

= 1974 ? 75 Buffalo Braves season =

The 1974 ? 75 Buffalo Braves season was the fifth season for the expansion Buffalo Braves franchise in the National Basketball Association and its Atlantic Division . It was the team 's third season under head coach Jack Ramsay . The team 's official home arena was Buffalo Memorial Auditorium .

Despite losing three key players in Gar Heard , Jim McMillian and Ernie DiGregorio for long stretches , the Braves continued to improve . The Braves finished in 2nd place with a 49 ? 33 record , as Bob McAdoo captured the NBA MVP Award . McAdoo led the league with 34 @.@ 5 points per game , while adding 14 @.@ 1 rebounds per game , which was 4th best in the league .

In the 1975 NBA Playoffs , the Braves earned the franchise 's second playoff berth , this time against the Washington Bullets . The series went to seven games . However , the Braves lost game seven 115 ? 96 on the road . After the season , the team was occupied with legal wrangling surrounding the departure of minority owner and general manager Eddie Donovan .

= = Transactions = =

On August 29 , 1974 , the Braves purchased Dale Schlueter from the Atlanta Hawks . On September 4 , 1974 , Matt Guokas was traded along with a 1977 NBA Draft second round pick and a future second round draft pick to the Chicago Bulls for Bob Weiss . Bernie Harris was waived on January 20 , 1975 . Mike Macaluso did not return to play for the Braves and never played in the NBA again .

On March 21 , Braves general manager Eddie Donovan announced that he would resign effective April 1 . The resignation was controversial because there were rumors that he would return to work for his prior team , New York Knicks , but there were simultaneous rumors that the Knicks had unfairly tampered with Donovan while under contract with the Braves . Upon the announced resignation , NBA Commissioner Walter Kennedy announced that the league would conduct a hearing on the matter . The transition was complicated by Donovan 's 5 % ownership of the Braves . Incoming commissioner , Larry O 'Brien announced an amicable settlement as one of his first orders of business .

= = Offseason = =

Prior to the season the team lost Bob Kauffman to the New Orleans Jazz in the May 20 , 1974 NBA Expansion Draft .

= = = NBA Draft = = =

The following members of the 1974 ? 75 Buffalo Braves were drafted during the 1974 NBA Draft . McMillen played for a year in Europe before joining the 1975 ? 76 Buffalo Braves . He played for a team in Bologna , Italy .

= = Roster = =

= = Regular season = =

Overview

An early eleven @-@ game winning streak helped the Braves achieve a 16 ? 4 record to start the season and a later seven @-@ game streak took them to 31 ? 16 . Buffalo supplanted the New York Knicks as Boston 's closest competitor in the Atlantic foursome with 49 wins and 33 losses . Buffalo boasted high @-@ scoring super star Bob McAdoo , who posted a 34 @.@ 5 scoring average to lead the NBA , while making more field goals than any other player . He also led in minutes played ,

while also ranking among the best rebounders and shot blockers in the league . McAdoo also earned 798 free throw tries , another league high , converting 81 % of his attempts . The Braves lost reigning NBA Rookie of the Year Ernie DiGregorio to a knee injury that limited him to 31 games , watched former Laker Jim McMillan battle illness that caused him to miss 20 games , and also lost Gar Heard for 15 games , which dropped the team from the elite and put more of the load on their star . The Braves attendance increased by 40 @, @ 000 to 467 @, @ 267 in their 41 home games , but the team fell to 5th of 18 teams . The team defense improved sufficiently to create an average 2 @. @ 2 @- @ point scoring margin after a slight average deficit the year before .

McMillan ranked tenth in the league in field goal percentage . Heard ranked 9th in blocks per game (1 @. @ 8) . Jack Marin , who played in 81 games , ranked seventh in free throw percentage (86 @. @ 9 %) . Randy Smith , who played in all 82 regular @- @ season games for the third consecutive season , finished fourth in assists per game (6 @. @ 5) . McAdoo , who also played all 82 games , led the NBA in minutes played , field goals , rebounds (ranked fourth per game) , points , and points per game . Meanwhile , he ranked sixth in blocks per game , second in total free throws , and fifth in field goal percentage . This performance earned him the league MVP and first team All @- @ NBA honors .

= = = October ? November = = =

As he had the season before , DiGregorio had a tremendous opening night with 33 points . The Braves defeated the defending champion Boston Celtics 126 ? 119 , giving them their first win in nine games against Boston as a visitor . The Celtics had eliminated the Braves from the 1975 NBA Playoffs . DiGregorio was sidelined after six games due to knee surgery . After a 4 ? 3 start , the Braves won eleven in a row starting with a November 3 , 1974 , victory over the Los Angeles Lakers at the Los Angeles Forum and culminating with a November 23 victory over the Phoenix Suns at home . In order to win the eighth game of the streak , the Braves had to overcome a seventeen @- @ point deficit to earn a 111 ? 106 victory against the Golden State Warriors . Even after losing to the Chicago Bulls on November 24 , their 15 ? 4 record was the best in the NBA .

= = = December ? January = = =

During December , the Braves dealt with injuries to McMillan , who required an emergency appendectomy , and DiGregorio . After their great start , the Braves compiled a 6 ? 7 month of December . On December 19 , despite 49 points by McAdoo , the Braves lost to the Cleveland Cavaliers . On December 28 , the NBA 's smallest player , Calvin Murphy scored a career @- @ high 45 points to lead the Houston Rockets to a 125 ? 117 victory over Buffalo . By January , Heard was suffering from a knee injury . As a result , in some games , the Braves only played seven players . In a January 3 game against the Detroit Pistons , Dale Schlueter was involved in two altercations that resulted in bench @- @ clearing brawls . In January 1975 , the Braves recorded a seven @- @ game winning streak starting with a January 10 win over the Cavaliers and ending with a January 24 victory over the New York Knicks . In the fifth game of the streak , McAdoo outscored Pete Maravich 43 ? 40 at New Orleans .

= = = February ? April = = =

Following an 11 ? 4 January , the Braves struggled to a 7 ? 7 record in February . On January 24 , DiGregorio returned to the active roster following his October 29 knee cartilage injury . The March 13 victory against the Golden State Warriors established the franchise record for most wins in a season at 43 , surpassing the prior season 's total of 42 . From March 14 to March 21 , the Braves posted their season @- @ worst four @- @ game losing streak . Donovan announced his April 1 resignation in late March . In late March , DiGregorio was sidelined for the rest of the season . The Braves then went on a five @- @ game winning streak from March 22 to March 29 , but the team lost three of four April regular @- @ season games .

== Season standings ==

== Record vs. opponents ==

== Season schedule ==

Source : [www.basketball @-@ reference.com](http://www.basketball-reference.com)

== Playoffs ==

During the playoffs , the Braves captured home court advantage with a victory over the Washington Bullets in game 1 of the Eastern Conference Semifinals , but the Bullets returned the favor in game two . The home teams won the remaining games as Buffalo lost the series in seven games . DiGregorio missed the playoffs . McAdoo played 46 @.@ 7 minutes per game during the playoffs and averaged 37 @.@ 4 points , which both led the league . Heard averaged 11 @.@ 7 points and 10 @.@ 9 rebounds .

During the regular season the Bullets had been 36 ? 5 (which was an NBA single @-@ season record for home victories) at home , but lost both games to the Braves . The Braves then opened the series at the Capital Centre with a 113 ? 102 victory in game 1 . McAdoo was the game @-@ high scorer with 35 and game @-@ high rebounder with 14 . The Bullets rebounded for a 120 ? 106 victory in game 2 in Buffalo . Wes Unseld totaled 25 rebounds and Elvin Hayes added 16 as well as 34 points . Meanwhile , McAdoo , who had averaged 14 @.@ 1 rebounds during the regular season only had 6 . In game 3 , Phil Chenier scored 18 points in the third quarter as the Bullets expanded a 53 ? 52 lead to 81 ? 70 . Unseld had 18 rebounds and Hayes had 16 to go along with his 30 points . McAdoo had a game @-@ high 34 and Smith added 26 in a losing effort . Before game 4 , McAdoo received his hardware for his league MVP and league scoring title and responded that night with a 50 @-@ point performance as the Braves evened the series 2 ? 2 with a 108 ? 102 victory . Two nights later Hayes responded with 46 points , including 16 in the fourth quarter , as the Bullets completed a 97 ? 93 comeback victory to regain the series lead 3 ? 2 . In the game , the score was tied at 89 with two minutes left when Nick Weatherspoon hit a 17 @-@ foot jumper to give the Bullets the lead for good . Chenier and Hayes built the lead up to 94 ? 89 before McMillian made two short shots to bring the Braves back within 1 point in the final minute . An Unseld offensive rebound and putback of a Hayes miss gave the Bullets crucial points in the final seconds . On the night Hayes shot 19 @-@ for 26 and McAdoo countered with 34 points . In game 6 , the Braves earned a 102 ? 96 victory as McAdoo scored 9 of his 37 points in the final five minutes . The game had 19 tie scores , with the last being at 89 . In game 7 , Washington jumped to a 28 ? 13 lead after one quarter behind 14 points by Chenier . Washington expanded the lead to 42 ? 19 before closing the first half with a 56 ? 38 lead . On the night , Chenier had a career @-@ high 39 points in the 115 ? 96 victory . McAdoo had 36 for Buffalo .

== Playoff schedule ==

Source : www.basketball @-@ reference.com

== Player stats ==

== Awards and honors ==

Bob McAdoo , NBA Most Valuable Player

Bob McAdoo , NBA Scoring Champion
Bob McAdoo All @-@ NBA Team (1st team)
Bob McAdoo 1975 NBA All @-@ Star Game