

Shaq, Hakeem set to battle

ATLANTIC CITY, N.J. (AP) — Forget the NBA Finals. This time it's a one-on-one, pay-for-view hype event. Oh, yes, and this time, there's a cool million on the line.

Shaquille O'Neal of the Orlando Magic and Hakeem Olajuwon of the Houston Rockets, who went face to face in the NBA Finals sweep by Houston, will play each other Sept. 30 at Trump Taj Mahal Casino Resort, it was announced Wednesday.

The purse: \$1 million. The event at the resort will be part heavyweight prize fight, part skins game, part pickup game dubbed "War on the Floor."

The NBA, which has no collective bargaining agreement with players and is in the midst of a lockout, is taking a hands-off approach, Deputy Commissioner Russ Granik said.

"In view of the lockout, the NBA will not be involved in this event nor take steps to prevent it," Granik said.

The format will be 10 rounds, or games, of 2 minutes apiece under

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MCADORY LIPSCOMB
general manager of Showtime
Event Television

"winner's out" rules. That is, the player who scores gets the ball again at the top of the key.

The winner of each round will get \$100,000. In the event of a tied round, the money will roll over to the next round. Whoever takes the most rounds wins. A tie-breaker will decide the winner if there is a tie.

At 7-foot, 255 pounds, the 11-year veteran Olajuwon would appear to be

the underdog to the 7-1, 303-pound O'Neal, a three-year NBA veteran. But the two were fairly evenly matched in the Finals.

In four games, Olajuwon averaged 32.8 points and had 46 rebounds and eight blocks. O'Neal averaged 28.0 points with 50 rebounds and 10 blocks.

"The building will shake, and no backboard is safe when these two basketball giants collide one-on-one," said McAdory Lipscomb, general manager of Showtime Event Television, the pay-per-view promoter.

"It's a defining moment for Shaq, Hakeem and Taco Bell, and one that will go down in the record books as one of the most exciting events in the annals of sports history," Jerry Gramaglia, senior vice president of Taco Bell Corp., said.

It's not the first, once-in-a-lifetime basketball showdown in Atlantic City. In 1992, Kareem Abdul-Jabbar and Julius Erving played the same kind of exhibition. Jabbar won 41-23.

Peterson

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guy that whoever gets him will get one heck of an employee," Allen said.

"It's a shame that some negative information got out when it proved to be totally false. It is hard to shake that, even if it was just rumors.

"He's been totally exonerated. There was no mishandling of funds. It doesn't seem right that the false information could cost him several top-notch jobs."

Regent Nancy O'Brien of Waterloo said she knew Peterson would not return to the athletic department.

"I knew Chris Peterson was looking for a different job," O'Brien said. "I'm pleased to learn that the job will be here at the foundation. I was a reference for him, and I think very highly of him."

Peterson was responsible for developing the Athletic Marketing Department and instituting a student-athlete ambassador program.

"If I was guilty of anything, the foundation sure as hell wouldn't have hired me. It's total exoneration, which I think I deserve."

CHRIS PETERSON

former associate athletic director

He also started the selling of corporate sponsorship for the instant replay board. Since it started, the marketing department totaled \$390,000 in cash corporate sponsorship and traded cash value for the 1994-95 fiscal year.

He also started the pickle card operation for the Husker Beef Club, which raised \$435,000 in 1994-95 and brought in a one-time donation of \$727,000.

Paul Carlson, interim vice chancellor for business and finance, said the reports of the misuse of funds were wrong.

"The university has not received

any complaints of misappropriation of funds for personal gain by Chris Peterson or any other employees of External Operations," Carlson said in a statement.

Peterson's job status was discussed in an executive session of the February regents meeting by Byrne and then UNL Chancellor Graham Spanier.

After the meeting, sources told the Daily Nebraskan that Peterson would resign within six months. Since February, labor negotiations have gone on between Peterson, his attorney and the university.

Injury dampens I-back's rise on the Husker depth chart

By Derek Samson

Senior Reporter

When the football depth chart was updated Tuesday, I-back James Sims had moved to No. 3 behind Lawrence Phillips and Damon Benning.

But on Wednesday — Nebraska's final scrimmage before its Aug. 31 opener at Oklahoma State — Sims stood on the sideline, wearing a No. 34 Charles Barkley jersey instead of his No. 31 Nebraska uniform.

Sims strained his right hamstring in practice last week, and has practiced sporadically since. But Wednesday was the first day he did not suit up.

"It's very frustrating sitting on the sidelines without any pads on," Sims said. "But the coaches know I'm not just taking advantage of an injury. They know I've tried to be out there, and that I could make it worse by being out there. It's been the coaches and trainers telling me to sit out."

Going into spring football, Sims was fifth on the depth chart with talented Husker freshman Ahman Green still in high school.

Sims was somewhat of a mystery, with the spring roster listing the wrong high school and age.

But the 24-year-old sophomore — who graduated from West Memphis, Ark., after attending Omaha Central until his senior year — quickly turned heads.

At 6-foot-1, Sims weighed 204 pounds in spring ball and ran a 4.40 in the 40-yard dash, a 1.48 in the 10-yard dash, posted a 38-inch vertical jump and totaled 2,914 points in the performance index. The 2,914 points was a record for Nebraska I-backs and third best all-time for any position.

Sims was able to get plenty of work because nagging injuries to Benning and Phillips left Sims one of the top backs. He eventually moved up to fourth-team by the start of fall practice because Clinton Childs moved to fullback.

"No one was asleep as far as not noticing me," Sims said. "Damon and Lawrence were just out a lot this spring, and that helped me because I was getting so many reps. I was able to understand my position and the offense so much better."

"My problem before was that I wasn't able

"Damon and Lawrence were just out a lot this spring, and that helped me because I was getting so many reps."

JAMES SIMS

Nebraska I-back

to react to the defense quick enough. The ball would be snapped, and I couldn't read what the defense was doing quick enough. With all that repetition, I now line up and recognize right away what is going to happen and what I'm supposed to do."

Over the summer, Sims added 15 pounds, but it didn't slow him down any. In the fall testing, he ran a 1.47 in the 10-yard dash, registered a 39-inch vertical jump and scored 2,336 points in the performance index.

"I've worked hard over the summer," Sims said. "I just figured to keep doing what I've been doing, and it will pay off. I just try to work as hard as I can to improve and let everything take care of itself. The coaches will put the players where they deserve to be, and I just need to work as hard as I can so they'll look at me."

Sims didn't want to guess where his hike up the I-back depth chart will end.

"I'll just keep doing the same things I have been doing," Sims said. "It's up to the coaches who plays. It's up to the players to show the coaches that you can play. My attitude all along has been to do the best I can, and I won't have any regrets."

"I just have to stay prepared. I just want to play and help the team wherever I can — the backfield or special teams. If my number gets called, I'll be ready."

But for his number to be called, he first must be wearing it.

"Oh, I know I need to be out there," Sims said. "I want to be so bad it's not funny. When you're competing so hard and everything is so tight, it is hard to sit out. I know it's the best decision. I'd rather have to sit out one scrimmage than an entire season. But I was really looking forward to this one."

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