

Sideline

SPORTING NEWS

Prefight antics aren't just training for Bowe

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Batman showed up at the cystic fibrosis wing of the Los Angeles Children's Hospital on Wednesday, bearing pizzas, soda and gift bags.

The man ripped off his mask and cape to reveal his true identity: heavyweight Riddick Bowe.

In walked a man wearing a Evander Holyfield mask, a robe and boxing gloves. Turns out that he was an imposter.

Bowe and Holyfield fight in Las Vegas Nov. 4.

Before they left, Bowe and his manager, Rock Newman, handed over a check for \$25,000, a donation in memory of Newman's nephew Patrick Proctor, who died last month of cystic fibrosis at age 15.

Hard foul puts O'Neal on shelf for six weeks

ORLANDO, Fla. (AP) — Shaquille O'Neal will have surgery on his broken right thumb on Thursday and may be sidelined until just before New Year's.

"I want to be playing by Christmas, but I'm not going to rush anything," O'Neal said Wednesday. "My team is good enough to where they can hold their own without me."

"He will be out of competitive basketball for approximately six to eight weeks after surgery," Dr. Richard Shure of the Jewett Orthopaedic Clinic said Wednesday after examining O'Neal.

Miami center Matt Geiger racked O'Neal's hand but was not called for a foul. In fact, O'Neal was called for traveling as he spun along the baseline and went for what looked like a dunk.

Immediately after the injury, O'Neal was furious and threatened to "show ... some of my Shaq-Fu stuff" to any other player who put a similar move on him.

Geiger said the Heat's strategy was to foul O'Neal if he got the ball in too close.

"It was a just a normal foul," he said. "There was nothing personal about it."

The Heat's Billy Owens added, "You're going to get fouled because he's not a good free throw shooter. You got to expect that."

College polls — really only a popularity contest

As the last college football game nears its end on any given Saturday evening, fans begin wondering what Sunday afternoon holds for them.

No, college football fans are not pondering what pro football team is going to win or what spirited duds and stylish sunglasses a certain former Oregon coach is going to wear on the sidelines. What is on the minds of most college pigskin fanatics is where their favorite teams are going to end up in the major college football polls.

They are kind of a strange concept, college football polls. College sports are really the only major event in the world that are officially ranked by whom they beat on a particular day, whether or not they covered a point-spread or if someone who was supposed to be more talented performed up to

expectations or not.

With the exception of boxing, tennis and maybe track and field, you just don't see major sports taking the time to bother with ranking one another; and you certainly don't see any other facet of the world ranked by single-day performances.

Maybe you can count a country's GNP or literacy rate as "rankings," but, for example, you certainly didn't see former President Bush drop behind Russia's Boris Yeltsin in any polls because Yeltsin had one hell of a summit meeting Saturday morning and Bush puked at a presidential dinner Saturday evening. It just doesn't happen

this way outside of college sports.

At any rate, it is hard to understand just what goes into the decisions behind today's major college football polls. For that matter, it is hard to understand what the major college football polls are and which ones should be trusted.

Do you go with the time-honored Associated Press Top 25 poll, in which much effort and thought is supposed to be put in by the nation's most prestigious college football experts? Or should you side with football coaches, who are polled in the CNN/USA Today poll? After all, these are true football experts, right?

Maybe the fans should be the ones who decide the countries top teams, as the promoters of the "Burger King Top 10" would probably want you to believe.

OPINION



Peter Kearney

Frisbee fanatics



Attempting an interception, Zac Cobb (right) plays defense on Andrew Bonar of the Ultimate Frisbee Club during a scrimmage Tuesday. The club practices Tuesdays and Thursdays at 4 p.m. and Sunday at 3:30 p.m. at Southbank Field.

Braves move closer to World Series title

■ **WORLD SERIES:** Atlanta's 5-2 victory puts them ahead of Cleveland three games to one

CLEVELAND (AP) — Even the Atlanta Braves will be hard-pressed to blow this.

The Braves, with Steve Avery starting ahead of Greg Maddux, moved within one victory of the World Series championship that has always eluded them, beating the Cleveland Indians 5-2 Wednesday night for a 3-1 lead.

Atlanta, whose postseason history is filled with failure, could not ask for a better position.

Now Maddux, held back a day to rest, can clinch it Thursday night in Game 5 against Orel Hershiser. Maddux, the three-time Cy Young winner, won the opener with a two-hitter.

Even if they lose, the Braves will head home with two more chances to win. The stats are on their side, too: Of the 39 teams taking a 3-1 edge in the Series, 33 have won it.

After sixth-inning homers by Ryan Klesko and Albert Belle left it tied at 1, the Braves broke it open with three runs in the seventh. Luis Polonia's go-ahead double chased Ken Hill, and David Justice hit a two-out, two-run single off Paul Assenmacher.

"It felt really good because we needed that because we know what kind of team Cleveland has," Justice said. "The more runs we get ahead of them, the better for us."

Doubles by Fred McGriff and Javier Lopez in the ninth added an insurance run against Alan Embree, and sent a few of the 43,578 fans to the exits at quiet Jacobs Field.

A day after the Indians rapped 12 hits in a 7-6, 11-inning win, Avery limited them to three hits over six innings. Greg McMichael followed with two scoreless innings.

Mark Wohlers, whose 2 2-3-inning stint Tuesday night was his longest of the season, took over in the ninth with a 5-1 lead was tagged for Manny Ramirez's leadoff homer and a double by pinch-hitter Paul Sorrento. Manager Bobby Cox wasted no time in bringing in Pedro Borbon, who struck out Jim Thome and Sandy Alomar and retired Kenny Lofton on a liner to right in his second appearance of the postsea-

Turn to **WORLD SERIES**, Page 12