

# SPORTS BRIEFS

## Report: Riddick Bove was "problem" recruit

Former heavyweight champion Riddick Bove reportedly was a "problem recruit" who was discharged after nine days in the Marine Corps reserves not because he wanted out but because he "refused to train." Major Rick Long, a spokesman at the Marine Corps' Parris Island boot camp, told the Washington Post in Tuesday's editions that the Marine Corps officials believe Bove deliberately behaved in a way that left them little choice but to discharge him.

## FOOTBALL

### Steelers' Rod Woodson has knee surgery

Veteran cornerback Rod Woodson of the Pittsburgh Steelers reportedly had knee surgery sometime in the past two weeks. The Pittsburgh Post-Gazette reported Tuesday that Woodson, currently an unrestricted free agent, underwent the operation on his right knee. The nature of the procedure, performed at Vail, Colorado by Doctor Richard Steadman, is unknown. Steelers spokesman Ron Miller said the team has not talked to Woodson since the Pro Bowl, but would not deny the report.

### Jets, LB Pepper Johnson agree to terms

Bill Parcells has tapped another former New York Giant to help him rebuild the New York Jets. The Jets Tuesday confirmed various reports that the team has agreed to terms with linebacker Pepper Johnson. Terms were not disclosed, but ESPN is reporting that Johnson will receive a one-year contract. The 32-year-old Johnson, who spent the 1996 season with the Detroit Lions, played for Parcells with the Giants from 1986-90 and was part of two Super Bowl championship teams. After Parcells stepped down, Johnson remained with the Giants through the 1992 season. Johnson is expected to serve as a backup to the injury-plagued Marvin Jones.

## GOLF

### Irwin leads Senior Slam by six shots

Hale Irwin, who already has won two tournaments this season, took a six-stroke lead into the final round of the \$500,000 Senior Slam at the Palmilla Golf Club in San Jose del Cabo, Mexico. Irwin roared out of the gate Monday with seven birdies in his first 13 holes en route to a 65. He birdied six of the first 11 holes before finishing his attack with a birdie on the 13th hole.

## TENNIS

### Ivanisevic reaches second round at \$814,250

Defending champion and top seed Goran Ivanisevic of Croatia struggled past Russian qualifier Andrei Olhovskiy, 7-6 (7-2), 6-7 (7-9), 6-2 Tuesday in first-round action at the \$814,250 Italian Indoors tennis tournament in Milan. Ivanisevic, ranked fifth in the world, entered the tournament with tendinitis in his left shoulder. After losing in the finals at Dubai, Ivanisevic withdrew from the European Championships in Antwerp, Belgium.

# SPORTS

## VIKINGS RELEASE WARREN MOON

The Minnesota Vikings released eight-time Pro Bowl quarterback Warren Moon on Friday, less than four months after signing him to a three-year, \$15 million contract extension.

Moon's days with the Vikings have been numbered ever since December 20th, when the team signed quarterback Brad Johnson to a four-year, \$15 million contract.

The 40-year-old Moon, acquired three years ago in a trade with the Houston Oilers, completed just over 54 percent of his passes last season for 1,610 yards with seven touchdowns and nine interceptions. He began the year as Minnesota's starting signal-caller, but suffered a right ankle injury in the first half of the season-opener against Detroit.

"Looking back, the trade for Warren was excellent for our team," Vikings vice president Jeff Diamond told the Minneapolis Star Tribune in Sunday's editions. "Going in we

expected we would have Warren for two years. It turned out to be three years and he'd probably still be here if he hadn't gotten hurt."

Moon returned for a 20-14 victory at Chicago in Week Three, but Johnson won the job for good on October 28th after coming off the bench in a 15-13 loss to the Bears.

Moon is fourth on the National Football League's all-time list in passing yards (43,569) and completions (3,514). He spent the last three years with Minnesota after 10 seasons with the Oilers. The former University of Washington star began his pro career in the Canadian Football League, playing six seasons with the Edmonton Eskimos.

"Warren did some great things for us. He helped us win a division title in '94, re-wrote our record book, made the Pro Bowl twice and led two of the best offenses we've had here," Diamond added.

In 1995, Moon became the first

Vikings quarterback to start all 16 games since Tommy Kramer in 1979. He led the NFL in completions with 377 and was second in touchdown passes with 33. Both were single-season team records, breaking his own mark of 371 completions and Kramer's standard of 26 scoring passes in 1981.

Moon was named to the Pro Bowl eight straight seasons before 1996. In 1995, he posted his eighth 3,000-yard passing season, tying him with Joe Montana for third on the NFL's all-time list, and his fourth 4,000-yard passing season, second behind Dan Marino's six.

Moon does not plan to retire and could draw strong interest from the Seattle Seahawks, who are seeking a veteran backup for starter John Friesz.

"We'll be in the process of making our first calls and trying to find him a team in the next couple of weeks," agent Leigh Steinberg told the Star Tribune.

## Baseball players warned

Major league baseball's chief of security has brought his annual warning to players: watch out for scams, gamblers and stalkers.

"These young men are really focused on baseball, and I'm their insurance man," Kevin Hallinan said Monday as he made his presentation to the Milwaukee Brewers spring training camp.

"We want to limit their distractions. A lot of these guys are going into cities for the first time and are unaware

about what the local crime picture may be.

"We want them to be sensitive to characters trying to get close to them, even their families."

Hallinan was hired 11 years by then-commissioner Peter Ueberroth after 25 years as a New York City police officer, the last five with an anti-terrorist unit.

He said each major league city has a "resident agent," a member of a local law enforcement agency who keeps tabs on his team and assistants in security

issues. For the Arizona Diamondbacks beginning next year, that man will be Chuck Blalock, a Phoenix police officer.

Fernando Vina, a Brewers second baseman who played collegiate ball at Arizona State, said the presentation is a good idea.

"They told us to be careful, watch out, be smarter than the other people and be ready for them before they can even get to you," Vina said. "They even give us a number to call if we think something's up."

## COGNAC HENNESSY - BLACK SKIFEST '97

Black SkiFest '97 has been joined for its second annual event by Cognac Hennessy as title sponsor. In announcing their sponsorship for the second year, Hennessy spokesman Ken Wyatt, Senior Marketing Brand Manager Says, "I am delighted for Cognac Hennessy to be a part of such a positive and unique event. The African American skier is an adventurous, fun-loving type of person and we want to be associated with this type of quality event." Last year, at Black SkiFest '96, over 500 African American skiers were in Sun Valley.


African American SkiFest is in Sun Valley, Idaho March 29 thru April 5, 1997. The Sun Valley resort was selected because of its reputation as the number one ski resort in

the United States for 1996 by readers of "Ski Magazine." Cooperation from the Sun Valley, Ketchum Chamber of Commerce greatly enhanced the experience.

Black SkiFest '97 is a whirlwind week of activities. Skiers will have one of the premier mountains to ski. Off the slope activities include snowmobiles, dog sled rides and a mid-night horse drawn wagon dinner sleighride in the crisp mountain air make it a unique setting. The outdoor heated pool party & wine sip, at the famous Sun Valley Lodge, is a great mixer. The entertainment for Black SkiFest '97 will be just as good.

For travel reservations call G.K. Travel Partners at 770-907-7862 or 800-484-3638 pin #0339.

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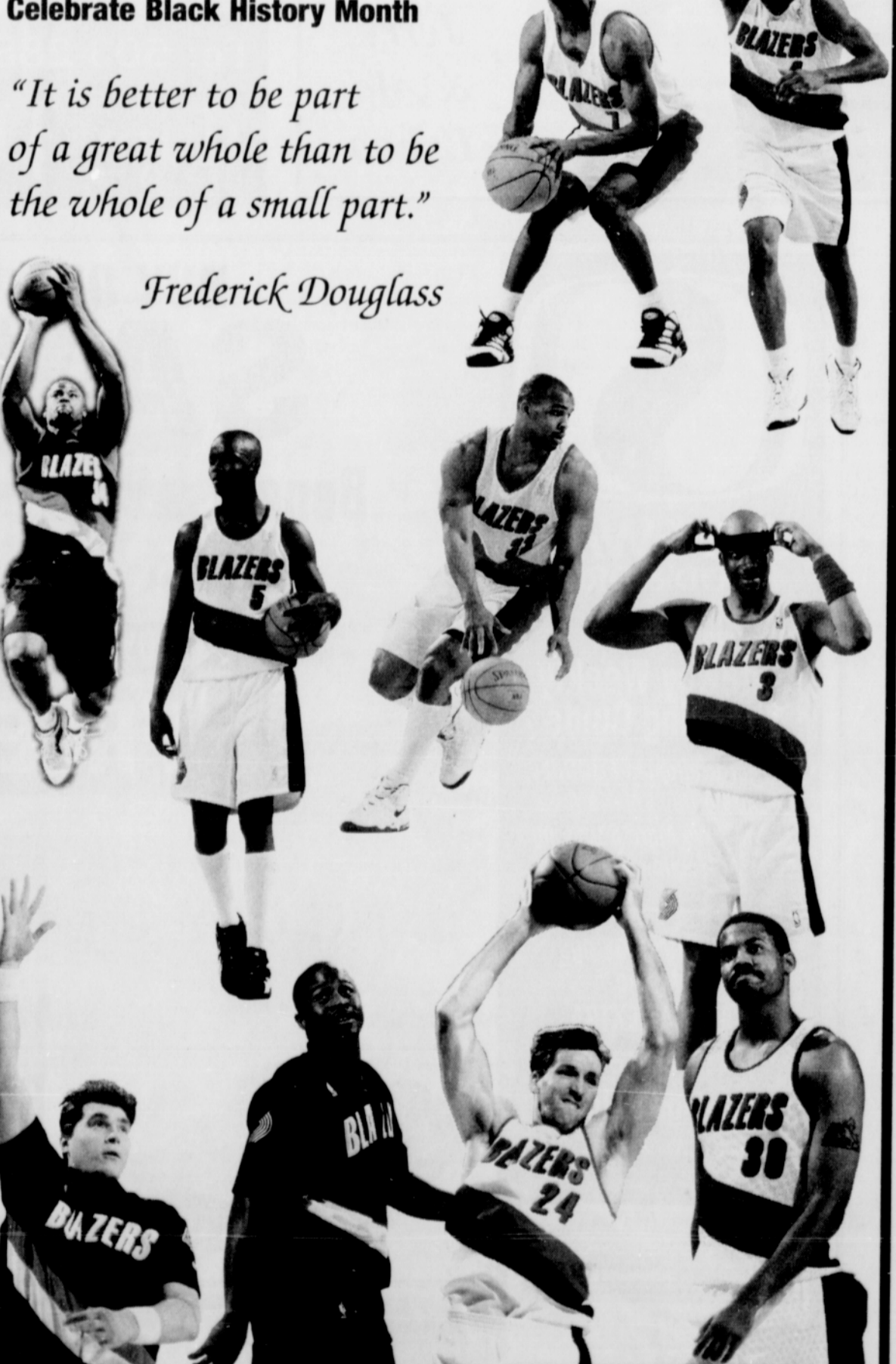
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"It is better to be part of a great whole than to be the whole of a small part."

Frederick Douglass



## THOMAS SAYS NO MONETARY JEALOUSY

His first day of spring training, Frank Thomas was polished and smooth. The ball jumped as he swung, the product of a month-long workout in his own private batting cage at home.

Thomas and the two other players who will give the Chicago White Sox one of the most imposing offensive lineups in baseball—Albert Belle and Robin Ventura—hit in the same threesome on a gorgeous sunny afternoon.

Balls went flying over the practice field fence from all directions. Later, the trio later posed together for a picture, adding veteran Harold Baines to the mix.

"I look forward to a special season," Thomas said about an hour after his workout was completed Sunday. He reported three days late after clearing up business in Chicago.

Thomas touched on numerous subjects in his talk with reporters.

He's not jealous of the money Belle is making, which is about \$4 million a year more than he's making. He said it would be impossible for any team to pay two players \$11 million each. Thomas said money is not as important as it once was and he would like to finish his career in Chicago after his current contract expires in 2000.

Belle gives the White Sox a player who Thomas says can now "outperform me." He said there will be friendly competition between the two stars.

He predicts the Sox will average six runs a game. He said it could take 100 wins to capture the AL

Central, and Chicago is capable of doing that.

"I've made a lot of money and I'm not worried what Albert is making. He was a top-notch free agent and deserved every penny. I'm not going to tell you that 'Oh well, I got to get close to that. I'm not worried about that,'" said Thomas, who encouraged Sox chairman Jerry Reinsdorf to go after Belle.

Belle signed a five-year, \$55 million contract last November and was recognized as the game's highest-paid player until Barry Bonds agreed to a contract extension last week, giving him an average salary of \$11.45 million.

Thomas signed a contract that beginning in 1995 guaranteed him \$29 million for four years. The club has options of \$7.15 million in 1999 and \$7.25 million in 2000.

Thomas predicted that Seattle's Ken Griffey Jr. would be the "first \$12 million man."

"I have no regrets at all. My family is not missing a meal. Coming out of Columbus, Ga., I never thought I could make the money I'm making," Thomas said.

"Honestly, the way salaries are going now, how many players can you have making \$11 million? In a few years when I'm up again, it's not going to take the world to keep me in Chicago. I'm happy there."

Thomas, a two-time MVP, said he and Belle will push one another.

"Sometimes you get a little professional jealousy going on among teammates. That's the way it is," he said.