



JERMAINE O'NEAL and the Indiana Pacers deflect in vain Al Harrington and the Golden State Warriors who win, 106-101, in their game Sunday. AP

'Helpless' injured top pick frustrated

TORONTO—Greg Oden is glad the Portland Trail Blazers are winning—he just wishes he was part of the fun. Oden, the No. 1 draft pick who had knee surgery in September and is out for the season, has watched from the sideline as his Portland teammates have won 17 of their past 18 games.

"I would just like to be out there to be able to say 'You know what, I'm out here, I'm working hard and I'm helping these guys win,'" Oden said before Sunday's game at Toronto. "I've got to keep in mind that I can't do anything but help myself and get myself ready for next year."

His recovery is expected to take six to 12 months. So far, Oden said everything is progressing well.

"The knee's going good," Oden said. "The rehab is going great. I feel great."

Oden had an MRI after his knee became swollen during preseason workouts. Team physician Dr. Don Roberts performed the surgery. Other high-profile players who have undergone the procedure include Jason Kidd, Amare Stoudemire and former Blazer Zach Randolph.

Despite not playing a single game as a pro, Oden has been learning a lot about life in the NBA as he watches from the bench.

"It's really helping me with my con-

night out, you just feel more comfortable that when I come in next year, I'm going to be ready to play against them."

Oden averaged 15.7 points and 9.6 rebounds last season as a freshman at Ohio State. Two of his Buckeye teammates, guards Mike Conley Jr. and Daequan Cook, were also first-round draft picks last June.

Conley was the fourth pick by the Memphis Grizzlies, and Cook was the 21st selection by the Miami Heat.

Oden's been keeping tabs on both.

"One of the main reasons I'm on this road trip is because I go to Miami to see Daequan," Oden said. "They're both starting and they're both doing really well. Last time I talked to Mike was right before his first start, when he was at Indiana. Those guys are doing good."

King ticketed for speeding

IN Medina, Ohio, LeBron James was ticketed by the State Highway Patrol for driving 101 mph on an interstate highway.

The Cleveland Cavaliers star was cited in a 65-mph zone on Interstate 71 near Medina at 2:43 a.m. on December 30—his 23rd birthday.

Cleveland attorney Colin Jennings filed a not guilty plea for James on Tuesday in Medina Municipal Court. A hearing