

# DESERT



# CLASSIC

PHOENIX \* ARIZONA

# Ward of the Court

**O**n Nov. 5, 1993, Nick Van Exel scored 23 points, the most for a Los Angeles Lakers rookie in an

opening game since Magic Johnson's 26 on Oct. 12, 1979, leading the new-look Lakers to a 116-108 upset of the defending Western Conference champion Phoenix Suns. The 6-foot-1, 170-pound point guard from Cincinnati followed his NBA debut with a 19-point effort the next day in Seattle.

Meanwhile, in Detroit, perennial All-Star Isiah Thomas missed seven games in November with a broken hand, and rookie Lindsey

Hunter of Jackson State stepped into the starting point guard role and excelled, averaging 14.7 points per game and leading the Pistons in assists in three games. Thomas has

since returned to the starting lineup, but Hunter earned more minutes than he was getting before Thomas got hurt.

Van Exel and Hunter are just two of the NBA's top

rookies who made names for themselves and raised their stock in the draft by playing well in the Nike Desert Classic, the nation's premier All-Star tournament for college seniors which was held at the America West Arena for the first time last year.

Players are divided into four squads and participate in six days of games and practice sessions under the guidance of former NBA head coaches.

Last year, 25 of the 36 Nike Desert Classic players were selected in the NBA Draft, including 11 first round picks — Hunter, George Lynch (Los Angeles Lakers), Scott Haskin (Indiana), Rex Walters (New Jersey), Greg Graham (Charlotte), Scott Burrell (Charlotte), Ervin Johnson (Seattle), Sam Cassell (Houston), Corie Blount (Chicago), Geert Hamink (Orlando) and Malcolm Mackey (Phoenix).

Van Exel was the Lakers' second-round selection, the 37th player taken overall.

This year, the Nike Desert Classic will be held April 18-23 at the Arena. Game sessions, open to the public, will be played on the evenings of the 20th and 21st and at noon on the 23rd. The Classic will feature the NBA Jam Session presented by Fleeer, which includes a traveling, interactive series of exhibits in which fans can participate and test their basketball skills in

## Player Roster\*

Name	Position	Height	Weight	School
Adrian Autry	Guard	6-3	207	Syracuse
Bill Curley	Forward	6-9	235	Boston College
Tony Dumas	Guard	6-5	190	Missouri-KC
Howard Eisley	Guard	6-2	180	Boston College
Dwayne Fontana	Forward	6-4	218	Arizona State
Travis Ford	Guard	5-9	155	Kentucky
Anthony Goldwire	Guard	6-1	184	Houston
Brian Grant	Forward	6-8	245	Xavier
Kenny Harris	Guard	6-1	188	Virginia Comm.
Arturas Karnishovas	Forward	6-9	220	Seton Hall
Antonio Lang	Forward	6-8	207	Duke
Billy McCaffrey	Guard	6-4	185	Vanderbilt
Jim McIlvaine	Center	7-1	245	Marquette
Greg Minor	Guard	6-6	222	Louisville
Eric Mobley	Center	6-11	250	Pittsburgh
Wesley Person	Guard	6-6	193	Auburn
Eric Piatkowski	Forward	6-6	215	Nebraska
Kevin Rankin	Center	6-11	265	Northwestern
Khalid Reeves	Guard	6-2	205	Arizona
Carlos Rogers	Forward	6-11	220	Tennessee State
Kevin Salvadori	Forward	6-11	230	North Carolina
Shawnelle Scott	Center	6-10	255	St. Johns
Michael Smith	Forward	6-8	230	Providence
Stevin Smith	Guard	6-2	205	Arizona State
Shon Tarver	Guard	6-5	214	UCLA
Deon Thomas	Forward	6-9	238	Illinois
B.J. Tyler	Guard	6-1	182	Texas
Charlie Ward	Guard	6-1	190	Florida State
Kendrick Warren	Forward	6-8	215	Virginia Comm.
Jeff Webster	Forward	6-7	220	Oklahoma
Monty Williams	Forward	6-8	224	Notre Dame
Steve Woodberry	Guard	6-4	195	Kansas

\*As of 4/1/94