

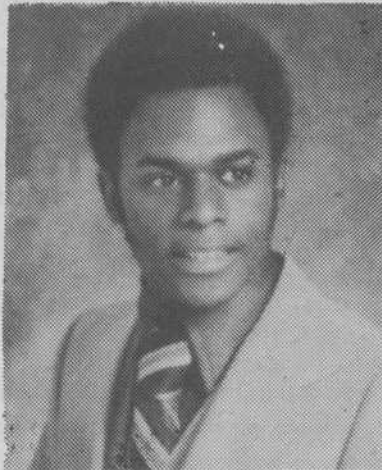
# SPORTS BOARD

SPORTS, GAMING, HORSERACING

MAY 17, 1984



## KEN'S COMMENTS



By Ken Wilson

Like the lethal explosion that can occur with the mixture of incompatible chemicals, the same might be said of a combination of athletics and politics.

With the Soviet Union's decision to boycott the 1984 Summer Olympics in Los Angeles, the end result of the action could signal an end to modern Olympics as we know them.

In addition to the announcement of their non-participation, the Soviets listed several reasons that included

the athletes' security and dignity. However, in the eyes of many observers, the USSR's politically motivated action can be attributed directly to revenge for the USA's 1980 boycott and the greater increasing possibility of defection by their athletes.

In addition to the Soviet Union's boycott, other Eastern Block countries are expected to follow the example, with the main damage principally being focused on the athletes themselves.

Caught in the middle, American athletes now must look at the games as a showcase of their talents while recording their best performances for personal reasons, in addition to making the Los Angeles Olympics successful.

With the Soviets and their allies staying at home, the sports most affected will be boxing, men's and women's basketball, wrestling, weightlifting, men's and women's track and field events, and men's and women's swimming.

Now that the final chapter has been written on the boxing career of Sugar Ray Leonard, fans can focus on the outstanding moments that included winning a gold medal on a standout Olympic boxing team in addition to spectacular bouts with Roberto Duran and Thomas Hearns.

Despite a successful return to the ring with a ninth-round technical knockout of Philadelphia's Kevin Howard last Friday night, Leonard has RETIRED from boxing for good, a decision that many boxing observers and fans agree with.

After a 27-month lay-off due to an eye injury, the expected ring-rust surprised Leonard in the fourth round of a scheduled 10-round bout, when Howard connected with a right hand to send the former undisputed welterweight champion to the canvas for the first time in his pro career.

According to Leonard, the fourth round knock-down signalled that it was time to hang up the gloves forever.

In regards to his contributions to the sport of prize fighting, Sugar Ray Leonard will best be remembered for the glamour he returned to the lower weight divisions while clearly establishing himself as the man that made boxing fun after Ali.

## HOLMES-COETZEE BOUT CANCELLED AT CAESARS

Caesars Palace cancelled the Larry Holmes-Gerrie Coetzee heavy-weight championship fight Tuesday, but promoters JPD Sports of Dallas were attempting to salvage it for the scheduled June 8 date.

Caesars claims "breach of contract" by JPD Sports, an entertainment company trying boxing promotion for the first time. Halloran declined to specify the contract violation.

JPD Sports president Kenny Bounds, unavailable for comment Tuesday night, said earlier his loses had approached \$4 million, and he was seeking additional financial backing. Richard Lovell, Holmes' publicist, said Bounds was "set" except for a site.

"They (JPD) had a deadline of this (Tuesday) afternoon to meet, and they didn't do it," said Halloran, who had not had a cancellation in the 70 previous fights he signed for Caesars. "We all knew he (Bounds) was new to the game, and this is a tough league."

Caesars had begun re-assembling the 25,000-seat stadium it used for major fights such as Duran-Marvelous Marvin Hagler, Hearns-Sugar Ray Leonard and Holmes-Gerry Cooney.

Holmes, heavyweight champion of the International Boxing Federation, and Coetzee, world Boxing Association champion, were scheduled to fight in a 30,000-seat outdoor arena in what Caesars Palace was billing as "a battle for heavyweight supremacy."

In a brief press statement, Bruce Aguiler, a Caesars Palace vice president said, "We are disappointed as I'm sure are many boxing fans

around the world that the Holmes-Coetzee fight will not take place at Caesars Palace."

Aguiler said a breach of contract with the promoter of the fight—JPD Sports of Dallas—caused the hotel to cancel its contract to host the multi-million dollar bout.

Aguiler was reluctant to elaborate on his statement, saying he would "prefer in not expanding at all on that press release."

But he also said the matter will "probably be in litigation at some point."

"We had some concerns and asked them to assure us to get certain things done in a certain time period and we had no choice," said Aguiler.

A source close to the promotion said JPD was trying to place the fight in another Las Vegas hotel, possibly the Sahara Hotel where Holmes has

been training for more than one week.

Both Holmes and Coetzee were scheduled to start training at Caesars Palace on May 25 for the bout which was set for a 25,000-seat stadium behind the resort.

Reached in his hotel suite at the Sahara Tuesday afternoon, an emotional-sounding Holmes said, "We're fighting. You hear a lot of ----. The fight is on. Caesars Palace is not the only house in town. The hell with Caesars."

Holmes, who has been paid a percentage of the \$12 million he signed for, will continue to train expecting a June 8 fight, Lovell said. Coetzee was to move his training camp to Las Vegas this week.

Holmes added, before he started laughing, "We'll put a fight across the street in the Dunes parking lot."

## T.N.B.A. Mixed Bowling League Finishes Season

The T.N.B.A. Mixed League Bowling season completed 35 weeks of bowling with the Community Store Rebels No. 2, Team #7, as winners during the first half and "Sure Shot," Team #9 winners for the second half.

Rolling for the championship ended with the Community Store Rebels #2 Team 7 holding their own taking first place. Sure Shot team gave them a tough battle to stay in second place.

High Score series for women saw Ole Jones with a 673; High Score for men saw J.H. Smith at 673; High Score game for women went to E. Batts—and had a 255 game and High Score Game for men tallying a 267 for K. McCoy.

In the High Handicap series, for Men was R. Ward with 775; E. Downing for women with 743. High Handicap game for men had W. Steele at the top with a 291 and for women it was Alyce Hill at 289.

High average game went to Billy Bagsby at 187; for women it was Gwen Amie at 180.

The league play ends with a tournament prepared by the League Directors. It will have a two-lady team to bowl in the National (T.N.B.A.) Tournament in Louisville, Ky. on May 26-31.

In the City tournament all T.N.B.A. members will be playing at Sam's Town Lanes on July 6-8.

E. Sykes, Reporter

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