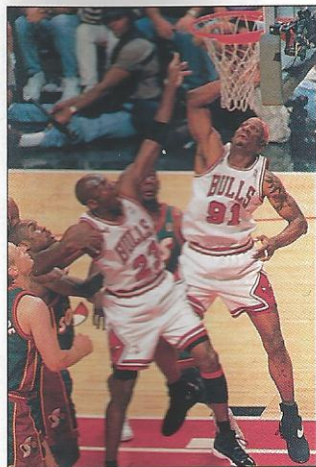

 The U.S. women's gymnastics team takes the gold at the Summer Olympics. Kerri Strug, second from right, is the heroine of the competition, landing her final vault despite a dislocated left ankle.




 U.S. swimmer Amy Van Dyken wins the women's 100-meter butterfly event at the Olympic Games with a time of 59.13 seconds. Van Dyken wins a total of four golds.


 The Chicago Bulls win their fourth NBA championship in six years as they defeat the Seattle SuperSonics in game six of the NBA finals on June 16.

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Al Bello, Allsport

 U.S. Olympian Dan O'Brien racks up 8,824 points to take the gold medal in the decathlon, a grueling, 10-event track-and-field competition.

 April 1996 marks the 100th running of the Boston Marathon. More than 38,000 contenders participate.




AP/Wide World

 Jean Driscoll (front right) of the U.S. takes the silver in the women's 800-meter wheelchair race, a demonstration sport, at the Summer Olympics. Driscoll, seven-time winner of the Boston Marathon, retires at the end of 1996, after setting several world records during her career.




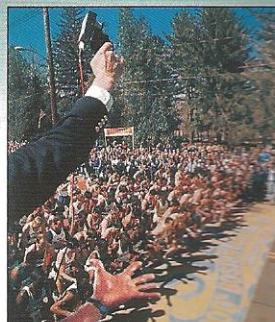
AP/Wide World

 Olympic swimmer Tom Dolan captures another gold for the U.S. as he wins the 400-meter individual medley on July 21. Dolan wins with a time of 4:14.90.




Al Bello, Allsport

 U.S. Olympian Michael Johnson wins the 200-meter final in a world-record time of 19.32 seconds. Johnson's triumph comes three days after he wins the 400-meter race, making him the first man to win both events in one Olympics.



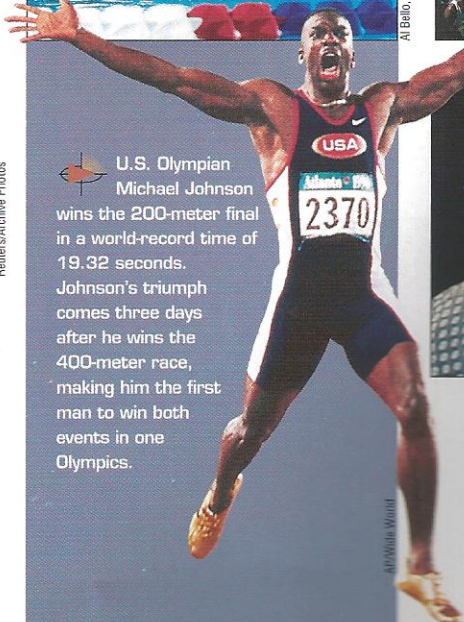
AP/Wide World

 Basketball star Shaquille O'Neal jumps from the Orlando Magic to the Los Angeles Lakers in July. The deal is the richest in NBA history, paying O'Neal \$120 million over 7 years.

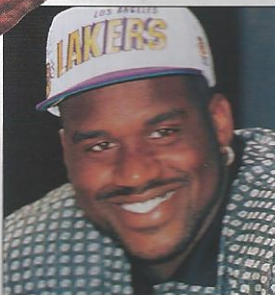


Reuters/Archive Photos

 Minnesota Twins star centerfielder Kirby Puckett announces his retirement from baseball in July. A serious eye ailment forces Puckett to give up the game, but he manages to maintain his upbeat attitude at press conferences and interviews.



AP/Wide World



Reuters/Archive Photos