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TRAIL BLAZERS 102, BULLS 95

# Pippen: My last year

## Vet to bow out of NBA at end of this season

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PORTLAND, Ore.—In an emotional night that began with a standing ovation during player introductions and ended with a gut-wrenching 102-95 overtime loss to the Trail Blazers, Scottie Pippen dropped the subtle hints and drops of practical purposes announced his retirement at the end of this season Saturday.

"I can pretty much assure you that was my last trip to the Rose Garden," Pippen said in the postgame locker room.

Asked what it would take for him to change his mind, Pippen smiled.

"A transplant," he said.

Pippen will take the fast track to Springfield, Mass. after a 17-year career that includes six NBA championships and a nod as one of the game's 50 greatest players.

Pippen turned back the clock with 17 points and seven rebounds in a season-high 35 minutes against Portland in a game that featured the return of Tyson Chandler.

But the Bulls still blew a 10-point fourth-quarter lead and extended their road losing streak against Western Conference teams to 25 games.

Raished Wallace's three-pointer with 2 minutes 53 seconds remaining put Portland ahead for good and his steal and emphatic alley-oop slam on a pass from Damon Stoudamire pushed the lead to 98-95.

Eddy Curry, who had a season-high 27 points, followed with two missed free throws with 1:11 remaining. Portland then maintained possession following two missed shots, forcing the Bulls to foul Stoudamire with 15.1 seconds left. His two free throws iced matters.

"It's hard to beat an ex-NBA player and take millions of dollars, you have to play that hard for 78 to 79 of 82 games," coach Scott Skiles said.

Wallace led Portland with 28 points.

The Bulls missed a chance to win in regulation when Curry got called for an ill-advised goaltending call on Wallace with 38.4 seconds left in the game.

After misses by both teams, Antonja Davis' last-second shot missed badly.

Off the court, veterans are questioning the effort and commitment of younger players.

The starting lineup got changed—Pippen for Ronald Dupree—and Skiles put Curry on warning for another change. Skiles said players are no longer a thing of the past.

The Bulls have lost 10 of 11 by an average margin of defeat of 12.2 points.

"We're not protecting the basket," Skiles said. "I have to find a way to get guys out there who will do that."

That's both an indictment of Curry and a welcome back for Chandler, a committee Chandler, who was practically hyperventilating with excitement before the game.

Out since Nov. 25—a span of 32 games—with a sore back, Chandler finally was cleared to play, although his minutes will be limited to about 15 minutes for the foreseeable future.

Chandler had three points and three rebounds in 12 minutes on Saturday. To make room for him, Chris Jefferies came down with a right ankle sprain and landed on the injured list.

Chandler averaged 13 points and 10.5 rebounds in the 10 games he played in before Saturday. More important, he often lit a fire under his teammates, particularly teammate, Curry.

"When me and Eddy are out there, we feed off each other a lot," Chandler said. "I definitely think with me out there, he'll be more comfortable. I can communicate with him and I think he'll respond well."

Portland fans responded to Pippen well, serenading one of the greatest Blazers ever with lengthy standing ovation during player introductions. Pippen, who played the last four seasons here, waved his appreciation.

| BULLS | MIN | FG-A | FT-A | REB | A | PF | PTS |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Brown | 40 | 7-13 | 0-0 | 1-5 | 3 | 4 | 17 |
| Curry | 42 | 1-5 | 0-0 | 1-12 | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| Davis | 42 | 4-12 | 2-2 | 2-7 | 2 | 3 | 10 |
| Crawford | 42 | 3-11 | 2-6 | 0-4 | 5 | 4 | 8 |
| Hinrich | 39 | 5-11 | 0-0 | 0-4 | 5 | 4 | 11 |
| Pippen | 35 | 6-11 | 4-5 | 2-5 | 3 | 3 | 17 |
| Chandler | 12 | 1-1 | 1-2 | 1-2 | 0 | 2 | 3 |
| Jefferies | 5 | 0-0 | 0-0 | 0-1 | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| Totals | 237 | 28-62 | 9-15 | 7-40 | 19 | 19 | 68 |

**Percentages:** FG .452. FT .571. **Three-point goals:** 5-16 (Pippen 3-6, Brown 2-4, Crawford 0-2). **Team rebounds:** 5. **Blocked shots:** 1 (Curry). **Turnovers:** 14 (Chandler, Pippen). **Technicals:** Curry, Crawford 2, Bulls team. **Ejections:** None. **Fouled out:** None. **Attendance:** 21,273. **Officials:** Hugh Evans, Mike Callahan, Victor Kats.

| PORTLAND | MIN | FG-A | FT-A | REB | A | PF | PTS |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Wallace | 35 | 9-15 | 9-9 | 7-9 | 2 | 3 | 28 |
| Stoudamire | 42 | 7-16 | 2-2 | 0-2 | 7 | 4 | 18 |
| Wallace | 37 | 12-18 | 2-3 | 2-7 | 2 | 5 | 26 |
| Anderson | 40 | 6-17 | 0-0 | 2-7 | 4 | 3 | 15 |
| Frederick | 27 | 3-7 | 0-0 | 0-1 | 1 | 2 | 6 |
| Bonzelevski | 15 | 1-3 | 0-0 | 1-3 | 0 | 4 | 2 |
| Patterson | 15 | 1-3 | 0-0 | 1-3 | 2 | 4 | 2 |
| Person | 14 | 2-5 | 0-0 | 1-2 | 0 | 3 | 5 |
| Ruffin | 5 | 0-1 | 0-0 | 0-0 | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| Totals | 240 | 41-85 | 13-14 | 14-34 | 18 | 26 | 102 |

**Percentages:** FG .482. FT .750. **Three-point goals:** 2-6 (Stoudamire 1-3, Wallace 1-3). **Team rebounds:** 4. **Blocked shots:** 1 (Wallace). Stoudamire, Bonzelevski, Wallace). **Turnovers:** 12 (Stoudamire 3, Wallace 3, Person 3, Anderson 2, Ruffin, Bonzelevski). **Technicals:** None. **Ejections:** None. **Fouled out:** None. **Officials:** Mike Callahan, Victor Kats, Bernie Adams.

| Bulls | 21 | 27 | 20 | 19 | 7—95 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Trail Blazers | 24 | 21 | 22 | 24 | 11—102 |

A: 21,273 (19,980). **Officials:** Mike Callahan, Victor Kats, Bernie Adams.