

WORLD news

ening to reveal the victim's sexual orientation while demanding that he turn over his wallet or ATM cards."

UNITED KINGDOM

Controversial British gay activist Peter Tatchell will travel to Memphis, Tenn., to confront boxing legend Mike Tyson at his training camp prior to the big June 8 fight with heavyweight champion Lennox Lewis. "I'm demanding, in the strongest terms, that Tyson stops his homophobic taunts against Lennox Lewis," he told the *Daily Telegraph*.

In January Tyson reportedly said: "I'll fuck you in the ass. You fucking faggot. I'll fuck you in the ass till you love me, you faggot," according to London's *Mirror*.

England's Prison Service has extended family rights to the partners of gay prisoners, the *Independent* reported May 14. Gay partners are allowed spousal visits with their imprisoned lovers and, in a case where both partners are jailed in separate prisons, can request "interprison visits."

The national association for former offenders, Unlock, praised the move. "Prisoners who leave prison and return to a stable relationship, whether with a same-sex or opposite-sex partner, are five times less likely to reoffend, and so maintenance of those relationships in prison is of great importance," chief executive Mark Leech told the newspaper.

CANADA

Tens of thousands of Canadians could have received HIV-negative test results that are wrong, 365Gay.com reported May 3.

Health Canada has determined that BioChem ImmunoSystems' rapid HIV test is not reliable. The fast results were given less than an hour after the patients' fingers were pricked and their blood was placed on a strip of chemically treated paper.

NEW ZEALAND

Police want men at the Bay of Plenty nudist beach to cease their inappropriate frolicking and have begun arresting some of them.

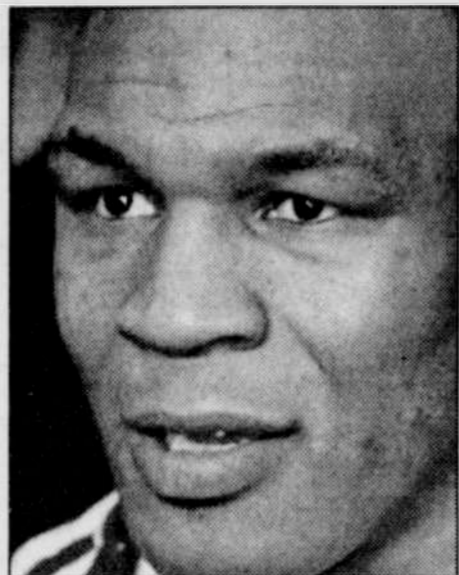
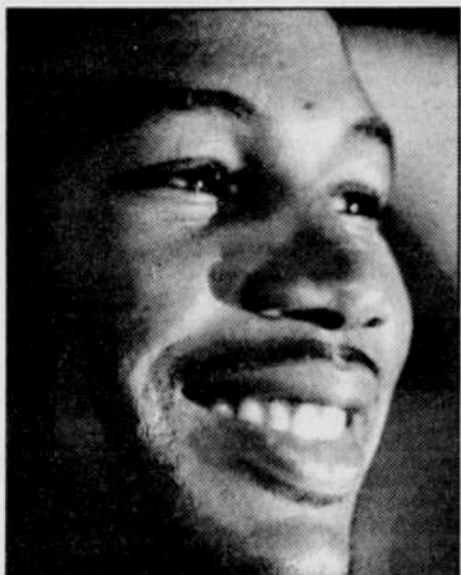
"It's quite obvious these guys are not just going down there to sunbathe in the nude," Detective Senior Sgt. Karl Wright St. Clair said. "I think what's happened now is that it's a bit of a cruising area for gays."

The co-owner of the nearby Chromazones Cruise Club for gay men, Grant Marx, told the *New Zealand Herald* the beach has been a pickup spot for 30 years and "no one really worried about it, but now all the houses have been built around it and families have started to go down there, [so] it's become a hot topic."

SOUTH AFRICA

The premier of the Western Cape province, where Cape Town is located, says gay activists are trying to destroy him because of his religious beliefs. "They want to attack my image as a Christian by attaching sleaze to me so that this will make my argument against homosexuals less credible," Peter Marais said May 11.

Several older white women—egged on by gay activists, he



A British activist is upset about Mike Tyson's (right) homophobic taunts against Lennox Lewis

claims—say he sexually harassed them, which he has denied. He insists they do not understand how nonwhites demonstrate affection.

They "clearly did not understand [mixed-race] and black culture, where it was common practice to hug and kiss people on the cheek," Marais told the *Dispatch* newspaper. "Afrikaners [white South Africans of Dutch descent] are used to greeting each other from a distance and by pressing each other's hand very hard. These things happened in 1994, and it was a cultural adjustment. To use that now and say it had sexual connotations is mischievous and plain sleaze."

After gay groups denounced Marais' allegation that activists provoked the women's accusations, he told reporters: "I acknowledge our homosexual community as part of the colorful rainbow nation of the Western Cape and South Africa. I respect the constitution and the rights it gives to all individuals and minority groups."

South Africa's constitution is one of only a handful in the world that ban discrimination based on sexual orientation.

ITALY

Satellite television viewers in Europe have their first gay channel, broadcasting from Milan in Italian.

Gay.tv took to the airwaves May 6 with three years of funding from the Dutch venture capitalist company Corill. The programming is provided by Xat Productions.

The Agence France-Presse wire service said that up to 15 percent of Italians are gay and that 14 percent of Italians have satellite television.

POLAND

About 2,000 people participated May 1 in Warsaw's Equality Parade.

The march began at the Copernicus monument and ended at Castle Square in Old Town. Participants called on the Catholic Church to recant its anti-gay teachings and urged the government to ban discrimination based on sexual orientation and support equal rights for all.

A small group of right-wing extremists tried to disrupt the parade but was thwarted by police. The queer marchers were joined by sizable contingents of feminists, socialists and anarchists.

"The parade was really a big success in Poland, where the gay and lesbian movement is not so powerful," said Kris Garwowski, editor of the gay magazine *Nowy Men*. □

Compiled by REX WOCKNER, who has reported for the gay press since 1985. He has a bachelor's degree in journalism from Drake University and started his career as a radio reporter.



Peter Marais

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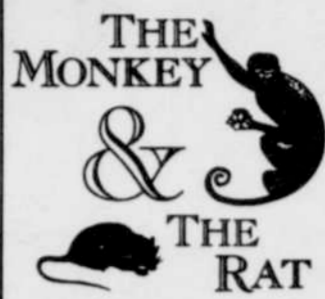
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