They're no angels, but Casa Colina's Condors are on cloud nine, taking home their seventh NWBA title in ten years.

### 42ND NATIONAL WHEELCHAIR BASKETBALL TOURNAMENT

by Tip Thiboutot

#### THE SEMIFINALS

The semifinal games of the 1990 National Wheelchair Basketball Tournament matched two of the National Wheelchair Raskethall Association's (NWBA's) greatest dynasties—the Casa Colina Condors and the Detroit Sparksand two aspiring dynasties—the favored Arkansas Rollin' Razorbacks and the defending champions, the tall and talent-laden Music City Lightning. It seemed fitting that these great teams would confront each other in the University of Kentucky's historic Memorial Coliseum, home of the most successful major college program in history.

#### Arkansas Rollin' Razorbacks vs. Music City Lightning

Totally unintimidated by the champions' pressure defense, Coach Harry Vines's Rollin' Razorbacks rolled to an

early 14-4 lead, executing their wellcoached high-post offense deliberately and almost flawlessly. Defensively, Arkansas' triangle-and-two formation, deploying Darren Schenebeck and Gary Woodring to pressure the Lightning ball-handlers, created chaos in Music City's offense.

Arkansas forged its early lead, which was extended to 30-15 with 1:45 remaining in the first half, on the strength of the balanced and productive scoring of Tim Kazee and Schenebeck, who scored 6 points each, as well as the inside shooting of the talented James Coughlin. who scored 8 points. Eight more points, all of them long bombs,

were beautifully fashioned by Alvin Moore, whose unerring marksmanship and three assists proved most responsible for extending his team's lead to 15 points. It was Moore's outside shooting that stretched Music City's defense, allowing Coughlin more freedom in the key.

If Coach Mitch Stephens's Lightning could possibly consider themselves within striking distance, they could thank the explosive Ron "Bird" Alsup, who drained 9 big points in the first 19-1/2 minutes of play. With 1:45 remaining. Bird infused hope into the Lightning's previously inept attack by drilling a 3-pointer (his second)—a 3pointer that was even more inspiring than the first, since it was launched from NBA range. A hook shot by Reg Goodman closed the gap to 10 points just before the buzzer signaled halftime. The story of this first half could be summed up in the fact that Arkansas doubled Music City's totals in assists, revealing the Razorbacks' superior teamwork.

But Music City has long earned a reputation for relentlessness. Their supercharged offense was fuel-injected by 16 more second-half points by the spectacular Bird, who spurred his teammates to mimic his firepower. And so they did, hitting 68% of their shots, narrowing Arkansas' lead to 2 points (47-45) with but 6 minutes remaining in what had become a very exciting game.

Music City's comeback, also mounted by the excellent play of last year's MVP, Reg Colton (who scored a total of 14 points), was stymied, however, by their well-coached opponents. The defending champions ultimately succumbed to the tall Razorbacks by a

mere 2 points, 57-55.

In the end, Arkansas' victory could be measured by their superior scoring balance. In response to Alsup's 25 points and Colton's 14, three Rollin' Razorbacks registered double-figure point production: Moore notched 12 points, Kazee scored 15, and Coughlin powered his way to 16 points and 12



The Casa Colina Condors' Larry Echols battles James Coughlin, Arkansas Rollin' Razorbacks, for the rebound in the championship game. Facing page: Cagey Condor Dave Kiley demonstrates his MVP prowess, slipping the ball behind the back of Arkansas' James Coughlin.



# HEAVEN.

valuable rebounds. Their performances left many observers, including this one, wondering how Detroit or Casa Colina could possibly contend with Arkansas' seemingly deadly combination of size and scoring punch.

#### Detroit Sparks vs. Casa Colina Condors

"Where have you gone, Curtis Bell?"
The absence of Bell, wheelchair basketball's most dominant forward, must
have conjured fantasies of his own commanding performance in the mind of
Darryl "Tree" Waller, Detroit's towering
and potentially dominating forward,
whose every move would have been
shadowed by the now-absent Bell.

As if to dispel any thoughts of a dominant performance by any of the Detroit players, as if to emphasize that such thoughts were no more than mere fantasies, incomparable Condor Dave Kiley took charge immediately after the opening tap, scoring 8 of his team's first 10 points in the initial 4 minutes of play on a 19-foot bomb from the left, a banker from 10 feet, a foul shot, and a 3-pointer, launched from the right sideline, Casa Colina's Albert Campos scored one basket during this sequence, a rebound of his own miss following a behind-the-back pass from (you guessed it!) Dave Kiley. The score: Casa Colina 10. Detroit 2. Casa's half-court pressure defense was stifling Detroit's offense.

But Detroit was not prepared to submit meekly to Kiley's early heroics. Countering Casa's attack with their own typically aggressive form of pressure defense, Detroit turned to Waller and Maurice Phillips for their offense. Waller knocked down 14 first-half points from low-post to midpost range, while Phillips notched 13 on a characteristic variety of shots, including daring drives, soft bankers, and two 3-pointers. Thanks to the efforts of these two players and in spite of the fact that they missed eight lay-ups, Detroit overcame Casa's early 8-point advantage by halftime, assuming a 1-point lead at 35-34.

The second half would prove to be another matter, however. While Phillips would score 9 more points, the Condors' Jim Miller limited Waller to 4. Detroit was victimized by their continuous errant shooting and deficient rebounding.

Pressing the entire length of the court, Detroit allowed themselves to become vulnerable to an attack by Casa Colina when Waller committed his third foul. Then, seconds thereafter, with his team still pressing, he sustained his fourth foul and retired to the bench.

Taking full advantage of Detroit's strategic error, Casa launched their first damaging blow at the beginning of the second helf secring 8

the second half, scoring 8 straight points within less than three minutes, powering themselves to a 42-35 lead. On the strength of Phillips's leadership and scoring, Detroit crept back to within 2 points (49-47), with 14:00 showing on the game clock. Casa then launched the telling blow, outscoring the bewildered Sparks by 13 (15-2) during the next 10 minutes.

Kiley then scored 6 straight points, enabling his team to extend their lead to 15, a margin they would hold until game's end, as they cruised to an easy 73-58



In the second semitinal game, Jimbo Miller of the Casa Colina Condors is surrounded by Detroit Sparks as he goes to the hoop.



In the 42nd National Wheelchair Basketball Tournament finale, cool, calm Al Campos of the Casa Colina Condors aims at the basket, despite the advances of Arkansas Rollin' Razorbacks detender Gary Woodring.



Arkansas' James Coughlin gets rid of the ball before crashing.

victory. Casa had demonstrated that they were not dependent on Curtis Bell, reeling off a whopping 41-22 advantage in rebounds over Detroit, as Jim Miller out-rebounded Waller by a 10-4 margin. Miller essentially neutralized Waller by scoring 17 points to the latter's 18. Miller's effort, combined with the offensive firepower of Kiley, who tallied 24 points-not to mention the steady production of Campos and Larry Echols, who canned 10 and 8 points, respectively-provided ample tribute to Casa Colina's balance attack.

In defeating Detroit, Casa
Colina revealed more than
enough balance to overcome
both Bell's absence and Waller's
potentially destructive inside
game. Could they repeat this
performance against an even
taller team (Arkansas), especially since they were now
threatened by the loss of yet another important player, their
talented guard, Mike Schlappi,
who had sustained an appar-

ently serious rib injury against Detroit?

The experts were divided in predicting the outcome of the championship game. Let it be known that H. McCormack, the NWBA's answer to Las Vegas's oddsmakers, established Casa Colina as 6-point favorites.

#### CHAMPIONSHIP GAME Casa Colina Condors vs. Arkansas Rollin' Razorbacks

Curtis Bell, of course, remained absent from the Casa Colina lineup, as was the talented Mike Duran. Mike Schlappi was present, though, having discarded a flak jacket protecting his injured rib and declared himself ready to

Little doubt existed that the Condors' Dave Kiley was present and more than ready to play. Kiley unleashed his plentiful arsenal of offensive weapons on Arkansas, scoring and assisting on 21 of Casa Colina's first 23 points.

Look! There he is, lofting a perfect lob pass over the Arkansas defender's outstretched arms to Miller in the lowpost. There he goes, head-faking two defenders out of position, then passing off



Coach Harry Vines ecstatically leaps from the bench as his team nips Music City in semifinal action.

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the dribble to Albert Campos and Joe Thorn for baskets, recording two more assists, six in the first 13 minutes of play. Here he is again, scoring on an eye-catching blast down the middle, following a typically deceptive head-fake; on two long bombs from 18 and 21 feet; and on a fast-break lay-up. And there he goes, playing intimidating chair-to-chair defense on the completely perplexed Arkansas guards, preventing them from lobbing passes to Arkansas' tall and dangerous James Coughlin.

Speaking of presence, the entire Casa Colina defense more than accounted for itself. The ubiquitous Campos once again bolstered his reputation as one of the best defenders in the history of the game, stifling Arkansas' Tim Kazee during the first half. And Jim Miller was doing his part, suppressing almost all of Coughlin's offensive thrusts into the key. Ditto for Larry Echols and Mike Schlappi. The entire Casa Colina defense was, we repeat, present, accounted for, and intimidating.

You need proof that they were intimidating? Check out the first-half statistics. Casa Colina limited the Razorbacks' productive tandem of Coughlin and Kazee to a mere two baskets in 13 attempts—the same Coughlin and Kazee who had burned Music City for 16 and 15 points while hitting 59% of their first-half shots. Against Casa Colina, their shooting percentage dropped precipitously to 36 in the first half of play.

Trailing 23-12 with 4 minutes remaining in the first half, the talented Razorbacks willed themselves to attack Casa Colina's previously impenetrable defense. Thanks primarily to the efforts of the resourceful Darren Schenebeck, the Razorbacks ran off 10 points while holding Casa to one bas-

ket, narrowing Casa's margin to 3
points (25-22) at the end of the half.
This surge seemed to create hope on the
Arkansas bench, particularly if Arkansas Coach Harry Vines could motivate
Coughlin, Moore, and Kazee to recapture some of the offensive magic they
had displayed against Music City.

If hope existed within the Arkansas contingent, it gradually dissipated during the second half. It dwindled when Campos scored two baskets in less than 1 minute to open the half, extending Casa's narrow lead to 7 at 29-22, then to 9 (33-24) on a basket by Larry Echols.

Hope all but vanished moments later when the ever-aggressive Schenebeck drove from the left, knocked down a short banker, and in the officials' opinion, charged into Kiley, nullifying a potential 3-point play that could have cut Casa's lead to 6.

Kiley meanwhile continued to weave his way fearlessly through Arkansas' triangle-and-two defense, finding openings that barely existed for Music City's players in their semifinal game against Arkansas. Kiley scored 8 more points in the second half, in addition to dishing out six more valuable (as in MVP) assists. Kiley's totals for the game were 17 points, 13 assists.

Miller and Campos succeeded almost as much as Kiley in dashing Arkansas' hopes. Miller scored 12 second-half points for a game-high 18. Campos notched 12 important points in the half. Between them, Campos (six for six) and Miller (eight for nine) missed only one shot.

At the 6:41 mark, Arkansas' hope turned to despair. Trailing by 9 points and in pursuit of a miracle ending. Kazee missed two easy shots underneath, then simultaneously committed

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**ALL-TOURNAMENT TEAMS** 

1st Team Darren Set

Darren Schenebeck A David Kiley G Jim Miller G Ron Alsup M Tim Kazee A

2nd Team Jim Goughlin Mike Schlappi Reggie Colton Maurice Phillips

Albert Campos

Arkansas Rollin' Rezorbacks Casa Colina Condors Casa Colina Condors Music City Ughtning Arkansas Rollin' Rezorbacks

Arkansas Rollin' Razorbacks Casa Colina Condors Music City Lightning Detroit Sparks Casa Colina Condors

MOST VALUABLE PLAYER David Kiley, Casa Colina Condors

CAPTAIN JAMES S. URE SPORTSMANSHIP AWARD Mike Schlappi, Casa Colina Condors



In consolation action, the Sparks' Joe Sutika tries to slip away from Music City's Reggie Goodman.



Past NWBA Commissioner Tim Nugent presents the prestigious Captain James S. Ure Sportsmanship Award to Mike Schlappi, Casa Colina Condors.



Milch Stephens, head coach of the Music City Lightning, accepts the 42nd NWBT consolation third-place trophy from NWBA Vice President Ralph Smith. Milch vows to bring his team back next year to regain the championship crown.

#### **NWBA HALL OF FAME 1990**

Billy Kennedy, from Long Island, NY, was inducted into the NWBA Hall of Fame for 1990. Billy started playing wheelchair basketball in 1950 with the Queens Chairoteers, and in 1953, as a Bulova student, he played for the Bulova Watchmakers. He moved on to play for the Brooklyn Whirlaways and Pan Am Jets before retiring in 1965. He coached the Hofstra Rolling Dutchmen from 1966-70.

Billy's 4'2" frame was a stark contrast to the mostly Class III players. Under the old classification system, Kennedy was a Class I (most severely disabled), yet he was selected to the All American Teams in 1955, '58, and '60.

Billy was a most skilled and highachieving player for one so disabled. He was one of the pieneers who carried the ball in the years when the game was in its infancy. Known as the "Little Guy With the Big Heart and Sense of Humor," Billy has earned his spot in the NWBA annals.

At right: Billy Kennedy, from Long Island, NY, who played NWBA ball in the early 1950's and '60's, showed up for the Legends Game on his way to induction into the NWBA Hall of Fame.





National Wheelchair Basketball Association Hall of Fame Inductees of the past and the present gather for their 1990 yearbook photo: (Back row, from left) George Veenstra (1988), Al Youakim (1983), Saul Walger (1976), Tim Nugent (1973), Bill Mathis (1984), Bill Johnson (1973), Ed Owen (1987), Jack Graff (1984), Billy Clem (1975), Mary Lapicola (1988), and Floyd Wilkins (1976). (Front row, from left) Clift Crase (1989), Carl Cash (1975), Dean Nosker (1989), Bill Fairbanks (1985), Fritz Krauth (1978), 1990 inductee Billy Kennedy, Norm McGee (1987), and Danny Vaccaro (1979).



a physical advantage foul (PAF) that resulted in two successful technical free throws by Kiley. Following these free throws, the technical foul turned the ball over to Casa, which subsequently extended their lead to 13 (49-36) on a basket by Campos with only 6:07 remaining. Kazee's missed shot and concurrent PAF amounted to a 6-point turnaround in Casa's favor.

Casa Colina then cruised to an 8point victory (57-49) and their seventh NWBA title of the decade, in spite of some desperate shots, two of them successful 3-pointers by Schenebeck and Kazee.

Seven out of ten championships: That is the stuff of which dynasties are crowned. Adolph Rupp, the University of Kentucky's legendary coach whose bust perches proudly outside of Memorial Coliseum, would undoubtedly have paid tribute to the Condors' greatness. Casa Colina's coach, John Chambers, paid tribute to his team's defense, stating that Casa Colina had to prevent the pass to Arkansas' big men: "We had to stop the pass inside, and we did."

True. But Curtis Bell's absence did something as well. It gave us a welldeserved MVP performance by the gifted Kiley. And it brought Miller and

#### S'NS TOP 25

- 1. Casa Colina Condors
- 2. Arkansas Rollin' Razorbacks
- 3. Music City Lightning
- 4. Detroit Sparks
- 5. Los Angeles Stars
- 6. Fresno Red Rollers
- 7. Alberta Northern Lights
- 8. Dallas Mavericks
- 9. Grand Rapids Pacers
- 10. Golden State '76ers
- 11. Alabama Rolling Tide
- 12. Long Beach Flying Wheels
- 13. New Jersey Blue Devils
- 14. Twin City Spinners
- 15. Toledo Silver Streaks
- 16. Chattanooga Big Wheels
- 17. Chicago Bulis
- 18. Lakeshore Pioneers
- 19. Denver Nuggets
- 20. Dallas Texans
- 21. San Diego City Knights
- 22. Baltimore Ravens
- 23. Willamette Rolling Rebels
- 24. Ottawa Royals
- 25. Colorado Rolling Cowboys

Campos out of Bell's prodigious shadow. Seizing the opportunity. they, too, played the type of defense and offense worthy of an MVP. Finally, the Condors demonstrated

that they were the team of the eighties and now, perhaps, the team of the nineties, as well.

Music City defeated Detroit in the consolation game (75-67), as Reg Goodman and "Bird" Alsup scored 24 and 18 points for the victors.

Thanks to Bill Johnson for serving as a spotter and for providing valuable commentary.

## 66 COACHES' COMMENTS 99

"Our defense was the most significant factor in our victory, particularly on top, preventing the pass to their big men. Campos and Kiley played awesome defense on top. Miller and Echols denied position inside. We had to stop the pass inside, and we did."

> -John Chambers Casa Colina Condors

"Our poor shooting demonstrated it was our first time in the NWBT championship. We were apprehensive and cautious. Casa's pressure defense turned our guards away. preventing them from getting the ball inside. A critical call came against Schenebeck. That charging call on him would have reduced the score to 5."

> Harry Vines Arkansas Rollin' Razorbacks

"Defense was the name of the game. Defense creates offense. That's what Casa did. They kept Arkansas away from the basket."

> -Mitch Stephens Music City Lightning

"Experience was the most important factor in the championship game, Kiley and his teammates executed when they had to."

> -Denver Branum Detroit Sparks

"Arkansas' team is a testimony to their coach. But they ran up against an experienced team that picked in the backcourt, creating many three-on-two situations. Casa Colina's defense was the key. Arkansas' potential is great."

> Carl Cash Richmond Rim Riders

"Casa Colina's experience, individually and collectively, made a big difference. They were very floorwise. Dave Kiley played an exceptional game. Arkansas played very well for a young team. Casa Colina's quickness was too much for Arkansas!

> -Tim Nugent University of Illinois

"The most glaring quality was Casa's defense, Without Bell, they wanted to shut down Arkansas' inside game. That was their mission, and they succeeded. They shut down Coughlin, who may have the highest field goal percentage in the game."

> -Frank Burns Casa Colina Condors

\*Casa had too much experience and too much talent against a well-coached team with average talent."

> -H. McCormack Music City Lightning

"The two teams were evenly matched, but I think the most compelling and all-consuming factor to the key to victory was that Casa wanted to prove to themselves and the NWBA teams that they could win without Bell. It was generally believed that they were not as good without Curt. They shot down that assumption once and for all. The MVP play of Kiley and all-around play of Campos assured Casa's victory.'

> -Bill Johnson Long Beach Flying Wheels

### 6TH ANNUAL NWBA LEGENDS GAME

The West whupped 'em! The 6th NWBA Legends Game was fun for the over-the-hill guys. The West won once again, 51-37.

Many said it was the superb coaching of the West's NWBA Hall of Famer Bill Johnson, who out-"thunk" the East's frustrated coach. past commissioner and NWBA founder Tim Nugent. Some said it was the sleek. agile West players. who were more lively and virile than the lethargic, lifeless East squad. Others said the East had a bench full of malcontents that even assistant coach Al Youakim couldn't contain. In fact, some of 'em snuck over to the West's side, copped some West jorseys, and posed as West

players. Yet other B-ball buffs said the West had the officials bought and paid for from the opening tip.

Who knows??!!

What is known is that the 8 West and 11 East players managed to straggle up and down the court and complete two 20-minute halves. (Which is quite an accomplishment in itself.) Actually, there was some of that flashy brilliance that carried many of these wheelchair basketball stars of yore into the record books and pages of NWBA's storied history.



Forty-six-year-old Scorge Veenstra, retired Springfield Spoke Joskey, and 55-year-old Roger Davis, who still plays for Music City, keep the ball away from a much-younger Tip Yiboulot, Phil Ramsey, and Jack Graff. The West beat the East in the 6th Annual Legends Game.

#### **WEST LEGENDS**

Phil Ramsey, AR
Fritz Krauth, CA
Bill Duncan, CA
Larry Steffers, CA
Bill Fairbanks, CA
Tip Thiboutot, MA
Dean Nosker, MO
Dave White, MO
Coach Bill Johnson, CA

#### EAST LEGENDS

George Veenstra, IL
Marv Lapicola, IL
Saul Welger, NY
Jack Graff, NY
Jim Cottey, NY
Billy Kennady, NY
Roger Davis, TN
Carl Cash, VA
Bill Meyer, VA
Leland Meeks, SA
Terry Hanson, MN
Coach Tim Nugent, IL

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