

Nate Robinson

Sophomore, Guard, University of Washington, Ht. 5-9, Wt. 180

High School: Rainier Beach HS, Seattle, Wash.

Birthdate: May 31, 1984 (Seattle, Wash.)

University of Washington

Two-year letterman guard who led Washington in scoring during each of his first two seasons ... Garnered first-team All-Pac-10 acclaim in 2004 ... Registered 38 career double-figure scoring games ... Possesses phenomenal leaping ability ... Originally enrolled at Washington on a football scholarship, but is now on a basketball scholarship after deciding prior to the 2003-04 season to concentrate on the hardwood full-time ... Played all 13 football games in 2002 and started the final six games as a cornerback on the Husky football squad, including the Sun Bowl ... Intercepted two passes and made 34 tackles ... Father Jacque Robinson played tailback for the Washington football team between 1981-84 and amassed 2,300 career yards to ranks No. 8 among all-time Huskies ... Jacque is the only college player ever to earn MVP honors in both the Rose Bowl (1982) and Orange Bowl (1985).

2003-2004: As a sophomore, played all 31 games, starting 21 of them ... A first-team All-Pac-10 Conference selection ... Led the team and ranked 13th among Pac-10 scorers with 13.2 points per game ... Tallied double-figure points 21 times and led all Husky scorers on seven occasions ... Topped all UW rebounders four times ... His team-leading 53 steals were the third-highest total among conference players ... Also led UW in free throw accuracy, hitting them at an 85.3-percent clip (87-102) that ranked third in the Pac-10 ... Voted the Feb. 2 Pac-10 Player of the Week after leading UW to a home swep of the Arizona schools ... Tallied a career-high 31 points on 11-of-15 shooting and added five rebounds and five steals during the Huskies' 96-83 win over No. 9 Arizona (Jan. 29) ... Scored 23 of his 25 points after halftime at Oregon State (Jan. 17), including a 3-pointer inside the final second that forced overtime in UW's 103-99 win ... Robinson's heroics at Oregon State rallied UW from a 16-point second-half deficit to post the pivotal victory that stopped a five-game losing streak and started a run of 14 wins in the next 16 games ... Helped the Huskies to a 19-12 record and their first NCAA Tournament appearance since 1999 ... The 12-6 Pac-10 record and second-place conference finish were UW's best since 1986 ... Topped the Huskies with 27 points, on 9-of-15 shooting, in their 102-100 first-round NCAA loss to UAB (Mar. 19).

2002-2003: As a freshman, played 23 games and started the final 10 ... Named to the CollegeInsider.com's 20-player National All-Freshmen Team ... Honored as a member of the All-Pac-10 Freshman Team ... Joined the team after the football regular season, participating in his first practice Nov. 26 ... Led the team in scoring average with 13.0 points per game, a figure that ranked 17th among Pac-10 players ... His 300 points tied for fourth among all-time UW freshmen ... Had 19 points, six rebounds, four assists and two steals in his second collegiate game, at Santa Clara (Dec. 7) ... Tallied double-figure points 17 times and led all UW scorers on 11 occasions ... Top scoring effort was a 20-point performance against Arizona State (Feb. 8) ... Tallied eight points and played 23 minutes against UCLA (Jan. 2), two days after his appearance in the Sun Bowl ... Ranked second on the team with 52 assists.

Rainier Beach High School (Seattle, Wash.)

Averaged 17.9 points, seven rebounds, seven assists and three steals per game as a senior in 2002 ... The 2002 Player of the Year in Washington state for the AAA classification ... Led Rainier Beach to a 28-1 basketball record en route to the 2002 state championship and a No. 7 national ranking from *USA Today* ... The MVP of the 2002 Class AAA state tournament after averaging 25.8 points for the champion Vikings. Scored 31 points as top-ranked Rainier Beach beat No. 2 Mark Morris in the semifinals and finished with 19 in the championship game against No. 4 Mercer Island in a 67-51 victory ... Ranked No. 98 nationally among 2002 prep prospects in Clark Francis' *Hoop Scoop* ... Rated the No. 9 point guard prospect in the West by Prep West Hoops ... One of 100 finalists for the McDonald's High School All-America team ... Collected 20 points and seven rebounds and received MVP honors after leading the City team to a 112-98 victory over the State squad in the 2002 Class AAA All-State game at KeyArena on April 13 ... Honored as the *Seattle Times* Class AAA state player of the year in both football and basketball ... As a senior, totaled over 1,200 yards rushing and 500 yards receiving while scoring 21 touchdowns ... A first-team A.P. all-state selection who received first-team All-Metro League accolades at running back, defensive back and kick returner ... A *SuperPrep* All-American in 2001 who was ranked as the nation's 17th-best player at the athlete position ... Also a standout in track and field, setting a state record of 13.85 seconds in the 110-meter hurdles ... Placed second in the 110-meter hudles at the 2002 state track meet ... Transferred to Rainier Beach in Seattle prior to his senior year from Logan High School near Oakland, Calif.

Robinson's Washington Statistics

YEAR	GP/GS	MIN	AVG	FG-FGA	PCT	3FG-A	PCT	FT-A	PCT	OR-DR	TOT	AVG	PF-DQ	AST	TO	BK	ST	PTS	AVG
2002-2003	23/10	576	25.0	120-260	.462	19-74	.257	41-57	.719	33-56	89	3.9	61-0	52	42	0	26	300	13.0
2003-2004	31/21	833	26.9	138-309	.447	46-130	.354	87-102	.853	52-69	121	3.9	75-3	84	61	3	53	409	13.2
TOTALS	54/31	1409	26.1	258-569	.453	65-204	.319	128-159	.805	85-125	210	3.9	136-3	136	103	3	79	709	13.1

Nate Robinson Game-by-Game 2003-04 Season Statistics

Opponent	Date	GS	Min	---TOTAL---		---3-PTS---		----REBOUNDS----														
				FG-FGA	Pct	3FG-FGA	Pct	FT-FTA	Pct	Off	Def	Tot	Avg	PF	FO	A	TO	Blk	Stl	Pts	Avg	
PORTLAND STATE	11/21/03	*	19	2-9	.222	0-0	.000	0-0	.000	2	1	3	3.0	2	0	0	0	0	1	4	4.0	
UC RIVERSIDE	11/24/03	*	30	2-8	.250	1-4	.250	3-3	1.000	1	0	1	2.0	1	0	5	1	0	1	8	6.0	
EASTERN WASHINGTON	11/29/03	*	29	5-7	.714	0-1	.000	4-6	.667	1	2	3	2.3	3	0	3	2	0	3	14	8.7	
GONZAGA	12/03/03	*	24	2-11	.182	2-6	.333	3-4	.750	4	1	5	3.0	1	0	1	1	0	0	9	8.8	
at Wyoming	12/06/03	*	28	1-9	.111	0-4	.000	0-0	.000	2	3	5	3.4	2	0	3	1	1	0	2	7.4	
at Houston	12/20/03		12	1-4	.250	0-1	.000	1-2	.500	0	1	1	3.0	3	0	1	2	0	0	3	6.7	
at San Diego State	12/27/03		21	6-8	.750	2-3	.667	2-2	1.000	1	1	2	2.9	1	0	4	4	0	2	16	8.0	
COLUMBIA	12/30/03		20	1-3	.333	1-3	.333	0-0	.000	0	1	1	2.6	0	0	2	2	1	2	3	7.4	
at California	01/02/04		21	4-8	.500	1-3	.333	1-1	1.000	2	0	2	2.6	1	0	2	0	0	3	10	7.7	
at Stanford Cardinal	01/04/04		25	6-13	.462	4-6	.667	0-0	.000	1	2	3	2.6	3	0	1	0	0	1	16	8.5	
USC	01/08/04		26	4-14	.286	2-7	.286	3-3	1.000	4	4	8	3.1	4	0	4	7	0	2	13	8.9	
UCLA	01/10/04		27	5-14	.357	3-6	.500	5-6	.833	0	2	2	3.0	2	0	4	1	0	4	18	9.7	
at Oregon	01/15/04		28	5-12	.417	2-5	.400	4-4	1.000	1	1	2	2.9	3	0	1	2	0	3	16	10.2	
at Oregon State	01/17/04		22	9-17	.529	2-7	.286	5-5	1.000	3	2	5	3.1	4	0	2	1	0	3	25	11.2	
at Washington State	01/24/04	*	30	5-8	.625	5-7	.714	2-2	1.000	1	0	1	2.9	1	0	4	2	0	0	17	11.6	
ARIZONA	01/29/04	*	32	11-15	.733	3-4	.750	6-6	1.000	1	4	5	3.1	1	0	3	2	0	5	31	12.8	
ARIZONA STATE	01/31/04	*	30	2-7	.286	0-4	.000	4-5	.800	2	2	4	3.1	4	0	5	4	0	2	8	12.5	
at USC	02/05/04	*	19	3-7	.429	1-4	.250	3-4	.750	1	2	3	3.1	5	1	0	0	0	1	10	12.4	
at UCLA	02/07/04	*	32	2-9	.222	1-5	.200	4-6	.667	3	4	7	3.3	2	0	2	0	0	0	9	12.2	
OREGON	02/12/04	*	35	7-10	.700	2-4	.500	4-5	.800	3	3	6	3.5	3	0	4	2	0	3	20	12.6	
OREGON STATE	02/14/04	*	28	5-9	.556	1-4	.250	1-1	1.000	2	4	6	3.6	1	0	2	4	0	1	12	12.6	
WASHINGTON STATE	02/19/04	*	32	2-7	.286	1-4	.250	0-0	.000	2	1	3	3.5	5	1	1	3	0	3	5	12.2	
at NC State Wolfpack	02/22/04	*	29	5-10	.500	1-2	.500	2-2	1.000	3	4	7	3.7	4	0	1	2	0	0	13	12.3	
at Arizona	02/26/04	*	30	5-12	.417	3-8	.375	5-5	1.000	2	2	4	3.7	1	0	3	3	0	2	18	12.5	
at Arizona State	02/28/04	*	25	4-8	.500	1-3	.333	4-4	1.000	1	4	5	3.8	3	0	3	1	0	3	13	12.5	
CALIFORNIA	03/04/04	*	28	3-9	.333	0-4	.000	2-2	1.000	1	1	2	3.7	1	0	1	0	0	0	8	12.3	
STANFORD	03/06/04		31	3-8	.375	1-3	.333	6-7	.857	1	4	5	3.7	2	0	3	2	0	1	13	12.4	
vs UCLA	03/11/04	*	26	4-7	.571	2-4	.500	2-2	1.000	2	3	5	3.8	4	0	7	3	1	2	12	12.4	
vs ARIZ	03/12/04	*	30	8-16	.500	2-4	.500	2-3	.667	3	3	6	3.9	1	0	5	4	0	3	20	12.6	
vs Stanford	03/13/04	*	32	7-15	.467	0-3	.000	2-4	.500	0	5	5	3.9	2	0	5	0	0	2	16	12.7	
vs UAB	03/19/04	*	32	9-15	.600	2-7	.286	7-8	.875	2	2	4	3.9	5	1	2	5	0	0	27	13.2	
Totals.....			21	833	138-309	.447	46-130	.354	87-102	.853	52	69	121	3.9	75	3	84	61	3	53	409	13.2

Games played: 31
Points/game: 13.2
FG Pct: 44.7
3FG Pct: 35.4
FT Pct: 85.3

Rebounds/game: 3.9
Assists/game: 2.7
Turnovers/game: 2.0
Assist/turnover ratio: 1.4
Steals/game: 1.7
Blocks/game: 0.1

Nate Robinson Game-by-Game 2002-03 Season Statistics

Opponent	Date	GS	Min	---TOTAL---		---3-PTS---		----REBOUNDS----														
				FG-FGA	Pct	3FG-FGA	Pct	FT-FTA	Pct	Off	Def	Tot	Avg	PF	FO	A	TO	Blk	Stl	Pts	Avg	
WYOMING	12/05/02		6	0-2	.000	0-0	.000	0-0	.000	0	1	1	1.0	3	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0.0
at Santa Clara	12/07/02		18	8-13	.615	0-2	.000	3-4	.750	0	6	6	3.5	1	0	4	1	0	2	19	9.5	
EASTERN WASHINGTON	12/14/02		24	8-13	.615	1-2	.500	2-4	.500	1	1	2	3.0	4	0	0	2	0	3	19	12.7	
FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL	12/21/02		21	6-10	.600	2-4	.500	0-0	.000	1	2	3	3.0	3	0	3	4	0	1	14	13.0	
HOUSTON	12/23/02		21	3-8	.375	3-6	.500	0-0	.000	1	0	1	2.6	2	0	2	0	0	1	9	12.2	
UCLA	01/02/03		23	3-8	.375	1-2	.500	1-1	1.000	1	0	1	2.3	4	0	0	2	0	1	8	11.5	
USC	01/04/03		28	3-15	.200	0-4	.000	1-3	.333	3	6	9	3.3	3	0	4	1	0	2	7	10.9	
at Arizona State	01/09/03		23	2-8	.250	0-1	.000	0-0	.000	1	2	3	3.3	2	0	2	2	0	1	4	10.0	
at Arizona	01/11/03		24	5-11	.455	1-3	.333	0-0	.000	0	5	5	3.4	4	0	2	2	0	0	11	10.1	
CALIFORNIA	01/16/03		26	6-18	.333	3-10	.300	0-0	.000	2	1	3	3.4	4	0	1	2	0	2	15	10.6	
STANFORD	01/18/03		23	5-8	.625	0-2	.000	3-4	.750	5	1	6	3.6	1	0	3	1	0	1	13	10.8	
at Oregon	01/23/03		21	6-11	.545	2-5	.400	4-4	1.000	2	1	3	3.6	2	0	2	2	0	1	18	11.4	
at Oregon State	01/25/03		23	3-9	.333	1-3	.333	2-2	1.000	1	4	5	3.7	3	0	3	0	0	1	9	11.2	
WASHINGTON STATE	01/31/03	*	27	3-6	.500	1-1	1.000	4-4	1.000	2	2	4	3.7	1	0	3	2	0	1	11	11.2	
ARIZONA	02/06/03	*	38	9-22	.409	1-7	.143	0-0	.000	3	1	4	3.7	1	0	2	2	0	0	19	11.7	
ARIZONA STATE	02/08/03	*	37	7-13	.538	1-3	.333	5-6	.833	2	4	6	3.9	4	0	3	4	0	1	20	12.3	
at Stanford Cardinal	02/13/03	*	23	7-10	.700	0-3	.000	2-2	1.000	0	1	1	3.7	3	0	2	3	0	0	16	12.5	
at California	02/15/03	*	29	6-10	.600	0-3	.000	0-0	.000	0	4	4	3.7	2	0	1	4	0	2	12	12.4	
OREGON STATE	02/20/03	*	30	6-13	.462	1-1	1.000	2-3	.667	0	2	2	3.6	4	0	5	1	0	0	15	12.6	
OREGON	02/22/03	*	25	5-15	.333	0-2	.000	4-6	.667	3	3	6	3.8	2	0	5	1	0	0	14	12.7	
at Washington State	03/01/03	*	29	6-13	.462	1-3	.333	2-4	.500	0	5	5	3.8	1	0	2	2	0	1	15	12.8	
at USC	03/06/03	*	30	6-13	.462	0-4	.000	6-8	.750	4	2	6	3.9	3	0	1	2	0	3	18	13.0	
at UCLA	03/08/03	*	27	7-11	.636	0-3	.000	0-2	.000	1	2	3	3.9	4	0	1	2	0	2	14	13.0	
Totals.....		10	576	120-260	.462	19-74	.257	41-57	.719	33	56	89	3.9	61	0	52	42	0	26	300	13.0	

Games played: 23
 Points/game: 13.0
 FG Pct: 46.2
 3FG Pct: 25.7
 FT Pct: 71.9

Rebounds/game: 3.9
 Assists/game: 2.3
 Turnovers/game: 1.8
 Assist/turnover ratio: 1.2
 Steals/game: 1.1

Robinson's Washington Career Highs

Points: 31, vs. Arizona (1/29/04)
Rebounds: 9, vs. USC (1/4/03)
Assists: 7, vs. UCLA (3/11/04)
Blocks: 1, on three occasions, last vs. UCLA (3/11/04)
Steals: 5, vs. Arizona (1/29/04)
Minutes: 38, vs. Arizona (2/6/03)

Robinson returns favor with highflying flash

By Ken Goe

SEATTLE -- Nate Robinson still has a published copy of the photo, the one with Oregon's Pit Crew brandishing larger-than-life cardboard cutouts of Gary Coleman. From Our Advertiser

"Motivation," Robinson said.

Robinson, generously listed at 5 feet 9, has a baby face, leading the UO students to the unflattering comparison with the undersized former child actor.

They were waving the cutouts outside McArthur Court when the Huskies' team bus pulled up in January. Once everybody was inside, they rained down "Gary Coleman" chants on Robinson as the Ducks won 84-74.

The loss dropped Washington's record to 0-5 in conference. As the Huskies walked off the court, the Pit Crew serenaded them with chants of "Doormat."

"Not one time did I see him say anything rude back to them," Washington coach Lorenzo Romar said. "Not one time did he point at the crowd. Not one time did he do anything.

"But guess what? He was soaking it in."

Two nights later in Corvallis, the Oregon State students picked up the "Gary Coleman" chant. Robinson answered with 23 points in the second half, 13 in the final 6:03 of regulation.

With the Huskies down three, Robinson went up from behind the three-point line. He double-pumped in midair and swished a three-pointer as time expired to force overtime.

The Huskies pulled away from there to win 103-99. They have kept rolling, winning 11 of their last 13 heading into today's regular-season finale against No. 1 Stanford.

A victory would put Washington in position to make the NCAA Tournament, not that anybody would have predicted it in January. Give the credit to the sophomore guard who is at his best with something to prove.

"You want to call him Gary Coleman? Good," UW guard Will Conroy said. "He's going to get mad, and he's going to get his dunk or the rebound.

"You probably won't see Nate until he takes the ball, jumps over somebody and dunks. And you better box him out, he'll grab the ball and dunk it. He'll use you as a stepladder if he has to."

Realistically, Robinson is closer to 5-7. Discussions about players that size usually don't revolve around dunks and rebounds.

"We tell him he's a freak of nature," UW forward Brandon Roy said.

How else to explain Robinson's high-wire act? The most explosive play of the Pacific-10 Conference season came when Arizona played at Washington.

Arizona was in a 1-3-1 zone. Romar diagrammed a backdoor lob play, in which a player cuts off a backscreen toward the basket, takes a lob pass in midair and dunks.

"Usually he draws the play for me and I wasn't in the game," the 6-6 Roy said. "Then he says he's drawing it for Nate."

Robinson came off the screen and, when he caught the lob from Curtis Allen UW players swear his head was above the rim. Robinson got up so fast and was so high, 6-11 Arizona center Channing Frye never challenged.

The crowd at Hec Edmundson Pavilion erupted in a volcanic display of emotion.

"You don't get the same feeling on TV as you did watching it live," said Roy, still celebrating moments later when Romar was forced to yell to get his attention to put him back in the game.

It was a made-for-television moment. Forgotten in the furor was Robinson's statistical line: 31 points, five rebounds and three assists. Other things the casual fan might not know: Devoutly religious, Robinson has a tattoo on one leg reading: "GAMETIME," an acronym for God Answers Me Everytime. He is considering a drama major. Last year, Robinson, Roy and teammate C.J. Massingale staged a scene from the play "Fences" by August Wilson in a drama class. The class responded with a standing ovation.

"They didn't know athletes could paint a picture by their acting," Robinson said. "It was pretty cool." Robinson coached a team of grade-school players in Romar's basketball camp last summer. The first day, he gave each player a nickname. The next morning, Robinson came to camp with a hand-lettered headband for each player, each nickname printed neatly on the front.

"They ended up winning the camp championship," Romar said. "Was it because of the headbands? No. But he found a way to get them going."

It's a trademark. Robinson was barely out of high school in the fall of 2002 when he emerged as the UW football team's best defensive back. When he decided to concentrate on basketball last fall, the performance of Washington's secondary sagged.

"I think he can do anything he puts his mind to," Roy said. "He's special."

There might not be a more competitive player in college basketball. One day after practice, Romar used a gimmick shot to beat Robinson in a game of horse. Robinson left fuming.

Robinson returns favor with highflying flash

The next day when Romar came to practice, Robinson nonchalantly was using Romar's trick shot to make baskets. With his offhand.

Conroy beat Robinson out the door of a public appearance at a local hospital. That day at practice, Robinson asked Romar before a no holds-barred rebounding drill if he could be on the second team, which wears gold tops. Then he matched himself with Conroy.

"The gold team beat us," Conroy said. "He was like he proved his point."

Before long, Robinson's ferocious competitive drive became contagious.

"If you don't show up for a drill, he's going to make you look bad," Romar said. "Nate shows up."

He isn't afraid to battle inside against players a foot or more taller. Robinson averages four rebounds in conference games. Most small guards drop back to defend when a shot goes up. Robinson crashes for the offensive rebound.

Against North Carolina State, he was again at rim level when he snagged a rebound and jammed it home.

The explosiveness overlays a foundation of hard work. Freed from football conditioning last summer, Robinson put himself through exhaustive individual drills daily to prepare himself for basketball.

One shooting drill he picked up from Ray Allen of the Seattle SuperSonics consists of coming out of a defensive slide to take a shot. The player gets one point for a make and loses two for a miss. He can't stop until he has 10 points.

"I got down in negative numbers sometimes, but I never stopped until I got 10," Robinson said. "There were times my arms were sore."

He would spend as much as 30 minutes shooting free throws, not stopping until he made 10 in a row without the ball touching the rim.

Tough-minded as he is, Robinson didn't forget the "Gary Coleman" chants he heard in Eugene. The memory festered.

So did the showboat dunk by UO guard Andre Joseph after that game had been decided. Joseph bounced the ball hard on the floor, caught the carom on the jump and slammed.

So in the return game in Seattle, with Washington in front, about to win, and the Ducks waiting for the final few ticks of the clock, Robinson suddenly drove and dunked.

Some Oregon players took umbrage. UO coach Ernie Kent pulled Robinson aside after the game to lecture him. When he met the media, Kent said he told Robinson he was "too talented and classy" to do that.

"I thought, 'It's all right if Andre Joseph does it but it's not all right if I do it?'" Robinson said. "But I regret it. I wouldn't do it again."

There would be no reason. Robinson made his point.

He doesn't get mad.

He gets even.

Nate's got game, but just one sport now

By Blaine Newnham

On any other Saturday night, Nate Robinson would have been at Rainier Community Center, playing basketball until after midnight.

"It's great, they even feed you," he said.

But last Saturday night was special, after all. Washington's football team was playing Oregon in Husky Stadium.

So Robinson instead took jump shots in adjacent Edmundson Pavilion through three quarters before positioning himself in front of a television set in the basketball locker room to watch the fourth quarter of the football game.

"I'm happy for those guys," he said of his former teammates and their big win, "but for once in my life, I'm finding out what I can do in one sport."

In a drill last week, Washington's basketball coaches asked the players to shoot 50 free throws in 3 1/2 minutes.

Robinson made 49 of 50.

He scored 30 points in one game-style scrimmage, and 37 in another.

In the two scrimmages, he was also the leading offensive rebounder, even though he is listed generously at 5 feet 9.

"He is going to be better this year because he shoots better," said Lorenzo Romar, the Washington coach. "You have someone with lightning quickness and great strength who can pull up and shoot the jumper."

Robinson was worth the price of admission even if he couldn't shoot that well last year, dunking the ball over players more than a foot taller, scrambling to get every loose ball and every rebound within reach. Even coming out late, even being a spot shooter, he still led the team in scoring.

"A year ago, I was criticized for letting him take questionable shots," Romar said.

"Nate is a guy you don't put handcuffs on, you let him play. He is one of those rare players who is at his best when he is just about out of control."

Robinson seems happy with his decision to give up football.

"Oh, yeah," he said. "I wanted to do basketball alone for once in my life. I wanted to know where all my love is."

Typically, Robinson isn't ready to close the door on football. It's hard to imagine now that he made a key interception in Washington's rally to win the Apple Cup last year, and two days later turned out for basketball.

"I'd like to play next year if my little brother (Anthony Stewart of Garfield) gets a scholarship," Robinson said. "I'd love to play with him."

It doesn't appear the Huskies are recruiting Stewart, a 5-foot-5 defensive back and kick returner, but who knows what will happen? Why dismiss anyone because of height?

On the other hand, who knows how successful Robinson might be this year on the court? His long-term goal is to play in the NBA, one of the special, height-challenged guys, like Spud Webb and Earl Boykins and Muggsy Bogues.

"There is a good chance he will be a pro at something," said Romar. "He is a very special athlete."

Robinson said he first dunked a volleyball when he was in the eighth grade, and a basketball when he was a sophomore in high school. He has a 42-inch vertical leap.

But it isn't just his athletic ability that distinguishes him.

"(Sophomore guard) Brandon Roy is a better athlete than Nate," said Cameron Dollar, the UW assistant coach. "But Brandon only gives you glimpses of his ability. Nate gives it to you every time down the court."

Dollar took the discussion a step further.

"I've seen the elite athletes, Michael Jordan, Vince Carter, Dominique Wilkins, and Nate is a notch below them. But unlike any other athlete I've ever seen except Allen Iverson, you get Nate's maximum effort every single time. Like Iverson, you see everything Nate's got all the time."

Robinson will play point guard against pressure, and he'll likely defend the other team's point guard, simply because of the size differential.

But in other cases, he'll be the shooting guard.

"He'll just score," said Romar, "because he will get the ball."

Robinson claims every loose ball. He is almost impossible to block out because of his elusiveness, and once he gets a rebound or a steal, the Huskies are off to the races.

It doesn't escape him that he fairly put the clamps on Luke Ridnour in one of the two games against Oregon last year.

"I took a charge from him and we won the game," Robinson said. "He's a great player with the Sonics and I want to talk to him, I want to ask him what it takes to get to the league."

"He was born in the gym, wasn't he?"

Robinson also sought out former Sonics coach Lenny Wilkens and asked the same question: How do I get to play in the NBA?

"He told me, 'Nate, you have to carry your team on your shoulders.' "

Get ready for the ride.