

PORTLAND OBSERVER

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"The Eyes and Ears of the Community"

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BLACK HISTORY MONTH

Jefferson High Wrestling team shoots for a pin

Jefferson High wrestling coaches Donnie McPherson and Don Lierman have a right to be happy. Jefferson won its first PIL dual meet wrestling championship in 30 years. Thursday, February 16, Jefferson beat previously unbeaten Grant 32-19 to take the championship in an action-packed wrestling finale which kept the crowd on the edge of their seats for most of the evening. Jefferson finally took control of the match when 171 pounder Jay Kim won by major decision over Grant's Ethan Plam.

According to McPherson, Jefferson has a strong young team which will graduate only three seniors. Through working hard and strict discipline, McPherson feels that the team has reached a level of respectability throughout the state. McPherson says, "Here at Jefferson there's no secret to success in anything you do except hard work and putting in quality time, whether it's sports or academics. We use sports as a vehicle to teach young men to compete in life as well as on the wrestling mat." Key people in the Demos' line-up include Eric Metcalfe (20-2) a sophomore who has worked hard over the summer to improve his wrestling skills and has unlimited potential. Look out for Eric in the state tournament.

Bobby Janisse, a junior with world class experience and team leader who's actual weight is 119, but has wrestled in much higher weights for the good of the team. Janisse is 21-1, with his only loss coming when wrestling at the 130 pound weight class, 11 pounds above his actual weight. Look for Janisse to be a dominate force in the state tournament at his normal 119 pound weight class.

Damon McPherson, a freshman with nine years of wrestling experience, is doing well at the 135 pound class. McPherson currently has a 18-4 record and will wrestle at the 130 pound class for the state tournament.

Jay Kim, one of the three seniors on the team, is the only remaining wrestler from four years ago when McPherson and Lierman took over as coaches. Kim has a 19-3 record and looks to place high in the state tournament in March.

McPherson is happy to realize a dream he had four years ago, to establish a championship wrestling team at Jefferson High, which is a predominantly basketball powerhouse.

McPherson says, "My greatest joy comes from seeing young men I've coached over the years doing well in life."



Teams Members are:

Eric Metcalfe	103
Jet Edwards	112
Hank Travis	119
Bobby Janisse	125
Chris Lowery	130
Damon McPherson	135
Tommy Linnell	140
David Stephens	145
Shannon Wash	152
George Archer	160
Jay Kim	171
Lawrence James	189
Carlton Slater	HWT "Great moves for a big fellow"

SENIOR OF THE WEEK



BY Jimi Johnson

Daisylin Oten came to Portland in 1968 after living in Queens New York for five years. Originally from the beautiful island of Jamaica, Oten puts a high premium on education.

In her homeland, she served as a teacher and was an inspiration to the many young people whose lives she touched. When

Daisy (as Mrs. Oten prefers to be called) arrived in Portland, she immediately set out to complete her college education. After graduating from Portland Community College with a AA Degree, Daisy attended Portland State University and obtained a B.S. Degree in social work. Mrs. Oten often says "You're never to old to learn."

THE ORCHESTRA THAT TOOK THE 'A' TRAIN AROUND THE WORLD

By Peggy Langrall
Smithsonian News Service

Wherever they went--Newport, London, Mospow, or Taipei--their fans listened, spellbound, as the first delectable dissonances of the Duke Ellington Orchestra rumbled through the hall. A reporter in Orlando, Fla., in March 1971, described an audience just so--listening "with reverent awe" while the band went on to "wend its way through half a century of jazz."

Ellington, who headed a 74, worked that long, until his death in 1974, almost his magic with exciting and complex sound. His mood-weaving recorded music continues to summon anything from foot-tapping joy to reflective solitude, and today's audiences often break into spontaneous applause at the first distinctive notes, just as they did when the Duke was on stage.

In Washington, D. C., Ellington's home town--the high school for performing arts and a bridge are named for him--there is going to be a monthlong celebration in April, marking the 90th anniversary of the band leader's birth. Among other events, the Ellington International Study Conference will convene its far-flung fans, with a band to include alumni of Duke Ellington's orchestra. The Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of American History will present daily performances and programs and an exhibit, "Duke Ellington: American Musician."

A prolific composer, Ellington drew on Afro-American, Latin and many other traditions. He was inspired by everything that happened to him. "Having fun through freedom of expression," is one way that Ellington defined jazz. Such a unique tonal palette, from the mellifluous chords he scattered over the piano to the wildy original voicings and harmonies he wrote for his players, had never been heard from any dance band before.

"The Old Man knew how to get the best from each individual player," Mercer Ellington, Duke's son and present leader of the band, said at the Smithsonian's acquisition ceremonies in 1988 for a huge collection of Ellington scores, tapes and memorabilia. Most of the band's jazz virtuosos, like Johnny Hodges, Harry Carney, Paul Gonsalves, Lawrence Brown and Cootie Williams, have moved with the Duke into legend. But music lovers can recapture the feel of their now vanished world in the archives of the Museum of American History.

Comprising about half of Ellington's total output of more than 1,000 pieces, the collection contains orchestrations--some 200 in Ellington's own hand--ranging, alphabetically, all the way from "Awful Sad" through "Zurdsay." The collection will open formally for study when the cataloging, microfilming and all other processing is completed in several years. Musicians and scholars will find examples of "the major stages through which an Ellington composition generally progressed," says Columbia University's Mark Tucker, the first music scholar to go through the materials.

Much of jazz originates in improvisation--not on paper--but it will now be possible to trace the genesis and form of Ellington's compositions from these scores. Once he had sketched out an idea at the piano, the leader would collaborate with his players to develop the score. Ellington had a genius for bringing out talents the players sometimes didn't know they had. Smithsonian jazz authority Martin Williams says that, thanks to the scores in the collections, "jazz bands can perform Ellington's music as he wrote it, bringing to a new generation the sounds once

heard in New York City's Cotton Club and at uncounted on-night stands around the country. Moreover, the collection documents Ellington's place as on e of this century's major composers."

Among the numerous reels of audio tapes the museum now owns is a group made in the late 1960s but never issued. There are also literally hundreds of photographs of the band members and their leader. More than 50 scrapbooks document the journeys, dance gigs and concerts. Stashed in boxes are some of the band's business papers, as well as portions of Ellington's autobiographical manuscript and a lifetime of jottings on hotel stationery.



There are awards and trophies, posters and the actual band stands bearing replicas of the elegantly calligraphed Ellington signature--all communicating a sense of Duke Ellington's enormous energy.

Born in Washington, D.C., on April 29, 1899, Edward Kennedy Ellington grew up, beloved and happy, in a moderately well-to-do family. His father, a butler--at one time, at the White House--made a point of picking up and passing on a felling for refinement to his children.

Ellington's adored mother gave her son every confidence in his worth and future. He took his first piano lessons with a Miss Clinkscales in 1906, studied art, and wrote his first song, "Soda Fountain Rag," at age 15.

In 1922, like many a musician since, Ellington gravitated to New York City. He and some Washington pals formed a band and gradually found dance hall jobs in Harlem and on Broadway. By 1927, the band was playing at Harlem's famous Cotton Club where a featured section of the nightly review was a between-sets concert piece. Though much of the band's early music was written for overtures and specialty dances or to move a comedian on and off stage, for the set breaks Ellington was able to write "Creole Love Call" and "Black and Tan Fantasy," the first of his extended works.

The band went to Hollywood to appear in the first of a series of movies, and now-world-famous compositions came along such as the eerily voiced "Mood Indigo" and eminently danceable "Sophisticated Lady." In 1933, the Duke made his first European tour and wrote "Daybreak Express," a musical re-creation of the sounds of a train as it pulls out of a station, hurtles through the night and comes to a halt at dawn.

Ellington loved trains, and through the 1930s and 1940s, he and the band spent thousands of hours on them. He used the almost mythic quality about trains in several of his pieces, and "Daybreak Express" demonstrates his pure love of sound. Even the train whistle--made by a combination of tightly voiced clarinets and muted trumpets--is uncannily soulful and real.

The band's famous signature tune, "Take

the A Train"-- the subway to Harlem--was written by Ellington's brilliant collaborator, pianist-arranger Billy Strayhorn. A number of his hand-written compositions are also in the Smithsonian collection.

"For musical wizardry and subtlety, Ellington was far above any of his contemporaries," Williams says. The glamorous show band reached a peak of creativity in the 1940s, with such blow-outs as "Braggin' in Brass," which Williams describes as "a tour de force of unsurpassed brass virtuosity"; "Harlem Airshaft," evoking urban apartment living, and "Cotton Tail," an incredible version of "I Got Rhythm." With 250 quarter notes per minute, it has been called "one of the landmarks of the era."

Ellington, who frequently said "I don't believe in categories of any kind," in 1941 branched out musically with the review, "Jump for Joy," a breakthrough for black musical theater. A series of Carnegie Hall concerts began in 1943 when Ellington composed the extended work, "Black, Brown, and Beige," with the beautiful anthem "Come Sunday." Success followed upon success. The tumultuous triumph at the 1956 Newport Jazz Festival, generated by a performance of "Diminuendo and Crescendo in Blue," featuring Paul Gonsalves on saxophone, landed Ellington on the cover of Time.

Ellington made news again when he was formally presented to the Queen of England, after a concert in 1958. In 1963, the band was selected by the U.S. State Department to conduct a good-will tour of the Near and Middle East--unprecedented in the annals of diplomacy. The Maharajah of Cooch Behar, who flew in for a concert from Kashmir, was a large portion of his family, owned all of Ellington's records.

The composer's output in 1963 alone included "Afro Bossa," incorporating Latin rhythms, and the suite "Such Sweet Thunder," commissioned by the Stratford (Ontario) Shakespeare Festival. The equally acclaimed "Far East Suite," including "Ad Lib on Nippon," came from Ellington's hand when he toured Japan.

Ever surprising, the composer turned serious liturgical expression in the decade before his death, with the first in a series of sacred concerts that was held at Grace Cathedral in San Francisco. World-hopping almost incessantly, the composer represented the United States at the World Festival of Negro Arts in Dakar, Senegal, in 1966, performing another sacred concert that year at Coventry Cathedral, England. At his 70th birthday party, held in the house where his father once worked as a butler, Ellington received the Presidential Medal of Freedom. A series of acclaimed tours in Eastern Europe, Russia, the Far East, Australia and South America followed.

After a concert in Buenos Aires, the fans were still on hand at 5:30 in the morning when the bus departed with the musicians for the airport.

"Ellington changed the notion of what it was possible to do with the standard jazz big band," Columbia University's Mark Tucker says. Few know, for instance, that the stunning score for the 1959 Otto Preminger film, "Anatomy of a Murder," was composed by Duke Ellington. Among the band's artifacts there is even a scenario he wrote for an opera that was to be called "Boola," about an African brought to this country as a slave.

So rich a variety of works interests and refreshes even after many listenings. Ellington, himself, "loved it all," Tucker says. Nor did he tire of playing old favorites for folks with fond memories, saying, "You have to respect such memories."

Introducing:



LaCandra Teal, 7th Grade, Ockley Green



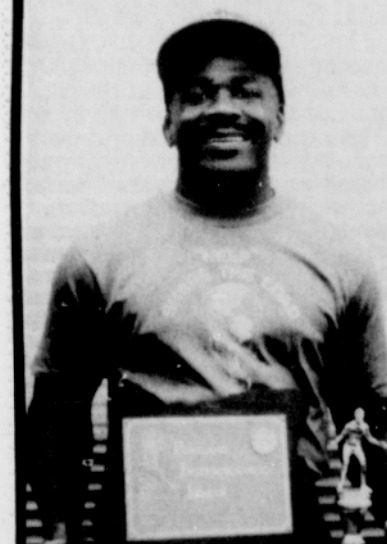
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K'Zell Wesson 7th Grade, Ockley Green



Jitesh Patel, 7th Grade, Ockley Green



Donnie McPherson, Wrestling Coach, Jefferson High School