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# It's a Smallworld

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The room is filled with the noise of loud music, his friends shouting, and the endless sounds of his inner voice telling him that he only has ten minutes to finish before the noon deadline. A bag of chips in one hand and his trusty mouse in the other, Bronxite Anthony Galasso, is trying to make the biggest decision of the week. He has sat at the computer in the same position for so long that he is now numb.

"Hey, Jim, turn the game up! I'm trying to decide what trades to make," he yells to his friend.

Shaquille O'Neal steps to the free-throw line and clanks both shots.

"Oh man, that's minus two points! That's it; I've decided. I'm trading him!"

For those out there who eat, sleep, and breathe NBA basketball like the fanatic Galasso above, own-

ing and operating a basketball team might seem a lot like a fantasy. Well, that's exactly what it is; it's called "Fantasy Basketball," and thanks to the internet and free websites like [www.smallworld.com](http://www.smallworld.com), being a general manager can become a virtual reality.

There are many sites on the web that offer a chance to play this fun, fantasy game, but only a handful are free. The most popular is Smallworld.com. According to the Nielson Net Ratings, May 2000- October 2000, Smallworld is "#1 in stickiness among sports sites on the Internet," with over 100,000,000 page views per month. There

S C O R I N G	
Points:	+1.0pt
Rebounds:	+0.5pt
Assists:	+2.0pts
Steals:	+2.5pts
Blocks:	+2.5pts
Turnovers:	-1.0pt
Missed shots:	-0.5pt
Missed free-throws:	-0.1pt

are currently over 2,500,000 smallworld members from 160 countries in the world. Smallworld was also recently ranked by Media Metrix as "the #1 fastest growing web site."

Smallworld.com is not limited to just fantasy basketball; it also boasts fantasy games for hockey, baseball, football, golf, soccer, NCAA tournament games, and even politics. "Anything that people can argue about, we can base a game on," says 30-year-old Mark Jacobstein, chairman and CEO of Smallworld.

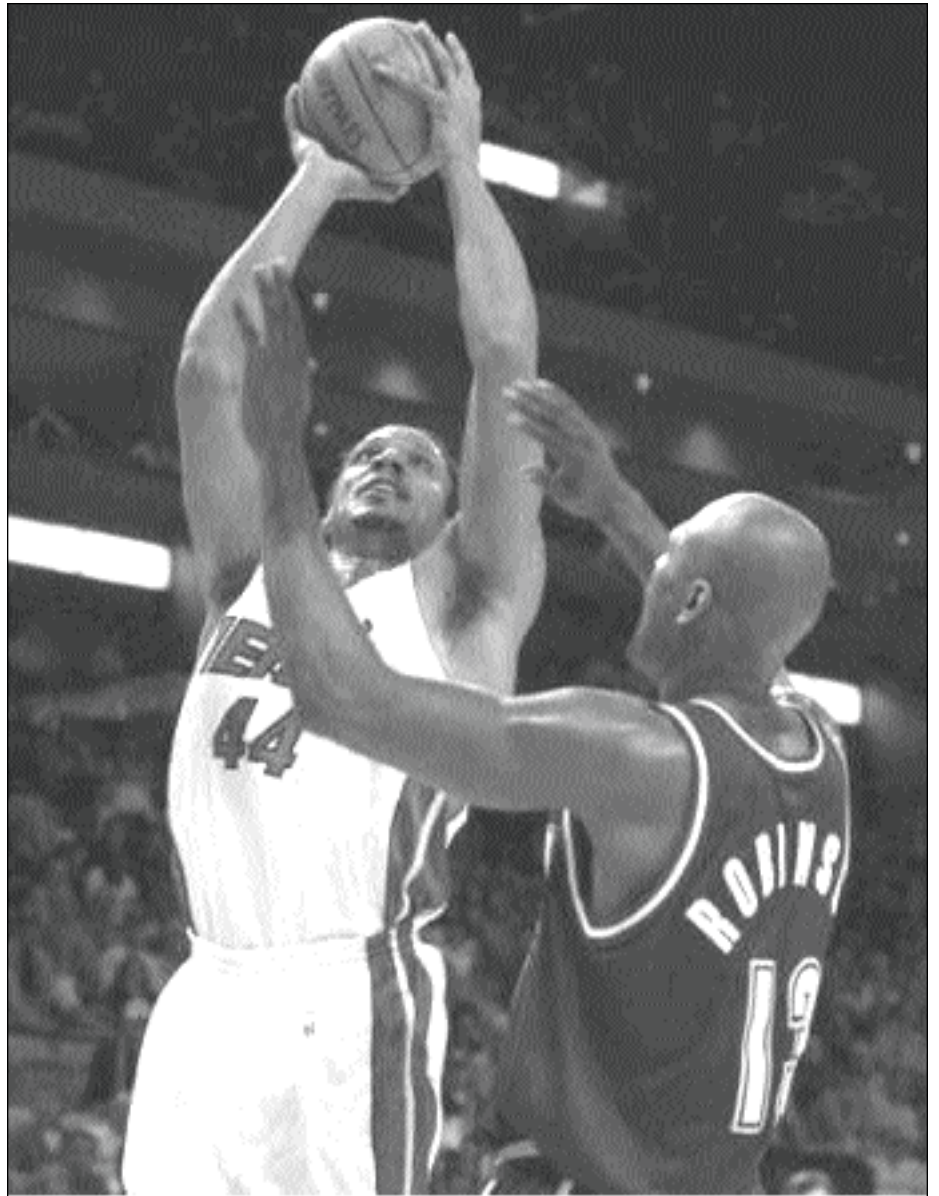
Smallworld, which was founded in 1994, builds games for some of the Internet's biggest media web sites such as FoxSports, Earthlink, Snap, MSNBC, Alta Vista, and

Lycos.

Before they can play at Smallworld.com, fantasy managers must fill out a registration sheet on their website, stating their name, address, online address, and phone number. Once registered, they are asked to choose a team name and password.

Smallworld.com offers fantasy managers the chance to create their own division, which they may invite family and friends to join. This way they can compete with their friends directly, with no strangers in their division. If they don't create their own or join one by invitation, players are randomly put into a division.

The object of the game is very simple: outscore everyone in your division, and in the world. Normally, there are twenty fantasy players in a given division, but there are currently over 300,000 players in the world. The scoring chart to the left explains how to score points.



To start the game, managers are given \$50,000,000 to build their team. Teams must consist of ten players: 4 guards, 4 forwards, and 2 centers. Every player is valued differently, and each day his value will

either increase or decrease, depending on how well he plays and how desirable he becomes. The more a player is bought, the more his price tag goes up. Conversely, if a player gets injured, his price will plummet since he will be out.

Do not misunderstand; though this is a fantasy game, scores are a result of how well players do in real games that take place each night in the NBA.

Managers are also given four trades per week with which to change their line-up. Trades are very useful when a player on the team is injured, is not playing up to par, or if simply is not playing many times that week.

The odds off winning

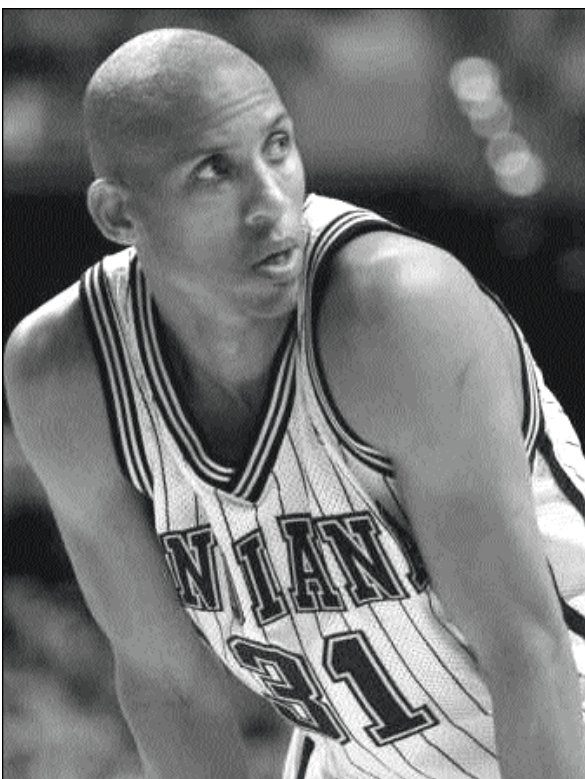
Since his trade to Miami, Brian Grant has been a sleeper for many fantasy basketball teams as he has been putting up huge numbers for Miami in the absence of Alonzo Mourning.

the Grand Prize, a weekend trip for two to the Basketball Hall of Fame Enshrinement Ceremony, are very slim, 1:300,000 at the very best, so Smallworld also gives weekly prizes to the ten players with the highest fantasy scores every week. Those who finish second through tenth in the world at the end of the season receive a Digital Video Camcorder.

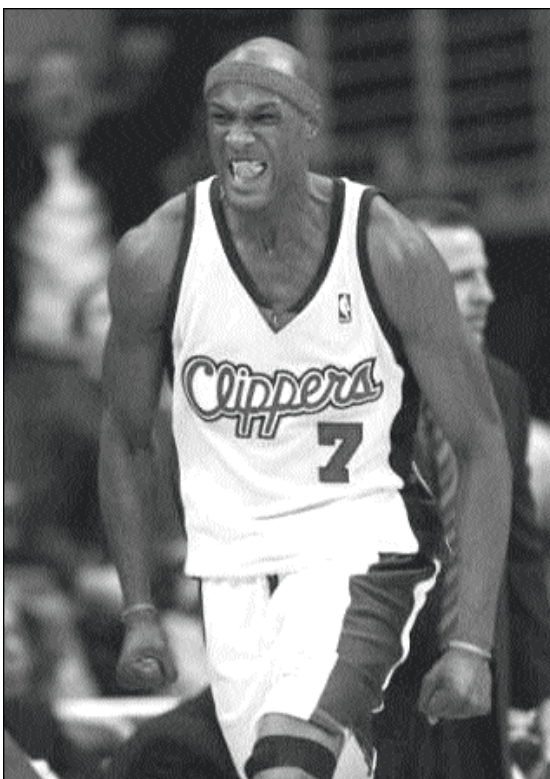
Some players may decide that since the chances of winning the Grand Prize are so low, they'll try to win a weekly prize by saving their trades and using them all in a week to make the most points possible in the shortest amount of time. Weekly winners, as well as those who finish 11th through 100th in the world, receive a Smallworld cap. Most interesting though, is the fact that Smallworld awards a \$1,000 scholarship to the college student with the highest fantasy point total.

Smallworld.com is a hit with Bronxites. "I've never really followed the NBA too much," says Bronxite and basketball fantasy player, Mike Palacia. "I used to only like college basketball, but now I'm always watching NBA games to see how my players are doing. 'Owning' a team made me learn about players in the NBA."

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FILE  
Reggie Miller seems reborn this season as he is again been a factor for many fantasy teams.



FILE  
As long as Lamar Odom keeps putting up big numbers, he will always be a fantasy threat. In just his second year in the league, his fantasy value keeps rising.