

# SPORTS BRIEFS

## FOOTBALL

### Niners reportedly close to signing QB Young to new deal

The San Francisco 49ers are reportedly close to signing star quarterback Steve Young, the NFL's top passer five times in the last six years, to a new contract. The San Francisco Chronicle is reporting Tuesday that Young and the Niners have reached agreement on several major financial points and the length of a new deal and that an announcement is imminent. "We're basically in accord on issues," Leigh Steinberg, Young's agent, told the San Francisco Chronicle. "We're working on details."

### Chiefs sign first round pick Gonzalez

The Kansas City Chiefs Tuesday signed University of California tight end Tony Gonzalez, their first round pick in the 1997 draft, to a six-year contract. Financial terms were not disclosed. The Chiefs traded four picks in order to move up five spots in the first round to select Gonzalez 13th overall in the April draft. The 6-4, 244-pound tight end is expected to immediately become an impact player in Kansas City's revamped passing game.

## BASEBALL

### Yanks trade INF Duncan to Blue Jays

The New York Yankees Tuesday traded disgruntled infielder Mariano Duncan to the Toronto Blue Jays for minor league outfielder Angel Ramirez. The Blue Jays will also receive cash considerations. After the trade, the Yankees purchased the contract of outfielder Pete Incaviglia from Triple-A Columbus to replace Duncan on the roster. Duncan, a vital cog in New York's World Series run last year, became disenchanted in New York when his playing time was reduced this year and asked to be traded.

## HOCKEY

### Blackhawks to announce re-signing of RW Amonte

The Chicago Blackhawks will announce the signing of Group II free agent right wing Tony Amonte at a 2 p.m. EDT news conference at the United Center. Amonte, who turns 27 on August 2nd, has emerged as one of the top right wings in the NHL. He led the Blackhawks with 41 goals and 77 points, both career-highs, and had an astounding plus-35 rating this past season.

## TENNIS

### Kafelnikov in action Tuesday

Fourth-seeded Yevgeny Kafelnikov of Russia takes on American Vince Spadea Tuesday in second-round action at the \$2.05 million du Maurier Open, a Super 9 event, in Montreal. Spadea hopes to duplicate the result of his 1995 U.S. Open meeting with the Russian, when he posted a three-set victory. In other second-round play, French Open champion Gustavo Kuerten of Brazil plays American Jonathan Stark tonight; eighth-seeded Richard Krajicek of the Netherlands takes on South African Neville Godwin; number 12 Jonas Bjorkman of Sweden meets Doug Flach of the United States; and Jan Siemerink, the 16th seed, battles American Chris Woodruff.

# SPORTS

## A Goodwill Ambassador



Evander Holyfield is greeted by young admirers as he arrives at Johannesburg International Airport as a goodwill ambassador for Coca-Cola and its commitment to the future of South Africa.

## TRAIL BLAZERS SEASON

The Portland Trail Blazers will open, and close, their 28th regular season against the Pacific Northwest rival Seattle SuperSonics according to the 1997-98 schedule released Tuesday by the National Basketball Association. The Blazers open the season at home for the 21st time in franchise history on Friday, Oct. 31, as they host the Sonics in a 7 p.m. contest at the Rose Garden. The Blazers and Sonics will also duel at the Rose Garden in the Apr. 19 regular season finale, a 12:30 affair.

Every home and road game during Portland's 1997-98 regular season will be broadcast on flagship station AM 1190, KEX, and along the Blazers' 29-station, satellite radio network.

For the third time in the last four years, the Blazers begin the regular season with a pair of back-to-back matchups. After hosting the Sonics in their season-opener, Portland travels to Los Angeles to face the Clippers in its first road contest, Nov. 1. The Trail Blazers play on consecutive nights 20 times, with the second game coming on the road in 16 of those sets. During the season the Blazers must play in Portland one night and on the road the following evening on nine occasions.

Portland's home games begin at 7 p.m., except for games scheduled to be televised nationally by either TNT,

TBS, CTV or NBC sports.

The Blazers open with nine of their first 14 games on the road and follow with 10 of their next 14 at the Rose Garden. Western Conference rivals Houston, Utah and the L.A. Lakers visit the Rose Garden during December, along with the first visit of the San Antonio Spurs and top NBA draft pick Tim Duncan. The defending World Champion Chicago Bulls visit Jan. 29, and the Indiana Pacers, under new head coach Larry Bird, come to the Rose City Dec. 10.

The road schedule includes a four-game excursion and a pair of five-game trips. Nine of the Blazers' final 13 regular season matchups take place away from home, with Portland wrapping up the road portion of its regular season at Denver, Apr. 17.

The 1997-98 home schedule boasts five Monday dates, 13 Tuesdays, two Wednesdays, four Thursdays, nine Fridays and eight Sundays at the Rose Garden. After playing six home dates in November, the Blazers have nine home games in December, seven in January, eight in February, seven in March and four in April.

The Blazers will appear on national television four times during the 1997-98 season.

The Blazers host the Western Conference Champion Utah Jazz on TNT Dec. 5, and their Feb. 4 visit to the Great Western forum to face the

Los Angeles Lakers will air on TBS. NBC Sports will regionally televise two matchups from Portland, Mar. 8 against San Antonio, and Apr. 19 versus Seattle. CTV will broadcast Portland's Feb. 1 home matchup with Toronto and their Apr. 11 visit to Vancouver.

The 48th annual NBA All-Star Game is scheduled for Sunday, Feb. 8, at Madison Square Garden in New York.

The team's television and BlazerVision broadcast schedules are scheduled for release later in the summer.

## BARKLEY GOES TO COURT

Charles Barkley was joking as if he were on the court, not in one. Barkley, sued for \$500,000 over a bar fight, was back in court Tuesday for the second day of his trial. The scuffle happened last summer at The Basement nightclub when Barkley was in town with the U.S. Olympic basketball team. Barkley told police he was the one who was attacked, and a defense lawyer said Olympic teammate Reggie Miller testified that Tyler threw the first punch. In a complaint amended Monday, the 24-year-old Tyler, of Spencerport, N.Y., is seeking \$50,000 in compensatory damages from Barkley and the bar, and \$500,000 in punitive damages from Barkley.

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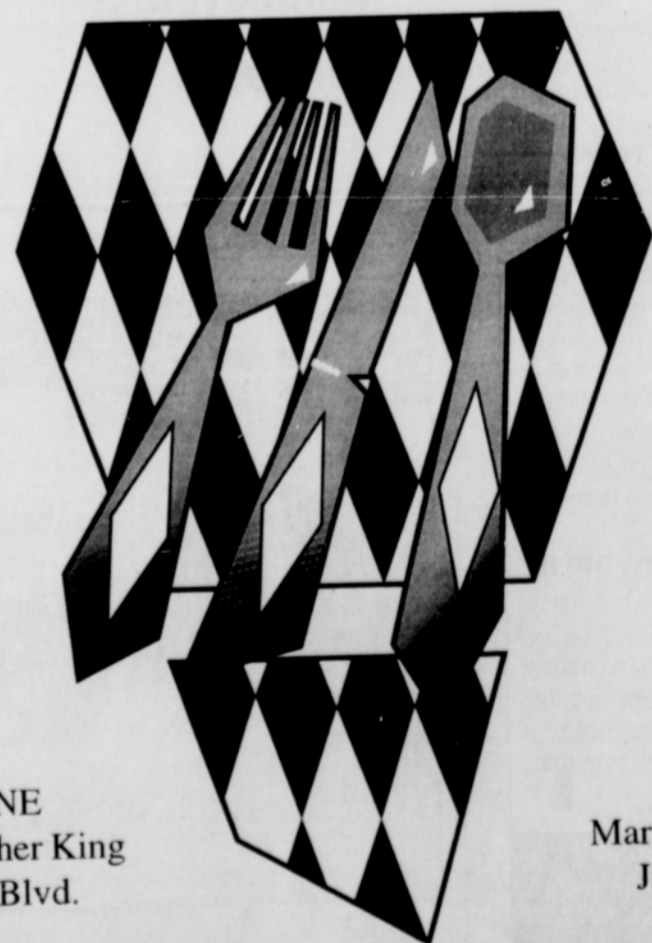
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