



Sports Talk

by Ron Sykes
Sports Editor

Embarrassment, like people, come in all shapes and sizes. Leon Spinks, former Olympic and heavyweight champ came in against South African Gerrie Coetzee in bad shape and was both humiliated and embarrassed.

An overhand right to the head sent the 200 pound Spinks to the canvas. Coetzee, a tremendous underdog, completely dominated the former World Boxing Association Champion knocking him down three times before the referee, Isidoro Rodriguez, stopped the one-ring circus.

Coetzee, a 6'3", former dental technician, will now meet "Big" John Tate to claim the WBA title expected to be vacated by the "Greatest" Muhammad Ali next month.

After fighting brilliantly against Ali, what then led to Spink's downfall? Leon Spinks has a lifestyle that is surely detrimental to any sporting career. Spinks reportedly refuses to train, keeps very late hours during camp, and is said to frequent bars. It was alleged that Spinks was seen in a bar on the eve of his championship fight with Ali having more than a few drinks.

Spinks' apparent disdain for training was no doubt the main thing that led to his latest defeat. Upon entering the ring one could easily see that Spink's body was not fit. The muscle tone and definition that was so obvious during the Olympics and Ali fights was not there. In it's place was a small spare tire about one inch thick.

To say Spinks looked like a rank amateur would be an understatement. To infer that he had a fight plan would be misleading.

Coetzee expected Spinks to charge like a bull, and he did. He (Coetzee) also knew that Spinks could be had by leading with his right . . . that too was true.

It was sad to see Spinks disposed of in such a humiliating manner and even more so to have it come at the hands of South Africa.

Spinks was taunted by many South African spectators who dominated the small crowd. Some knocked at the window and shouted "kaffir," Afrikaans for "nigger." It should be noted that Coetzee himself was kind,

polite and courteous. It was his handlers and countrymen that turned this prestigious event into a one-ring circus.

The Portland Trailblazers, still waiting to be made whole after the loss of all-pro center Bill Walton, came one step close to being made whole by acquiring the man they needed in this year's draft, Jim Paxson.

Selecting twelfth, the Blazers named the 6'6", former Dayton Flyer amid cheers from Harry Glickman, Stu Inman and coach Jack Ramsay. "We were surprised to see Paxson still around when it came our turn," said an elated Blazer official.

Paxson will have a difficult time making the Portland team. He must beat out a solid guard crew including Lionel Hollins, Ron Brewer, Dave Twardzik and T.R. Dunn.

Willie Smith, the 6'1" guard from Missouri is said to be high on Ramsay's list.

So high in fact that when he became injured at the end of last season Ramsay, rather than put him on waivers, chose to keep him around for added insurance against injuries to his guards.

Paxson, the number one choice, has two chances to make this year's team, the others: Andrew Fields, Cheney State; Mickey Fox, St. Mary's (Canada); Darryl Robinson, Appalachian State; Matt White, Penn; Ray Ellis, Pepperdine; Jeff Tropf, Central Michigan; Willie Pounds, Chaminado (Hawaii); Stan Eckwood, Harding (Arkansas); and Kelvin Small, Oregon.

The Detroit Pistons probably fared better than any other team in this year's draft. The Pistons used three first round picks to choose Greg Kelser, Magic Johnson's former teammate; Roy Hamilton, UCLA; and Phil Hubbard, Michigan. All three are bonafide All-Americans and should really help the lowly Pistons.

Ray Leonard, former Olympian will become the next welterweight champion of the world when he meets and beats current champ Wilfredo Benitz on December 1st. Sugar Ray Leonard put on a dazzling display of boxing skills in beating Ciaverini, 33-1, in Las Vegas.

After Leonard beats Benitz the stage will be set for a showdown between the best young welterweights in the world. Leonard and former heavyweight champion Roberto Duran. My choice . . . Ray Leonard.

Coalition meets

Harry Ward and Herb Cawthorne, co-chairmen of the Community Coalition for School Integration, has announced that the Coalition will hold a planning workshop on Saturday, June 30th.

The workshop will be held at Maranatha Church, 12th and Skidmore, from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Members are asked to bring sack lunches.



The Portland Trailblazers suffered a disappointing 2-1 loss to the San Jose Earthquakes last Wednesday night at Civic Auditorium. The Trailblazers will be completing a 3-game road trip with their last stop in Seattle this Saturday night before heading home to meet with Washington on Wednesday, July 4th, game time will be 8:00 p.m. There will be a fireworks display after the game so come on out, watch some soccer and enjoy the fireworks. (Photo: Keith Kvernvik)

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