

# 1986-87 Vintage Basketball Association Finals Preview

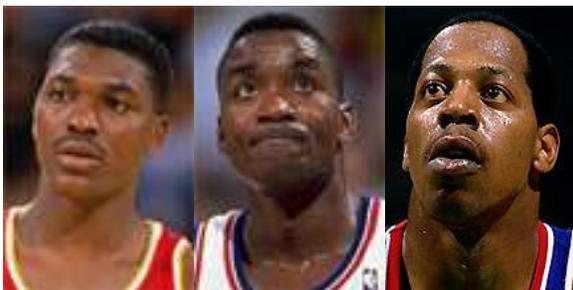


*63-31 Western Conference Champion Costa Mesa Condors*

vs

*89-2 Eastern Conference Champion Fresno Stars*

**Regular Season:** To quote Yogi Berra, it's "Deja Vu All Over Again". It's a rematch of the 1985-86 VBA Finals. The tables have turned a bit as the Fresno Stars will have the home court advantage. They had a miraculous season that most likely will never be repeated. They had the league's best offense, a new VBA record of 137.6 points per game. The Stars had the league's 5<sup>th</sup> best defense (105.4) for a whopping 32.2 differential. They set a VBA record for FG% at .579 en route to an 81-1 regular season. Their only loss was to the Defending Champion Costa Mesa Condors. Magic Johnson led the way, scoring 23.0 points to go along with 7.7 assists and 5.3 rebounds. Alvin Robertson averaged 22.1 points and had a league-best 4.0 steals per game. Doc Rivers handled point guard duties and finished tied for 2<sup>nd</sup> in the league with Mo Cheeks with 9.8 assists. He tallied 18.5 ppg as well. Fresno got 17+ points per game in limited roles from Paul Pressey and Patrick Ewing. The Defending VBA Champions, the Costa Mesa Condors, finished with the league's 4<sup>th</sup> best record at 55-27 and had the league's 2<sup>nd</sup> best offense, averaging 128.0 points per game. They also had the league's 2<sup>nd</sup> best point differential of 10.4. CMC finished 5<sup>th</sup> in both offensive and defensive FG%. Isiah Thomas was the league's passing leader, dishing out 12.6 assists per contest and he was 5<sup>th</sup> in the league with 2.8 steals. Zeke added 20.7 points per game as well. Akeem "The Dream" Olajuwon led the team in scoring with 21.6 points and was 3<sup>rd</sup> in the league with an 11.7 rebounding average. Vinnie "The Microwave" Johnson lived up to his nickname, averaging 17.2 points in only 27.6 minutes.



**Early Playoffs:** Fresno won their Eastern Semi-Final series 4-0 over the Andes Mountaineers. Andes did give them a wake-up call, losing by one in game one, 113-112. Magic scored 43 in the finale to average 26.3 for the series. Robertson was good for 17.3 and Rivers 16.5. Costa Mesa defeated a tough El Paso Scorpions team led by Michael Jordan. Olajuwon averaged 22.0 points and 11.5 rebounds. Isiah contributed 21.3 ppg and 12.7 assists. Purvis Short tallied 23.5 in the 4 games he played.

**Conference Finals:** In the **Eastern Finals**, Fresno defeated the Rocky Mountain Express 4-1. The series felt closer, as a few bounces in Rocky Mountain's way and it could have been a different story. Ewing was named Finals MVP averaging 28.2 points, 7.4 rebounds and 1.8 blocked shots. Magic chipped in 23.8 points and 7.6 assists. Michael Cage had a big series with 19.6 ppg and a 10.8 rebound average. Costa Mesa faced the Minnesota Muskies once again in the **Western Finals**. The Muskies were 69-13 in the regular season and had defeated the Condors all 6 regular season games. Olajuwon led the upset, taking home MVP honors averaging 21.5 points, 10.5 boards, 2.7 steals and 2.5 blocks. Costa Mesa took the series 4-2, winning all 3 games played in The Barn (MNM's home court). Zeke was good for 18.8 points and 13.8 assists, including a new VBA Playoff record of 22 assists in game 5. Short scored 22.0 in the 4 games he participated.

**Head-to-head:** Costa Mesa was the only team to defeat Fresno during the regular season, winning on the Stars' home court at Selland Arena on February 7<sup>th</sup>. The Stars had defeated the Condors on December 20<sup>th</sup>. Olajuwon averaged 28.5 in the two contests. Magic topped Fresno with 26.5. Below are the boxscores...

	1	2	3	4	Final									
Fresno	37	39	41	46	163									
Costa Mesa	43	33	32	41	149									

Fresno	Min	FG	3PT	FT	Reb	Ast	To	St	Bk	Pf	Pts	+/-	GS
Rivers	35:22	6-6	0-0	3-4	0-3	20	4	0	0	3	15	+15	22.5
Johnson, Mag	39:02	12-15	1-1	8-11	0-5	13	5	1	0	3	33	+11	31.5
Robertson, A	35:59	13-19	0-0	3-5	0-3	7	2	2	0	3	29	+17	24.7
Cage	27:58	6-8	0-0	3-4	2-4	1	3	0	0	5	15	+5	9.1
Ewing	21:40	8-12	0-0	5-9	0-8	1	1	2	1	5	21	+23	17.0
Pressey	26:45	9-10	0-0	0-0	2-5	3	7	2	0	4	18	+18	12.4
Rasmussen	17:50	5-11	0-0	0-0	1-3	0	0	0	0	4	10	-6	4.0
Kersey	16:53	3-6	0-1	5-6	1-4	1	0	1	1	3	11	+12	10.4
Coleman	14:17	5-5	0-0	1-2	1-3	0	1	0	1	4	11	+6	8.5
Wingate	4:13	0-0	0-0	0-0	0-1	0	0	0	0	0	0	+9	0.3
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>67-92</b>	<b>1-2</b>	<b>28-41</b>	<b>7-39</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>163</b>	<b>+14</b>	<b>168.0</b>
		<b>.728</b>	<b>.500</b>	<b>.683</b>									

Costa Mesa	Min	FG	3PT	FT	Reb	Ast	To	St	Bk	Pf	Pts	+/-	GS
Thomas, I	33:31	8-11	0-0	8-12	0-2	14	4	4	0	5	24	-3	26.3
Johnson, V	27:47	5-10	0-0	4-5	5-7	3	3	4	1	2	14	-7	15.7
Sellers	26:16	5-12	0-0	3-4	4-8	0	1	0	1	0	13	-3	9.9
Thompson, M	27:53	11-23	0-0	1-4	8-15	0	0	0	1	4	23	-31	16.9
Olajuwon	21:02	9-13	0-0	7-9	4-5	2	3	1	4	4	25	-5	22.4
Levingston	23:23	7-9	0-0	1-3	0-0	0	2	0	0	5	15	-4	6.7
Fields	18:13	5-10	0-0	0-0	0-1	1	0	0	0	2	10	-14	5.2
Pressley	17:59	4-11	0-0	0-0	2-5	3	3	0	0	3	8	-2	2.1
Vanos	15:51	3-6	0-0	1-2	4-8	3	2	0	0	4	7	-4	6.1
Matthews	14:03	2-3	0-0	2-2	0-1	2	2	0	0	2	6	-17	3.6
Corbin	10:16	0-4	0-0	0-0	0-0	0	0	1	0	0	0	-19	-1.8
Wennington	3:48	2-3	0-0	0-0	0-0	0	0	0	0	0	4	-1	2.7
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>61-115</b>	<b>0-0</b>	<b>27-41</b>	<b>27-52</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>149</b>	<b>-14</b>	<b>150.3</b>
		<b>.530</b>	<b>.000</b>	<b>.659</b>									

	1	2	3	4	Final
Costa Mesa	42	34	41	31	148
Fresno	36	38	26	35	135

Costa Mesa	Min	FG	3PT	FT	Reb	Ast	To	St	Bk	Pf	Pts	+/-	GS
Thomas, I	35:06	5-7	0-0	3-4	0-2	19	5	1	0	5	13	+3	17.6
Johnson, V	27:46	6-14	0-0	2-2	2-3	3	1	4	0	3	14	+31	12.2
Short	31:51	12-20	0-0	8-10	2-5	3	5	0	0	4	32	+24	19.8
Thompson, M	19:21	8-15	0-0	2-2	4-10	1	4	1	0	6	18	+7	10.6
Olajuwon	33:45	14-26	0-0	4-7	6-17	0	5	2	3	5	32	+7	22.8
Sellers	24:28	4-7	0-0	0-0	3-7	1	2	1	2	3	8	-4	7.9
Fields	18:21	2-8	0-0	0-0	1-4	0	2	1	0	5	4	-23	-2.2
Levingston	17:33	5-15	0-0	4-7	5-7	1	1	1	0	3	14	-3	7.9
Vanos	11:10	2-3	0-0	1-4	5-6	0	1	3	1	2	5	+8	8.2
Corbin	10:37	1-1	0-0	0-0	1-1	2	0	2	0	0	2	+3	5.8
Matthews	10:02	2-3	0-0	2-2	0-1	3	0	0	0	0	6	+12	7.1
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>61-119</b>	<b>0-0</b>	<b>26-38</b>	<b>29-63</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>148</b>	<b>+13</b>	<b>153.4</b>
		<b>.513</b>	<b>.000</b>	<b>.684</b>									

Fresno	Min	FG	3PT	FT	Reb	Ast	To	St	Bk	Pf	Pts	+/-	GS
Rivers	34:17	4-9	0-0	4-7	2-6	9	4	3	0	3	12	-7	12.8
Johnson, Mag	37:24	8-14	0-0	4-7	1-7	10	8	3	0	5	20	+1	14.7
Robertson, A	27:18	10-18	0-0	0-0	2-3	2	5	1	0	6	20	-9	8.1
Cage	38:54	10-17	0-0	5-10	4-9	1	3	2	2	4	25	-34	18.9
Ewing	19:57	4-8	0-0	1-6	2-5	4	0	0	2	5	9	-31	7.5
Pressey	32:09	5-10	1-1	6-7	0-1	4	6	2	3	3	17	-10	11.6
Kersey	17:05	7-12	0-1	3-4	3-7	1	1	2	3	0	17	+16	18.1
Rasmussen	13:01	6-9	0-0	3-4	2-3	0	0	0	1	3	15	+14	11.9
Dreiling	11:05	0-1	0-0	0-0	0-3	0	1	1	1	2	0	+6	0.1
Wingate	8:49	0-5	0-0	0-0	1-2	1	2	0	0	1	0	-11	-4.2
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>54-103</b>	<b>1-2</b>	<b>26-45</b>	<b>17-46</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>135</b>	<b>-13</b>	<b>130.4</b>
		<b>.524</b>	<b>.500</b>	<b>.578</b>									

