

Sheila Johnson group buys WNBA's Mystics

Former television executive Sheila Johnson became the WNBA's first Black female owner Tuesday when she joined a group that purchased the Washington Mystics.

Johnson, co-founder of Black Entertainment Television, became a part-owner of Lincoln Holdings LLC, which purchased the Mystics from Abe Pollin's Washington Sports & Entertainment.

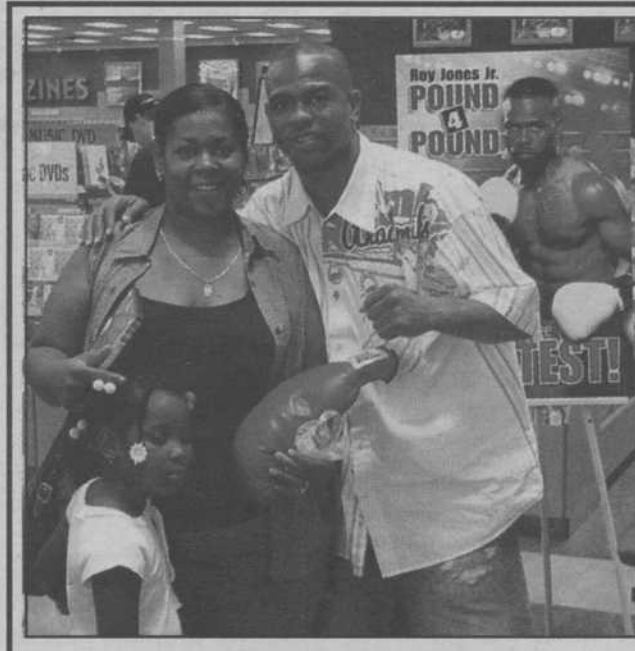
African-American woman to own a WNBA team," Pollin said. "We sought her out, we think she's perfect to run a team."

Her former husband, Robert L. Johnson, who co-founded BET with Johnson, is the owner of the Charlotte Bobcats of the NBA. The two divorced in 2002.

Sheila Johnson, who lives about 50 miles from Washington, is the director of the

Washington Capitals. At least they're playing and have a shot at making money," Leonsis said. "So it's an honor to be part of a team that is very vital and has been a leader in attendance so many years."

"Sheila really has a unique perspective on business and management and how to drive our sports teams forward," he added.



PUT YOUR DUKES UP

Roy Jones, the former undisputed light heavyweight champion and former WBA heavyweight titlist, stopped through Tower Records recently to promote his new boxing DVD, 'The Greatest Knockouts.' Jones gave fan Trudy Jones an autographed glove as her granddaughter Breiana English looked on.

Photo special to Sentinel-Voice



Sheila Johnson, a former executive of Black Entertainment Television, announced at the MCI Center in Washington on Tuesday that she would become the WNBA's first Black female owner, presiding over the Washington Mystics.

Lincoln Holdings, founded by AOL executive Ted Leonsis, owns the NHL's Washington Capitals and is a 45-percent partner in the NBA's Washington Wizards and MCI Center, which Pollin also owns.

The Mystics said Johnson is believed to be the first Black woman to be a part-owner of three professional sports franchises. Johnson's stake in Lincoln Holdings is between 5 and 10 percent.

Leonsis said Johnson will hold the titles of president and managing partner of the Mystics and will represent the team at the board of governors meetings.

NBA Commissioner David Stern and WNBA President Donna Orender joined Johnson, Leonsis and Pollin and his wife, Irene, at the news conference at MCI Center.

"We think it's time for an

Washington International Horse Show, which is held annually at MCI Center.

"I hope that this is a signal that it's about time that a woman, and an African-American woman, is part of this whole scene of sports," said Johnson.

The purchase price for Pollin's share of the Mystics was about \$5.5 million, which would put the franchise's worth at about \$10 million.

The sale is the latest transfer of Pollin's holdings to Leonsis' group. In 1999, Lincoln Holdings bought the Capitals from Pollin, but Leonsis has said that team has consistently lost money. The Mystics, meanwhile, have led the WNBA in attendance five times since beginning play in 1998.

"I will say that the Mystics are managed and have been running better than the

McNabb

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For while Terrell may be a showboat who knows how to garner media attention by doing a jitterbug after he scores a touchdown or by getting into a hot tub with the naked blonde-of-the-moment, his big mouth, bigger ego, insatiable greed and backstabbing ways are far more toxic than anything Donovan has ever done. Give me the modest company man over the flamboyant jerk anytime. Sayonara, T.O.

Attorney Lloyd Williams is a member of the NJ, NY, CT, PA, MA & US Supreme Court bars.

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