

Parkour Party: *The newest extreme sport, which evolved from French military training, has many enthused followers, Griffin Arellano investigates*



Photo Courtesy of Urban Freeflow

The Geto Boys have long held a respected opinion on what it means to be a real gangster, deciding that “real gangsters don’t run fast.” Their credibility is up in the air now, however, with the arrival of the unorthodox sport parkour.

Of course, parkour isn’t just about running. The main emphasis is on overcoming obstacles fluidly by combining gymnastic style moves with vaults, so that the traceur (runner) goes over and through instead of around. The result is an almost theatrical process that at the same time is incredibly efficient.

The inklings of parkour began with the French Georges Hébert, a naval officer who observed the impeccable grace with which the indigenous people of Africa moved through their surroundings. Around this he developed the Natural Method, a training system that focuses on using obstacles to one’s advantage. This method was used throughout the French military,

filtering down to rescue training and, eventually, Raymond Belle. It was Belle’s son David that saw the potential for an urban translation and started a group with his friends to begin creating a formal sport out of it.

It took years and years of work with his team, but when ad agencies started asking, David and his fellow traceurs were ready. The following influx of amateurs inspired by videos and commercials legitimized the sport.

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“I discovered parkour in high school by seeing videos online,” says Ryan Ford, aka Demon, the founder and leader of Colorado Parkour. “I began to try some things on my own and was hooked.”

Now Colorado Parkour is internationally recognized and respected as one of America’s premier traceur groups, representing those in cities like Boulder, Denver, and Fort Collins. Certainly, the natural terrain of Colorado’s mountains and foothills draws traceurs, but “hot spots” are most

often found in urban environments, where the close proximity of diverse features make areas attractive.

Regardless of the complexity of the terrain, the traceur him/herself is outfitted as simply as possible. Often the only provision is a pair of shoes, and some go without even those. “Because of this, you can do parkour anytime and anywhere,” says Ford.

The way in which most traceurs learn their limits is through extensive training and practice, building through strength, agility, and acrobatic training programs. Of course, the most important piece of conditioning is going out and running parkour. The combination of all of the physical skills translates into an exercise in mental capability, an attribute of equal importance to the combination of physical capabilities.

In the coming years, parkour may begin to change the way we run, as it spreads across the globe. It is undeniably a strong resource for educating people about how to better interact with their environments physically and mentally, and its enjoyment factor makes it more likely to catch on. Certainly, it is redefining what it can mean to turn and run.

After a Rough Offseason, the NBA Season Begins.

Trades, gambling, and talented new players are big news leading into the 07-08 NBA Season.

By Kevin C Keller

October 30th 2007 is the date of the first jump ball of the 2007-2008 NBA season. This jump between the San Antonio Spurs and the Portland Trailblazers will end one of the busiest off-seasons in NBA history. It included major trades, the most talent in the draft since 2003, which had Carmelo Anthony, LeBron James, and Dwyane Wade, and plenty of controversy. It all leads to an exciting NBA season.

The leagues biggest controversy since the Detroit and Indiana brawl came from referee Tim Donaghy. He was investigated by the FBI for betting on games that he refereed, and later pleaded guilty to all charges. This caused major uproar in the whole NBA community. Players wondered how this affected their games, fans were angry, and commissioner David Stern put in new rules, such as technical fouls being reviewed, to prevent referee inference on fair games.

The second biggest headline this offseason is that Kevin Garnett got

traded from the Timberwolves to the Celtics. They also acquired Ray Allen, one of the best shooters in NBA history, from the Supersonics. Also, through all this movement they managed to keep the best player they had before the movement, Paul Pierce. The Celtics completely changed their roster through various trades, and with it they have emerged as a power out of the east. This team is the best from Boston since the Larry Bird era, on paper. But the big question is will these three all-stars have chemistry on the court.

Greg Oden and Kevin Durant were the two top players in this summer’s much anticipated draft, and they went number one and number two respectively. Oden went to the Portland Trailblazers, while Durant was picked by the Seattle Supersonics. These acquisitions

are potentially the beginning of a new era for both teams. These two teams will build their teams around these two players, and even though it has been announced that Oden will sit the whole season out because of knee surgery, the Trailblazers will still build their team around him.

This season will have plenty of excitement, but in the end only eight teams from each conference will be in the playoffs.

From the Western Conference, the best team has to be the San Antonio Spurs, the defending NBA champions, they have their big three returning, Tim Duncan, Tony Parker, and Manu Ginobili, along with key role players like Robert Horry, Michael Finley, and Bruce Bowen. Other contenders include the Phoenix Suns, the Denver Nuggets, the Houston Rockets, the Los Angeles Lakers, the Utah Jazz., and last the Dallas Mavericks. Those eight teams have the best chances this year. The east isn’t as good as they

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Kevin Garnett, shown here posting-up, got traded from the Timberwolves to the Celtics

Photo Courtesy of David Brewster

west even with the Celtics becoming a good team. The defending Eastern Conference champions are the Cleveland Cavaliers, and they should be a decent team again, but they won’t return to the NBA finals. Other potential contenders include are the Miami Heat, the Detroit Pistons, the Boston Celtics, the Chicago Bulls, the Washington Wizards, the New Jersey Nets, and

last the Orlando Magic.

The NBA has geared up for a great season, with a busy offseason, that featured a talented draft, referee controversy, and big trades. Based on what’s happened in the last few months, what will ensue is almost unpredictable.