

LAS VEGAS SENTINEL

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SPORTS BOARD

SPORTS, GAMING, HORSERACING

December 5, 1985



SPORTS ON PARADE

By B.J. RICHARD



The showdown between undefeated Donald Curry, WBA welterweight champion and unbeaten WBC welterweight champion Milton McCrory kicks off Friday at the Las Vegas Hilton. The coin flip came up for a 12-rounder. The organization rules will be WBA. This means that the three-knockdown rule will be in effect. If either fighter is knocked down three times in any one round, the bout is stopped.

In addition to the main event, three scheduled 10-round preliminary bouts highlight the evening. The main event will be televised by the Home Box Office cable network, but hotel officials say the live telecast will be blacked out in the Southern Nevada area.

The six-bout card starts at 4:30 p.m. with the main event at 7:15. The three 10-rounders features Las Vegas lightweight Ireleis "Cubanito" Perez, United States Boxing Association bantamweight champion Hurley Snead and middleweight Robbie Sims. Perez meets Ali Karim Muhammad; Snead faced Jose "Pulga" Torres and Sims takes on Mario Tenio. Fight fans can also enjoy a scheduled six-rounder and four-rounder. Undefeated bantamweight Gil Davila, of Pomona, California, faces Donnie Porter of Las Vegas, in the six. In the four-rounder, heavyweight John Christjohn, of San Luis Obispo, California, meets Oliver McCall, of Chicago.

SPORTS BRIEFS

Black tennis professional Zina Garrison from Houston, Texas continues her quest during the Australia Open.

Garrison, the sixth seed, advanced to the third round by defeating powerful New Zealander Belinda Cordwell 6-4, 4-6, 6-4. National Finals Rodeo, the richest in the sports history, opens Saturday through Dec. 15 at the Thomas and Mack Center. The Australian Tournament prize money is \$1.5 million. Ex-Las Vegas Stars shortstop Ozzie Guillen was named the American League Rookie of the year. Lady Rebels downed South Carolina 77-62. Bum Phillips, the crew-cut cowboy coach of the New Orleans Saints since 1981, abruptly resigned, foregoing the final three years and \$1.3 million of his contract.

KING GOES FREE

Boxing promoter Don King celebrates his exoneration from tax evasion charges. Up until the time of the verdict King had no doubt of his innocence, but was concerned about the outcome of the trial. "I was always confident, but you never know what will happen," he said. "I was innocent. I never wavered from that. I knew I was innocent."

King and associate Constance Harper had been charged with skimming nearly \$1 million from Don King Productions. Harper was found guilty on three counts and awaits sentencing while King was found innocent.

Much is said about black athletes in education, but former national basketball association star Elvin Hayes will earn a degree in speech and recreation next month, 21 years after he enrolled in college. "I feel that it's the

The Boxing Scene

COONEY AFTER BIG BUCKS

Gerry Cooney packs a bigger financial punch for Michael Spinks' first IBF world heavyweight title defense, but former champion Larry Holmes appears the front-runner.

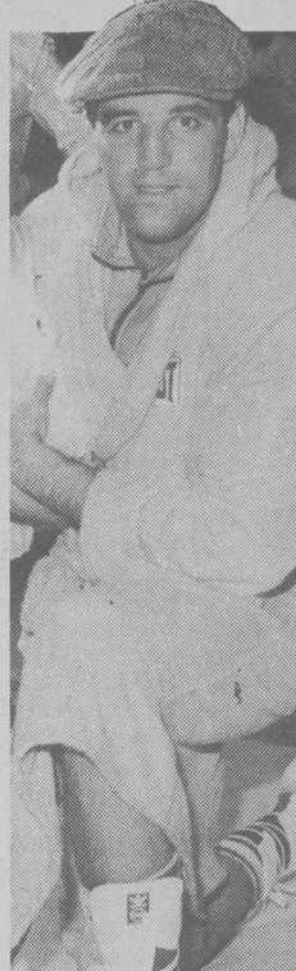
Butch Lewis, Spinks' manager, said last week a fight against Cooney would be more lucrative than a Holmes rematch. The bout probably would be in February, he said.

The Holmes-Cooney fight in 1982 produced boxing's alltime top grossing gate (\$39 million) with the fighters splitting \$17 million.

Holmes received \$3.5 million for spinks, who earned \$1 million.

Dennis Rappaport, Cooney's manager, met with a Lewis representative Thursday.

"It's my feeling that if they can get Larry for less money, they'll take him,



Gerry Cooney

most important thing I've done in my whole life," said the 40-year-old Hayes, a 12-time all-star.

For years he was accustomed to reading only the sports pages of the newspaper on airplanes. Suddenly, he was required to read heavily and write essays for difficult senior level courses. There were doubts, but perseverance paid off. His grades steadily improved and he made the dean's list. In 1968, during his senior year, he dropped out of the University of Houston to heed the call of professional basketball. In 1984, Hayes returned to school and enrolled at UH-University Park. "When I dropped out, it was one of the worst decisions of my life, but luckily, it was one I could correct," he said.

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maybe for \$3 million," Rappaport said. "We're willing to fight winner-take-all. I wouldn't even consider \$5 million."

Rappaport said Cooney is running at his Long Island, N.Y., Home. A fighter must be among the IBF's top 12 contenders for a title shot.

Lewis said Holmes called him last week eagerly wanting a rematch after he watched Cooney stump for a Spinks fight on ABC's Sports Beat.

"Larry's numb," Lewis said.

Abdul-Jabbar signs for 18th season

INGLEWOOD, Calif. -- Kareem Abdul-Jabbar of the Los Angeles Lakers, the leading scorer in National Basketball Association history, has signed a one-year contract extension to play an unprecedented 18th NBA season, it was announced.

No terms were disclosed, but it is believed Abdul-Jabbar will receive \$2 million, which is reportedly his salary for this season.

Abdul-Jabbar, who turns 39 next April, had announced previously that he intended to play in 1986-87 and perhaps beyond.

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