

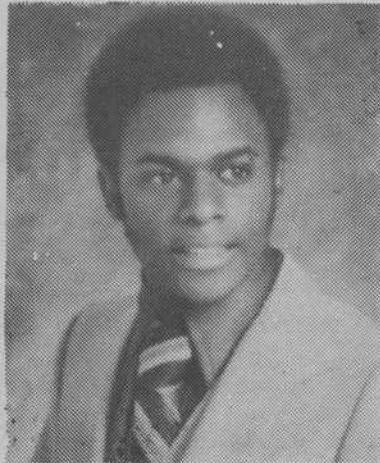
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SPORTS, GAMING, HORSERACING

SEPTEMBER 6, 1984



KEN'S COMMENTS



By Ken Wilson

Lazy Saturday afternoons, tailgate parties, homecoming celebrations, and spirited crowded stadiums that are familiar to the college football scene will frequently become the 'in' thing as September rolls in.

As the collegiate campaign swings into full gear, possibly the appearance of the game has begun to focus on the business aspect with larger schools emphasizing live gates and big television contracts which can only happen with winning programs.

Still, all of the hoop-la surrounding the college game makes it much more appealing than the pro level.

Of course, with the arrival of each new season, there's the chase for the somewhat mythical national championship while one of the most noted individual honors is the Heishman Trophy.

Though the pickings are slim for the 1984 Heishman award, some of the top candidates include Boston College's quarterback Doug Glutie, running back Bo Jackson of Auburn, Pittsburgh's offensive tackle, Bill Fralic, and Navy's Napoleon McCallum.

Already, the young season has witnessed several upsets, including defending national champion Miami's 20-18 victory over then top-ranked Auburn in the second annual college football Kickoff Classic, the official season opener.

Locally, Saturday, Sept. 8 marks the 1984-85 debut of the UNLV football team that features Las Vegas' own Heishman candidate, senior QB Randall Cunningham.

Cunningham directs an explosive offense that also includes running back Kirk Jones, and should challenge Pacific for the Pacific Coast Athletic Association title, in the role of the favorites.

A brief look at other top college football conference around the country.

Many observers term the Southwestern conference the strongest in the country with possibly six teams having the chance to take the title: Alabama, Louisiana State, Tennessee, Florida, Auburn, and Georgia.

Another conference that boasts parity among teams is the Pacific-10.

THOMAS UPSETS WITHERSPOON, PAGE LOSES TO BEY, WEAVER AND DOKES PICK 'UP EASY WINS

Unheralded Pinklon Thomas upset Tim Witherspoon on Friday night to capture the World Boxing Council heavy-weight championship at the Riviera Hotel on a 12-round majority decision.

Thomas, a 2½-1 underdog, used a strong left jab in a standup style to gain the decision in Witherspoon's first defense of his title.

There were no knock-downs in the bout and neither fighter appeared to be hurt seriously at any time.

It was the 25th victory for the undefeated Thomas, with only a draw against World Boxing Association heavy-weight champion Gerrie Coetzee of South Africa as a mar on his record.

The loss dropped Witherspoon to 18-2. Witherspoon's only other loss was to Larry Holmes in a bid for the WBC heavyweight championship before Holmes relinquished that title.

"My jab was working for me," said Thomas, giving credit to the weapon which mainly helped him gain the decision.

The 26-year-old Thomas said he was never hurt, although he admitted Witherspoon did "graze" him "with a shot."

The final verdict would have been a split decision, but referee Richard Steele deducted a point from Witherspoon for hitting with his backhand in the fifth round.

Witherspoon, who is managed by Carl King, also complained of being thumbed.

"I was thumbed almost every round," Witherspoon said.

Witherspoon received a purse of \$400,000 and an additional \$50,000 in training expenses. Thomas was paid \$100,000 by promoter Don King.

Greg Page, a dancing, jabbing veteran showman at heavy-weight, played with David Bey early and tattered his face in several places by the 12th round Friday night during thier United States Boxing Association championship bout.

But Bey's straight-ahead style and combinations on the ropes convinced three judges

Dokes, 26 — who was knocked out in his last fight in the 10th round by Gerrie Coetzee Sept. 23 of last year — looked sluggish in his unanimous decision over Mike Jameson, but claimed he was just

trying to ease back slowly into the heavy-weight picture.

Weaver, fighting before a thinned-out crowd after the main event upset of Pinklon

Thomas over Tim Witherspoon, looked ferocious against out-classed Billy Thomas as he knocked out the New Orleans fighter at 1:16 of the seventh round.

Spinks-Qawi Fight Halted

The world light heavy-weight title fight between champion Michael Spinks and Dwight Muhammad Qawi was called off Friday because of a shoulder injury to Qawi.

Promoter Butch Lewis said he was told early Friday that the top contender would not fight in the Sept. 7 bout. Qawi reportedly left for his home in New Jersey.

Lewis said he is trying to line up No. 2 contender Willie Edwards, who had been scheduled for a 12-rounder on the supporting card.

However, Lewis said it all depends if KATZ television network would go along with the fight with the new contender KATZ planned to televise the original promotion.

Spinks unified the world title 18 months ago by defeating Qawi, who was then named Braxton.

Rod Newman, Qawi's manager, said Qawi had always had a bad left shoulder and that the "pain would come and go but was always OK by fight time."

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