

Entertainment Briefs

SNOOP DOGG FIGHTS OHIO DRUG CHARGE

OBERLIN, Ohio (AP) - A lawyer for rap star Snoop Dogg appeared in court to plead innocent on behalf of his client, who was charged with marijuana possession after a traffic stop. The 30-year-old rapper-actor, whose real name is Calvin Broadus, is charged with possession of marijuana and possession of drug paraphernalia. Both charges carry a maximum sentence of \$250 and 30 days in jail. Snoop Dogg was charged after the State Highway Patrol stopped his tour bus in Amherst for speeding on Oct. 17. Drug-sniffing dogs found six bags of marijuana weighing about 200 grams in the cargo hold. Defense attorney Jay Milano on Tuesday said the rapper's high-profile status makes him an easy target. "Sometimes Snoop Dogg's buses have been stopped just because it's Snoop Dogg's bus," Milano said. "We're not sure that happened here but if it did, then that's an issue that we'd have to fight out." Milano also entered innocent pleas for four others charged in the case. A pretrial hearing is scheduled for Dec. 11. Milano said he didn't think Snoop Dogg would be present.

MICHAEL JACKSON CUT FROM ABC BROADCAST

NEW YORK (AP) - ABC had to hurriedly cut a Michael Jackson performance out of a concert special that aired Thursday night at the singer's request, a spokesman said. Jackson asked for his performance to be cut from the "United We Stand" concert special because Jackson's own concert special is planned later this month on CBS. Jackson was still to appear as one of several performers in an all-star finale at the end of the show. His own concert special, taped in New York in September, will air on CBS on Nov. 13. CBS had suggested that Jackson's CBS special might have to be delayed if he had appeared so recently in a competing network's show, according to The New York Times. The CBS special was timed to be shortly after the release of Jackson's new album, "Invincible," on Tuesday.

SUGE KNIGHT PLANS HILLTOP MANSION

LOS ANGELES (AP) - Rap music mogul Marion "Suge" Knight, who was recently released from prison, wants to build a 9,000-square-foot hilltop mansion, though he doesn't plan to live there. Instead, he'll use the house as a "positive" environment for children, according to his company, Death Row Records. Knight plans to put a movie theater, pool and other amenities at the 1.8-acre estate in the hills above the San Fernando Valley, according to renovation plans that will be considered at a hearing Thursday. Construction ground to a halt after Knight, 36, went to prison in 1996. He was released in August after serving five years for violating probation by getting into a fight in a Las Vegas hotel. The altercation occurred hours before rap star Tupac Shakur was killed in a drive-by shooting as he rode in Knight's car. Shakur was on the Death Row label.

JIMI HENDRIX CHILDHOOD HOME SAVED FROM DEMOLITION

SEATTLE (AP) - The childhood home of Jimi Hendrix appears to have won a last-minute reprieve from the wrecking ball. The ivory-hued house with purple trim was sold on eBay in August for \$43,500, but the Michigan-based buyer backed out after the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks. A pitch to Paul Allen, who built the \$250 million Experience Music Project, went nowhere. EMP, which has a permanent Hendrix exhibit, has no interest in the house as an artifact. A condominium developer said this week the Central Area home could be demolished within two weeks. After two hours of negotiation Thursday, Craig Dieffenbach, a developer and former business manager for Jimi's brother Leon Hendrix, said he had a plan and the money to save the 900-square-foot house. The 87-year-old structure would be moved to a temporary location pending location of a permanent site. It's not clear how long Hendrix lived there, but the house is clearly identified with the guitar virtuoso who died in 1970. His picture is visible in an attic window. The back bedroom and exterior trim are purple, and the bathroom and kitchen cabinets are lavender - possible salutes to his classic "Purple Haze."

ENTERTAINMENT

Michael Jackson debuts at No. 1

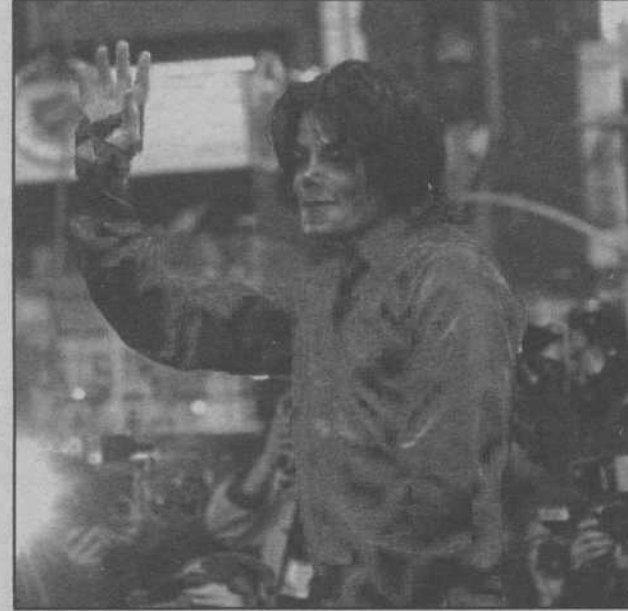
NEW YORK (AP) - Michael Jackson proved "Invincible" to negative reviews. His first new album in almost six years has debuted at the top of the charts, according to figures released Wednesday.

Jackson's "Invincible" sold 366,272 copies in its first week of release in the United States; it also debuted at No. 1 in a dozen countries overseas. The album succeeded despite mixed to harsh criticism from music reviewers: The headline of Entertainment Weekly's review was "King of Pop."

Music industry watchers said the figures were encouraging for Jackson.

"For someone who has not been visible musically in a long time, I think it's a very strong first week," said MTV's Tom Calderone.

It may be time for Jackson to give up his "King of Pop" moniker, however. "Invincible" sold far fewer than the 1.9 million copies that 'N Sync "Celebrity" moved in its debut week last summer.



Michael Jackson waves to crowds Wednesday in New York's Times Square, who gathered to see him at his first ever in-store appearance to celebrate his new album "Invincible" which was released on Oct. 30.

Even last week's No. 1 debut, from gruff rapper DMX, sold 439,957 copies.

Still, it was one of the best debuts of Jackson's career, which is filled with top-selling discs, including the all-time best-seller "Thriller."

But Jackson's reign at the

top of the charts is likely to be brief - Britney Spears' third disc, "Britney," was released Tuesday, and is expected to post first-week sales of near 1 million.

"I think everybody should be happy with this for a first-week number," said Alan

Light, editor of Spin magazine. "The question now is: Were those the die-hard fans? Now we'll see what the effect of word of mouth will be, because he's got to compete against Britney this week and everything that's coming out in the next."

Perhaps mindful of his tenuous spot at No. 1, Jackson was at the Virgin Megastore at Times Square on Wednesday to do something usually reserved for new or less successful acts - sign copies of his disc for fans.

At one point, he made a grand appearance in front of the store, stepping onto a podium outside to acknowledge the huge crowd. Hundreds of people rushed to get a glimpse of the star, clad in a blue sweat suit.

While no media were permitted inside, MTV's Carson Daly interviewed Jackson briefly for his "TRL" show across the street, congratulating him on having the nation's best-selling disc.

Jackson may get a boost (See Jackson, Page 13)

High-flying Li fights way through futuristic film

By Kam Williams
Special to Sentinel-Voice

Jet Li, known in his native China as a martial arts master since the tender age of 11, started making kung-fu movies when he was only 16 years-old.

Though a household name in the Orient since the '70s, he was only discovered by Hollywood recently, in 1998,

after an appearance as a villain in Lethal Weapon 4, his first English language film. A compelling performance there enabled Li to land the starring role opposite the late Aaliyah in Romeo Must Die (2000), a bloody, inner-city update of Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet.

The phenomenal success of that film established Li's star quality and led to Kiss of the Dragon (2001), another action-adventure affair. In that political potboiler, he played savior to Bridget Fonda's damsel-in-distress caught up in an international conspiracy.

With The One, Jet Li is back for a new round of high-

octane antics, this featuring state-of-the-art, futuristic fight sequences. While he also has another vaguely romantic relationship with an alluring co-star, model-turned-actress Carla Gugino, this movie offers the most non-stop action of Jet yet.

The indecipherable storyline, almost too confusing to recount, is riddled with



JET LI

sci-fi gibberish about parallel universes, anti-matter and quantum tunnels. All you need to know is that Gabriel Yulaw

(Mr. Li) is a much-decorated veteran of the LA Sheriffs Department. But this happily-married man also has a dark side, for he moonlights on an intergalactic rampage to other universes where he hunts down and slays an identical alter ego.

Why is Gabe so intent on murdering all of his lookalikes? Not out of an inane vanity or a self-hating psychosis, but because he somehow acquires all of these identical strangers powers and abilities in the process.

And having killed himself 123 times, he needs only one more notch on his belt to become some sort of invincible, evil immortal.

Thus, the scenario is set, with the forces of good, led by Delroy Lindo (The Last Castle), squaring off against an increasingly intelligent foe with amazing agility, super-human strength and, best of

all, awesome martial arts moves.

The Matrix-esque slow-down, speed-up stop action ought to be enough for fans of the genre to overlook the retarded, Swiss-cheese plot.

Good (2 stars). Rated PG-13 for ninety non-stop minutes of automatic weapons fire, fisticuffs, kicksticuffs and pyrotechnics.



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