

With Frye cooking, Knicks burn Blazers

THE STAR-LEDGER

NBA

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BY MATT BEARDMORE
FOR THE STAR-LEDGER

NEW YORK — As the final 20 seconds ticked off the clock yesterday, rookie guard Nate Robinson dribbled up the court as 17,057 at Madison Square Garden stood and cheered their once-again beloved Knicks.

"I've been dying to hear it," said Robinson, who made his first three shots and finished with **KNICKS 103** and **BLAZERS 92** seven points. "I've wanted the crowd to feed off us, it was great."

After dropping seven of their first nine games, including the last two of their disappointing West Coast trip, the Knicks returned to the win column yesterday — the first home victory for coach Larry Brown — by beating the Portland Trail Blazers, 103-92.

"It's very important to win at home, especially after a trip like that," guard Jamal Crawford said.

The crowd that gathered for the matinee had plenty to cheer about as rookie Channing Frye continued his strong push for more playing time, scoring 17 of his 20 points in the second half. And the fans also got a little taste of Brooklyn as cousins Stephon Marbury and Portland guard Sebastian Telfair each poured in 27 points and went at each other as if they were holding court in Coney Island.

"I thought they both were spectacular," Brown said. "I respected what they both did. Sebastian is getting better every second of every game. He made some plays tonight that you don't see many people make."

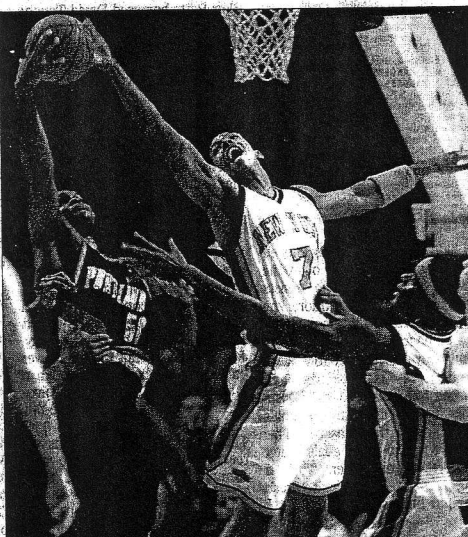
Telfair (six rebounds, seven assists) scored 13 of his 19 first-half points in the second quarter, which included two 3s and a fall-away flip shot from the baseline over Malik Rose.

"He played very well tonight," Marbury said of Telfair. "I think this was his best game as a pro. He read the pick-and-roll well and he did everything he had to do."

Marbury, who sat the final 6 minutes of Friday's loss in Denver, attacked Telfair from the opening tipoff and would not relent. Telfair picked up two fouls guarding Marbury in the first half, as did reserve guard Jarrett Jack.

"Steph, overall, was phenomenal," Brown said. "I think he was energized because he wanted to play well, he wanted to compete and he played like he's capable of playing."

But so did the Blazers — at



KATHY WILLENS/ASSOCIATED PRESS

Knicks rookie Channing Frye, who scored 20 points on 8-of-10 shooting yesterday at the Garden, battles Blazers' Zach Randolph for a rebound.

least in the first 24 minutes. With 10 points from forward Darius Miles and 11 from forward Zach Randolph, Portland converted a blazing 59 percent (20-of-34) from the field en route to a 57-54 half-time lead.

"First half, we had a hard time stopping them," Brown said. "Second half, we made them turn the ball over, we defended well, held them to one shot."

The Knicks, outscored by 22 in the second half in the Nov. 9 loss to the Blazers in Portland, were sparked in the third quarter yesterday by Robinson, Frye, Rose, Crawford and Maurice Taylor.

"Our third quarters have not been that good at all," said Crawford, who continued his hot shooting with 12 of his 19 points in the first half.

With the Knicks leading 71-70, Robinson checked in for Marbury and the Knicks rolled off eight straight points during the next 2:06. Frye was on target, nailing a 21-footer and a 6-footer and Taylor capped the run with a dunk as the lead expanded to 79-70.

"By the end of the season he is going to be one of the best rookies in the league," Marbury said of Frye, who played his college

KNICKS 103, Trail Blazers 92

	Min	FG	FT	Reb	A	P	PTS
Miles	38:18	5-13	6-8	2-7	5	3	16
Randolph	39:31	8-13	1-3	0-2	3	3	17
Przybilla	20:43	2-2	1-3	1-2	1	3	5
Monia	22:56	3-4	0-0	0-4	1	3	8
Telfair	40:12	8-12	8-11	1-6	7	5	27
Dixon	25:22	5-7	0-0	0-1	1	2	13
Rattiff	22:56	0-0	0-0	0-1	0	2	0
Jack	7:28	0-0	0-0	0-0	1	2	0
Patterson	11:48	0-4	2-2	1-1	0	3	2
Outlaw	10:26	2-5	0-0	0-0	1	1	4
Totals	240:00		5-24	20	30	92	

Shooting: Field Goals: 33-60, 55.0. Free Throws: 18-27, 66.7. 3-Point Goals: 8-13, 61.5. (Blazers: 3-3, Telfair 3-5, Monia 2-2, Randolph 0-1, Outlaw 0-2). Team Rebounds: 13. Team Turnovers: 23 (24 PTS). Blocked Shots: 5 (Przybilla 3, Rattiff 2). Turnovers: 23 (Miles 7, Telfair 3, Dixon 3, Patterson 2, Rattiff 1, Przybilla 2, Randolph 2, Monia 2). Steals: 5 (Telfair 3, Patterson, Outlaw). Technical Fouls: Defensive Three Second, 7:25 second.

	Min	FG	FT	Reb	A	P	PTS
Knicks							
Davis	24:06	3-4	0-0	3-5	1	4	6
Rose	28:18	2-5	2-2	2-7	2	2	6
Curry	17:07	3-4	6-10	0-2	0	1	12
Crawford	38:29	5-14	7-7	0-5	4	1	19
Marbury	41:19	9-16	9-11	0-1	8	3	27
Frye	23:58	8-10	4-5	3-6	1	2	20
Ariza	11:20	1-4	0-0	1-1	1	2	2
Robinson	16:28	3-9	1-1	3-5	2	7	
Lee	12:01	0-1	2-2	0-0	1	2	2
Taylor	18:04	1-2	0-0	0-0	0	2	2
Butler	8:50	0-2	0-0	1-2	0	1	0
Totals	240:00		12-34	19	27	103	

Shooting: Field Goals: 35-71, 49.3. Free Throws: 31-38, 81.6. 3-Point Goals: 27-48, 56.3. (Knicks: 2-4, Marbury 0-3). Team Rebounds: 8. Team Turnovers: 13 (19 PTS). Blocked Shots: None. Turnovers: 13 (Crawford 4, Marbury 3, Frye 2, Curry 2, Ariza, Taylor). Steals: 8 (Rose 2, Davis 2, Marbury, Crawford, Butler, Taylor).

	Min	FG	FT	Reb	A	P	PTS
Portland	28	29	14	21	—	92	
KNICKS	26	28	27	12	—	103	

A-17,057 (19,763). T-2:17. Officials—Jim Clark, Tom Washington, Michael Henderson.

Crawford is picking up his game

KNICKS NOTEBOOK

BY MATT BEARDMORE
FOR THE STAR-LEDGER

NEW YORK — Although the Knicks have stumbled out of the block, losing seven of their first 10 games, guard Jamal Crawford has seen his production increase since averaging fewer than six points in his first three games.

"It hasn't translated into wins," said Crawford, who averaged 17.7 points last season. "As long as we win, I'm fine."

In the Knicks' past seven games, Crawford has shot 46 percent (43-of-94) from the field, including 31 percent (10-of-32) from beyond the 3-point arc. He has his average up to 13.7 points per game.

Crawford made his first start of the season in Portland on Nov. 9, recording a team-high 15 points in a 95-83 loss. The sixth-year guard also led the Knicks in scoring against Utah (20), a game the Knicks won, 73-62.

Crawford had 19 points yesterday as four Knicks scored in double figures.

"Coach puts me in position to succeed, and I just try and make plays," Crawford said.

■ **With 12 points** and two rebounds in the first half, it looked as if Edgy Curry was on his way to a huge afternoon. But the first-year Knick, who is averaging just 24 minutes per game, sat the second half with a strained left calf.

"I have been trying to play

through it, but it hurt a little bit," Curry said. "It got a little sore as I played. I just have to take care of it so that it is not a nagging injury."

■ **Maybe he knew** something the Stephon Marbury detractors didn't. Before yesterday's game, coach Larry Brown sat with reporters and said of Marbury: "He's going to have a great game today, I can feel that."

Marbury shot 9-of-16, scored 27 points and handed out eight assists in 41 minutes.

■ **Channing Frye** is the first Knicks rookie to lead the team in scoring more than once in a season since Mark Jackson did it 11 times in the 1987-88 season.

The Associated Press contributed to this report.