must for Men

"All guys should have their hair styled," Battle said with a little grin playing around the tiny scar he has on his face from some old fight.

Now here he was, dressed comfortably in a maroon sport shirt and pin-striped slacks, but he was No. 2 in the fashion contest with Frazier.

Frazier was clad in an expensive green silk suit, complete with vest. He wore a yellow shirt and green tie. And to complete the outfit, he displayed a pair of green alligator shoes. He was beautiful.

They hadn't met until this day that they were opening Battle and Clyde's Penthouse to the world of tonsorial splendor. Agents, the guys who make dough for their clients, had arranged everything.

You take a private elevator to the Penthouse. The place is plush, dimly lit, each chair in a private alcove. There is a sunroom for summer pleasure, an art gallery and a boutique where a guy, if he has any dough left, can buy himself some shirts, ties, jewelry and toiletries.

### \$3.50 for a Trim

Okay, Battle and Clyde, what was the cost of the last haircut you guys got before you opened this joint?

"I paid \$3.50," Frazier said. "But all I got was a trim around the edge. That cost \$2.50. I tipped one dollar."

"I am," Clyde grinned, "the last of the big-time spenders."

Of course, each has a few other things on his mind. Frazier's is the continuing surge of the Knicks seeking the team's first NBA title. Battle's is a little more complicated. He almost missed the grand opening of his penthouse. He was arrested in California for disturb-

ing the peace. He got involved in a fight.

Would he talk a little about it while he posed for the photogs, making like a barber . . . oops, hair stylist. . . ?

Obviously, Battle's problem in California didn't set well with the Jets. He explained:

"It was a rough deal," he said. "Nothing would have come of it if the cops didn't find out who I was. It's all over now, all settled. I paid a fine of \$65 for disturbing the peace."

"I went to a wedding reception for a friend of mine. I tried to break up a fight and when I saw I couldn't, I split out by myself. I didn't want to get involved. I went down the beach (Manhattan Beach, Calif.) and walked into a bar."

"This same guy who tried to beef it up at the party walked in."

### Cops Halt Fray

"I explained to him that I didn't want any trouble and then the cops came in and said to break it up. I was looking for my jacket when I looked around and there was the heat. The cops put handcuffs on me. Imagine that? They hurt my wrists. That's when I got sore. There was no reason to do that."

"They said I had a string of unpaid traffic tickets, too. There were two tickets, in New York. I have given friends money to pay them for me and they never did. I got that straightened out. I never even had to pay an extra fine on that. They kept me overnight before it could be straightened out. It was a mess."

Battle, the tough rookie from USC who hit hard and ran hard and got himself a reputation for doing odd things like rolling cars and diving off cliffs and even chewing glass for a gag, added . . .

"I called Coach Ewbank to explain and apologize," he said. "He was disappointed. He likes good citizens. He drafted a lot of good citizen defensive backs. But I'll give them hell once the tryouts start. Once we put on the hard hat, I won't back away from anybody."

Frazier looked across the room at his partner. Battle now was trimming a wig some thinking photographer had put on a basketball. The ball was resting on a barber chair. Kidding? See above.

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# Knicks' Rise Linked to Frosh Frazier

## Walt a Demon on Defense And Skilled Ball-Handler

By MURRAY JANOFF

NEW YORK, N. Y.—“Confidence,” Walt Frazier said with the sageness of a Methuselah, “is the name of this game.”

So, in the simple statement by 23-year-old Frazier, there is a partial answer to many questions concerning the sudden challenge being offered the powers of the National Basketball Association by the New York Knicks.

“Confidence comes with maturity,” Red Holzman, the Knick coach, said another night during a conversation about how the young Knicks appear headed for permanent establishment on a higher rung in the East.

It was during the rise of the once-cellar-dwelling club to a battle down the stretch to finish higher than fourth place for the first time since 1959, and into the playoffs for the second straight year, the first time since 1955.

Frazier—and Holzman—are important to this rise. Holzman was the club's chief scout. He scouted all the current Knicks, including Frazier, and he took over the club December 27, lost the first two games he coached and then led the team on a 25-12 spree the next 37 games.

Other rookies, like wide-shouldered Phil Jackson, who is Frazier's roomie on the road, have played important roles. And so has the pressing zone defense the Knicks installed recently. But perhaps it was like the Celtics' Bill Russell said:

“Frazier will be a real good one. He has good size and speed and he certainly has the confidence.”

When did Russell realize how good Frazier is, especially as a rookie playing the tough guards in the league?

### Russell Is a Believer

“When the Knicks beat us in Boston,” Russell answered. “Frazier had a great game. He certainly showed us he knows what he's doing.”

That night (February 4) the Knicks used their pressing defense and forced the usually-placid Celtics into errors. Frazier led the defense, with a half-dozen steals, some key points and a couple of clutch rebounds.

And so with this contribution, the Knicks near the end of a schedule and it's time to look back at the year Walt Frazier had. Undoubtedly it was a year of much frustration because of an early ankle injury, a virus infection and the problem of combating the clouds settling around him. Most of the publicity reserved for a No. 1 draft choice went to Bill Bradley, who finally arrived two years late.

“When Walt first came to training camp, we could see immediately that he was the best young guard on the squad at the time,” captain Willis Reed said. “Not quite like a Barnett—who is a different-style player, and I'm talking about a guy coming up.

### Sharp Ball Handler

“Frazier moved the club very well up and down the court. He looked sharp handling the ball and he looked very good on defense.

“Then he had the ankle injury. By the time he got back on the squad, it took him a long time to regain his confidence. His shots weren't going in and, as a result, everything else fell off . . . his timing, his defense.”

Frazier, the MVP in last year's National Invitation Tournament for a winning Southern Illinois team he had led to a 24-2 record, was the Knicks' No. 1 choice. He decided to forego completing college (his class graduated) at this time and said he'd get his degree in physical education by attending summer sessions. He

### Walt Loves Loud Clothes, Including Alligator Shoes

NEW YORK, N. Y. — “He's learning,” was the way Dick Barnett provided opinion on the flashy way Walt Frazier dresses. Barnett is known for his sharp, bright suits, ties, coats, flowing breast pocket handkerchiefs and homburg hat. At midseason, Frazier broke out with similar garb.

It's a common sight to see Frazier in a green or rust or cream-hued suit, multi-colored tie and alligator shoes. It's the alligator shoes he loves most of all. They say he owns several pairs of them . . . at \$80 a pair.

came in with the usual confidence a rookie possesses. He also came in with a lucrative contract to help support his wife, Marsha, and infant son, Walter III.

“I was full of hope,” Frazier said. “I learned right away it wasn't going to be easy, especially when we began to play exhibition games. In the first three pre-season games, I learned I had to change my style. In college, I had a slow delivery when I took a shot. The guys in this league have arms and hands all over you and you've got to get rid of it fast.

“I got a lot of help from the veterans, like Reed and Howard Komives, and thought I was doing all right until I got hurt near the end of the third exhibition. I thought I was through with basketball.”

“He was scared when it happened,” Jackson recalled. “He thought the ankle was broken. It definitely set him back.”

### Missed Exhibition Tilts

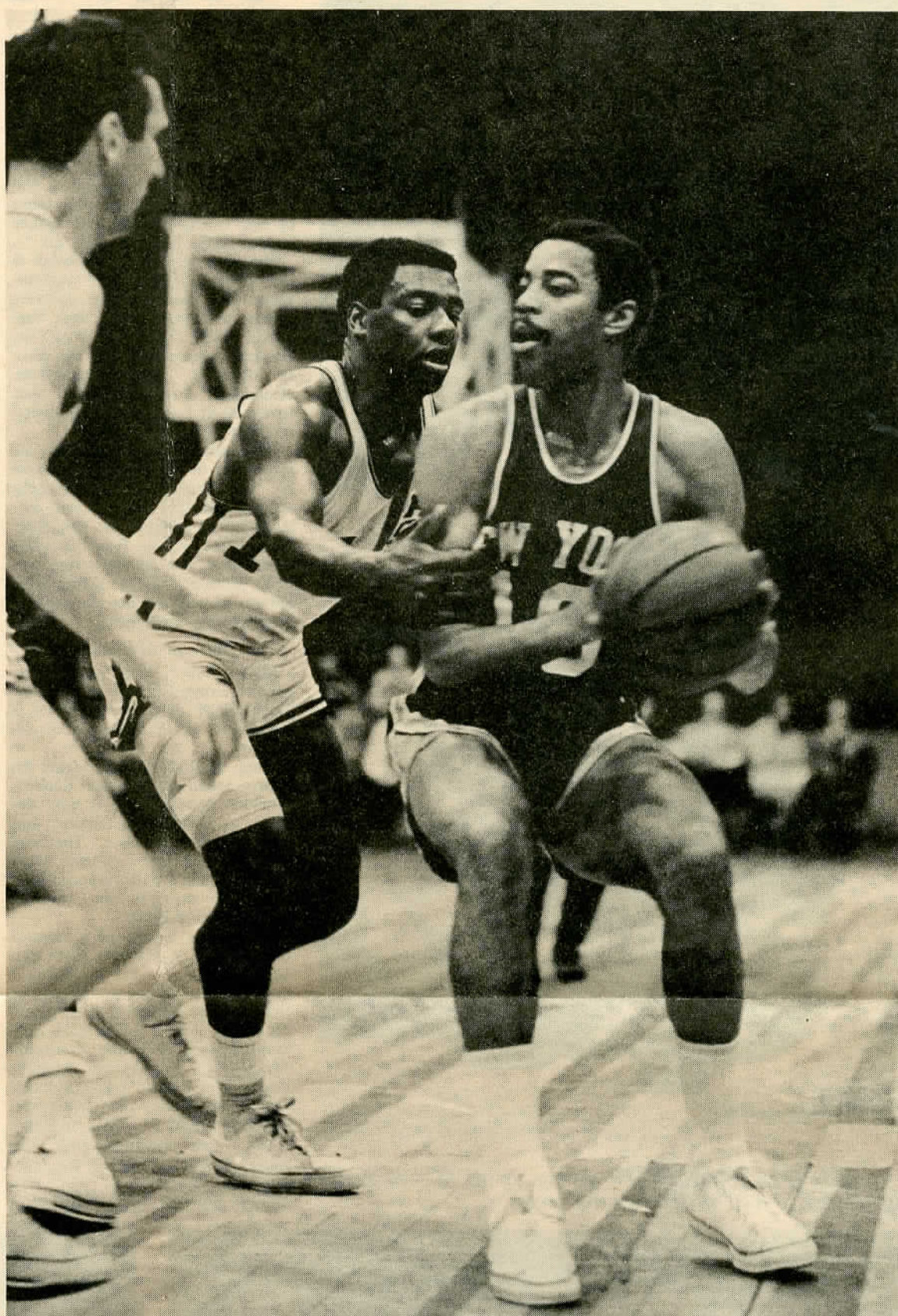
“It was a tough break,” said Holzman, who helped Dick McGuire in training camp and eventually swapped jobs with him. McGuire became the club scout and Holzman the coach. “There's no doubt it hurt his chances for the Rookie of the Year honors. He was out for the rest of the exhibition season (nine games) and then was on the injury list and didn't get activated until the sixth game of the season.”

Those with statistical minds will recall the Knicks won their opener and then went on a six-game losing streak that kept them under .500 until they got to 32-32 on February 14, the night the new Madison Square Garden opened.

“When I first came back from that ankle injury, my timing was off badly,” Frazier said. “I'd miss a shot and my confidence left me. I started looking to pass off.

“Confidence is the name of the game. It took time to find I could handle the ball more. It's hard to pinpoint when I suddenly found myself. It seemed like it happened overnight. Maybe it happened in Boston, or the game we won in Philadelphia, or the game with Philadelphia in New York.

“I know I found myself moving without really thinking, like I did



Walt Frazier Comes to a Sudden Stop When He Encounters Oscar Robertson of the Royals.

in college. Everything fell into place.”

The game in Philadelphia was the start of the Knicks' surge from a 15-25 record, their low mark of the winter. That was the night Holzman coached on one knee at the bench, constantly yelling instructions to keep the defense pressing. It was the Knicks' first victory in Philadelphia since March 10, 1965, and it started a six-game win streak, all on the road.

### A Landmark Victory

The game in Boston was the Knicks' first regular-season win there since December 22, 1962, after the Celts had beaten them 25 times in the Boston Garden. A lone exception was a Knick playoff win there last March. It was the game Bill Russell said made him realize how good Frazier is.

Then the Knicks closed the old Madison Square Garden on February 10 by whipping the 76ers again and Frazier scored 23 points, had 15 assists and 15 rebounds in this one.

“This was a complete game,” Reed said. “One guy accounted for most of our points. He got 23 himself, the 15 assists meant 30 more and the 15 rebounds led to more points. He must have been re-

## Wide-Brimmed Hats Give Walt a New Name: Clyde

NEW YORK, N. Y.—When one of the Knicks calls, “Clyde,” you know he's calling Walt Frazier. Danny Whelan, the team trainer, is given credit for the nickname, but denies it.

“They call him Clyde because of the wide-brimmed fedora he always wears,” Whelan explained. “It's just like the hat Clyde wore in the movie ‘Bonnie and Clyde.’”

“I think it was Nate Bowman who first called me Clyde,” Frazier said with a grin. “But I like those wide-brimmed hats and I had my hat before the movie came out.”

Frazier also takes a ribbing when he brings an oversized suitcase on the road. “The guys say,” Whelan confided, “that Clyde carries his machine gun in it.”

sponsible for 60 or 70 points alone that night.

“He has a knack of penetrating and looking for the open man and he helps us bigger guys off the boards. He's a good jumper. He could play forward against some in this league because he's so strong off the boards.

“And he lives with a lot of pressure. He hasn't lived up to what

he knows he can do. But that was because of the injury and sickness. But I know what he can do. I was with him on a series of clinics we gave at summer camps.

“You know,” Reed added, “when he first came to training camp, everybody on the team used to beat him playing one-on-one. I

(Continued on Page 46, Column 5)



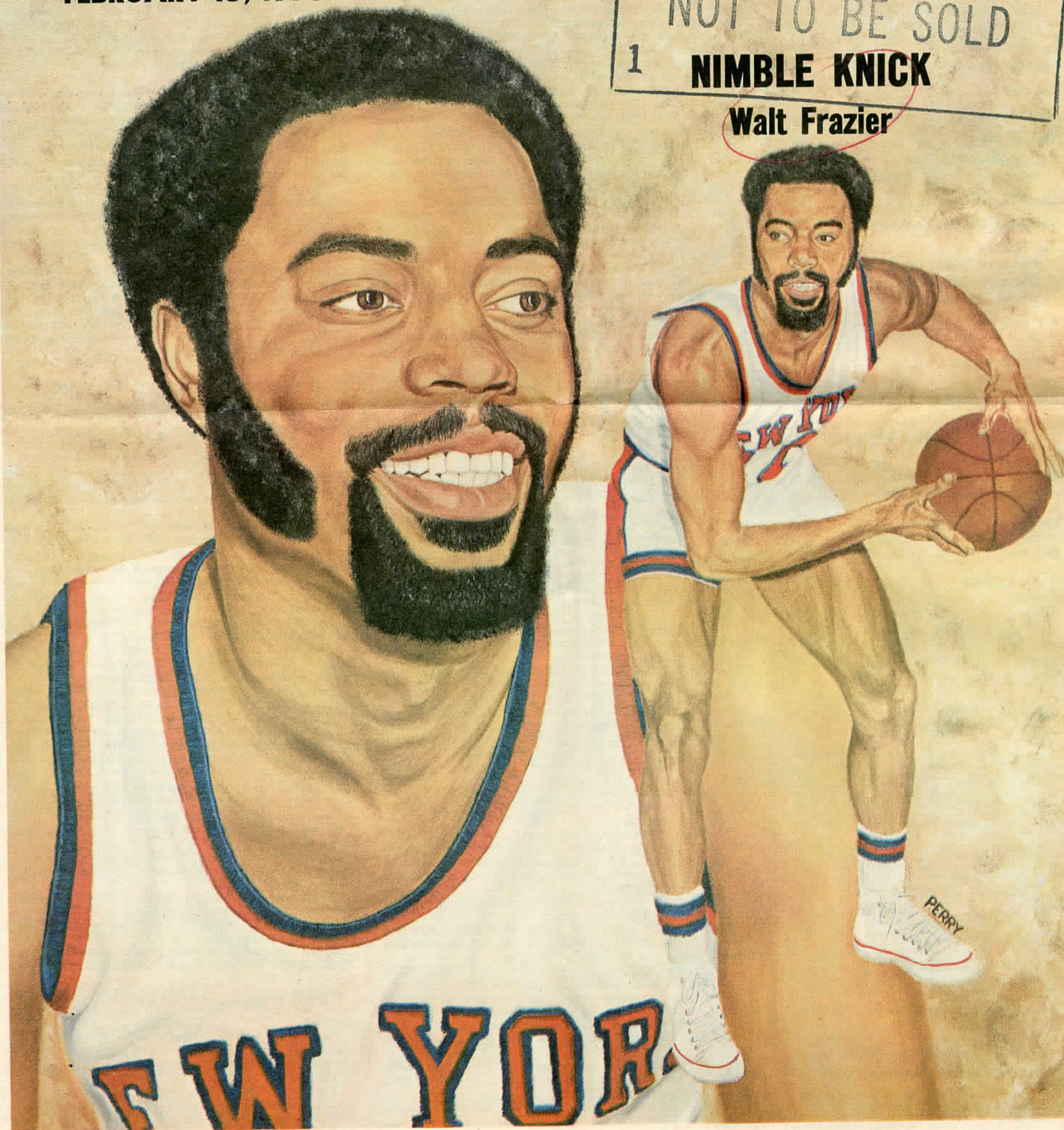
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# Watch Clyde Glide—Court Magician

By PHIL PEPE

NEW YORK—Most of the old Knick gang is gone now, the gang that won two NBA championships in five years.

Willis Reed is gone, retired because of knee problems. Dave DeBusschere is gone, jumping over to the executive branch as general manager of the New York Nets in the rival ABA.

Dick Barnett is not really gone, but he is a player no longer. He sits on the Knicks' bench as a valued assistant to Coach Red Holzman.

Dean Meminger is gone to Atlanta, Mike Riordan to Washington and Cazzie Russell to Los Angeles. Eddie Mast is gone, too, and Mike Price, Johnny Warren, Charlie Paulk, Nate Bowman, Eddie Miles, Dave Stallworth, Luther Rackley, Bill Hosket, Donnie May and Greg Fillmore. They haven't been heard from for some time.

JERRY LUCAS is gone, too, but I can't remember where.

That doesn't leave many of the old gang, except Walt Frazier, that symbol of youthful vigor, great moves, grace, speed and cool. It may surprise you to know on his next birthday, March 29, young Frazier will be 30 years old.

The funny thing about Walt, who got all that publicity as a sex symbol and young man about New York, is that he is a better basketball player today than he was four or five years ago when the Knicks were winning championships and he was getting so much attention.

He doesn't get quite so much attention now, but he is a better basketball player, which he proved by excelling in the recent NBA All-Star Game and being named the game's Most Valuable Player. That never happened to him before, even in the days when the Knicks were winning championships and Frazier was a big reason they won.

FOR THOSE who may be wondering, nothing has happened to Frazier. And the fact that in perhaps his best year the Knicks are struggling to keep above .500 is testimony to the kind of game pro basketball is.

The Knicks don't have the outstanding big man anymore, and you can't win if you don't have the outstanding big man.

Walt is a super star, but he had one failing. He did not grow to be 6-8 or 6-9. He stopped at 6-4. When you think about it, perhaps it is good that he did not grow bigger than 6-4. At 6-4, he can do things with his body no big man can do, beautiful, graceful things that set him apart, that are wonderful to behold.

**WATCH HIM** glide down the basketball court with the grace of a thoroughbred, his body lean and supple, his head held high, his eyes darting from side to side.

Watch as the defender moves up to meet him and they are chest to chest. Suddenly, almost too quickly for the eye to see, Walt Frazier puts the ball on the floor, behind his back, gathers it in front of him. Then he accelerates into full stride, stops to elude a taller defender who has switched off his man, soars into the air, pauses as if suspended in midair, and flicks the ball into the hoop as 19,000 people go mad.

At 30, Walt Frazier has lost nothing of the magic he has been performing since he came into the NBA, from little-known Southern Illinois U. in 1967.

**OFF THE COURT**, he has lost none of the animal magnetism that has made him one of New York's most eligible and easily recognized bachelors.

Watch him as he walks, with that loose-limbed gait, on New York's East Side, his body moving slowly and gracefully, resplendent in a long, black mink coat and a white fur hat and a beautiful young lady on his arm.

His lifestyle and his basketball style have made Frazier the center of attention. It wasn't long after he came out of college that stories about him became almost legend in New York.

"IT'S CLYDE'S ball," teammate Willis Reed once said. "He just lets us play with it once in a while."

Clyde. That's another thing. It's Walt Frazier's nickname, pinned on him by Danny Whelan, the Knicks' trainer who is noted for

selecting nicknames.

The name comes from the movie "Bonnie and Clyde," which was big a half dozen years ago. Whelan named Frazier after Clyde Barrow, some say because of Frazier's penchant for wearing clothes of that era. Some say it was because Frazier is expert at stealing the basketball from unsuspecting dribblers.

It was that ability to steal the basketball, with his quick hands, that first attracted Clyde to New York fans. And that was the first thing his teammates noticed about him.

**BALL STEALING** wasn't his only forte. He became one of the most confident offensive players in the game, although the Knicks' style of play, hitting the open man, made it difficult for one player to dominate the game on offense.

Frazier rarely scores heavily, but he has been a consistent 20-point scorer and has excelled in other phases of the game.

He is a perennial pick on the NBA All-Star defensive team. A typical Walt Frazier eve-

ning might be 26 points, on 11 for 18 from the floor, a dozen rebounds, eight or nine assists and five or six steals.

When Earl (The Pearl) Monroe joined the Knicks a few seasons back, it was predicted that either Earl or Clyde would be gone after a year or so. Each was extremely talented, great on offense and vain enough to believe he was the man to do the job when a basket was needed.

**THE THINKING** was that with Frazier and Monroe on the same team, their egos would never permit them to be compatible, and they'd need two basketballs.

But it is a tribute to the skill, talent and professionalism of both men that they still are together in the Knick backcourt, forming the best tandem in all of pro basketball. Each gets recognition and together they make the Knicks tough to beat, despite their lack of overall size.

Clyde is the first to admit that he enjoys the recognition he has received in New York.

"I like being recognized," he said. "I can

remember when I wasn't recognized."

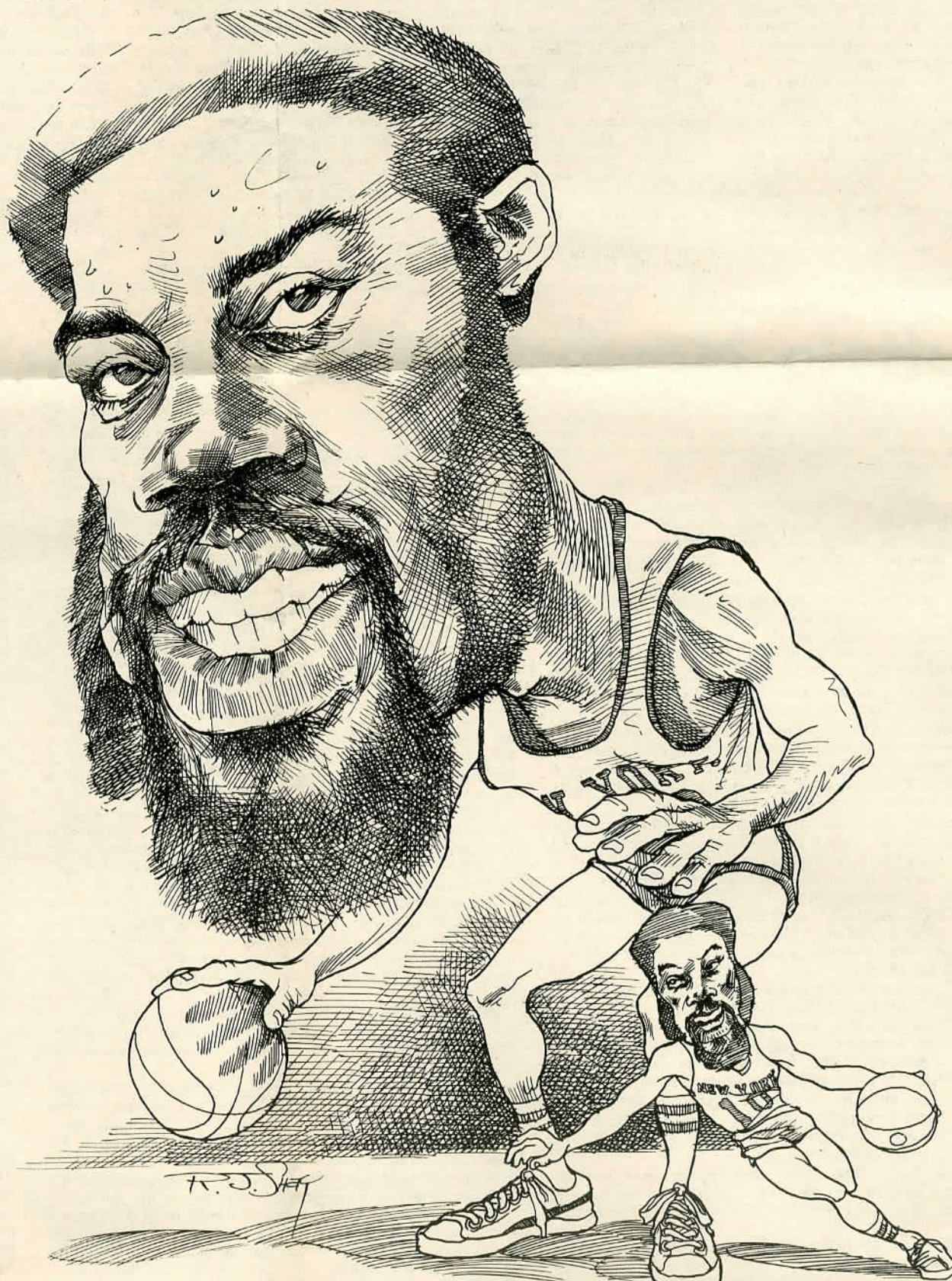
He usually finds time to sign autographs if people ask.

"MY BASIC character is to be polite," he said. "New York hasn't made me that cold. Two things New York has taught me—never trust anybody and save your money."

Toward that end, Walt Frazier has made an important start. He has investments, including a management service, "Walt Frazier Enterprises," in which he represents such athletes as Julius Erving, Bob Lanier, Roy White and Randy Smith.

He lives in a bachelor penthouse on the East Side of New York, in the 50s, drives a 1965 Rolls-Royce, has been named to lists proclaiming him among the 10 Best Dressed and 10 Sexiest Men in Sports. He earns in excess of \$250,000 a year from the Knicks, has an extensive wardrobe that includes at least four fur coats and has beautiful women throwing themselves at him.

Is he to be envied? When Christmas comes, what can he get that will turn him on?



Walt Frazier . . . Peak Performance With a Mediocre Ball Club



LIFE WALT FRAZIER

LIFE WALT FRAZIER				FIELD		GOALS		FREE		THROWS		MISCELLANEOUS				SCORING		COMMENTS	
YEAR	TEAM	GAMES	MINUTES	MADE	ATTEMPTS	PCT.	MADE	ATTEMPTS	PCT.	REBOUNDS	ASSISTS	PERS. FOULS	DISQ.	TOTAL PTS	GAME AVG.				
1967-68	N.Y.	74	1588	256	568	.451	154	235	.655	313	305	199	2	666	9.0				
68-69	N.Y.	80	2949	531	1052	.505	341	457	.746	499	635	245	2	1403	17.5				
69-70	N.Y.	77	3040	600	1158	.518	409	547	.748	465	629	203	1	1609	20.9				
		231	7577	1387	2778	.499	904	1239	.730	1277	1569	647	5	3678	15.9				
70-71	N.Y.	80	3455	651	1317	.494	434	557	.779	544	536	240	1	1736	21.7				
		311	11,032	2038	4095	.498	1338	1796	.745	1821	2105	887	6	5414	17.4				
71-72	N.Y.	77	3126	669	1307	.512	450	557	.808	513	446	185	0	1788	23.2				
		388	14,158	2707	5402	.501	1788	2353	.760	2334	2551	1072	6	7202	18.6				
72-73	N.Y.	78	3181	681	1389	.490	286	350	.817	570	461	186	0	1648	21.1				
		466	17,339	3388	6791	.499	2074	2703	.767	2904	3012	1258	6	8850	19.0	STL	BLK		
73-74	N.Y.	80	3338	674	1429	.472	295	352	.838	536	551	212	2	1643	20.5	161	15		
	7	546	20677	4062	8220	.494	2369	3055	.775	3440	3563	1470	8	10493	19.2				
74-75	N.Y.	78	3204	672	1391	.483	331	400	.828	465	474	205	2	1675	21.5	190	14		
	8	624	23,881	4734	9611	.493	2700	3455	.781	3905	4037	1675	10	12,168	19.5	351	29		
75-76	N.Y.	59	2427	470	969	.485	186	226	.823	400	351	163	1	1126	19.1	106	9		
	9	683	26,308	5204	10,580	.492	2886	3681	.784	4305	4388	1838	11	13,294	19.5	457	38		
76-77	KNICKS	76	2687	532	1089	.489	259	336	.771	293	403	194	0	1323	17.4	132	9		
	10	759	28,995	5736	11,669	.492	3145	4017	.783	4592	4791	2032	11	14,617	19.3	589	47		
77-78	CLEV.	51	1664	336	714	.471	153	180	.850	209	209	124	1	825	16.2	77	9		
	11	810	30,659	6072	12,383	.490	3298	4197	.786	4807	5000	2156	12	15,442	19.1	666	56		
78-79	CLEV.	12	279	54	122	.443	21	27	.778	20	32	22	0	129	10.8	13	2		
	12	822	30,938	6126	12,505	.490	3319	4224	.786	4827	5032	2178	12	15,571	18.9	679	58		
79-80	CLEV.	3	27	4	11	.364	2	2	1.000	3	8	2	0	10	3.3	2	1		
	13	825	30,965	6130	12,516	.490	3321	4226	.786	4830	5040	2180	12	15,581	18.9	681	59		



## PLAYOFFS

[illegible]