

# SPORTS

## Snubbed Female Ref Gets \$7.85M

By LARRY NEUMEISTER

A jury awarded \$7.85 million Thursday to a woman who seemed in the running to be the NBA's first female referee before discovering the league did not want her.

Clutching a tiny copy of the New Testament in her palm, the stunned Sandra Ortiz-Del Valle sobbed and shook uncontrollably after the jury agreed that the NBA had discriminated against her.

"I can't believe they understood because so many people didn't," Ortiz-Del Valle, 46, of

Hillside, N.J., said after the verdict was returned following a week-long trial before U.S. District Judge Sidney H. Stein.

The jury, which deliberated over two days, awarded her \$100,000 for lost wages, \$750,000 for mental and emotional pain and \$7 million in punitive damages.

Jeffrey A. Mishkin, the NBA's executive vice president and chief legal officer, said in a statement that he was confident the verdict will be set aside.

"This is not our first experi-

ence with a jury that has made a serious mistake. This kind of result tends to happen when a professional sports league is the defendant," he said.

Chris Brienza, an NBA spokesman, said the league will ask the judge to set aside the verdict as the first step in an appeal.

Violet Palmer became the first woman to referee an NBA game when this season began in October. Less than a week later, the second woman, Dee Kantner, worked her first game. The league said it had approached

both women about four years earlier because it believed they had the makings of NBA officials.

Recalling that she has loved basketball since she was a child in Harlem, Ortiz-Del Valle talked about her struggles as she and her lawyers shared tears and hugs for 20 minutes after the verdict.

She said she was a center and forward playing basketball for City College before she began officiating in 1984 in the Biddies League for children ages 7 and 8.

"I wanted to be the best referee I could be," she said. "I wasn't thinking I have to break this door down."

Before long, she was refereeing in the Pro Am League, a league of 22 teams throughout the nation. By 1991, she was officiating in the U.S. Basketball League, made up of teams from Maine to Florida.

"The players were always fine," she said. "They knew me from other leagues."

From 1992 through 1994, she officiated preseason scrimmages for the New Jersey Nets and seemed at the league's doorstep.

She said she rose to No. 2 on the list of those in line to officiate in the NBA and then noticed that those who were ranked behind her were being promoted to the league.

In court papers, the NBA said it observed Ortiz-Del Valle's performance as a referee for several

years before concluding she did not qualify to officiate in the NBA.

The league said the level of competition in the games or leagues in which she worked were far below that of the NBA. It said she repeatedly ignored its suggestions that she upgrade her schedule.

At first, Ortiz-Del Valle in the lawsuit asked to be installed as an NBA referee but she has given up that request after injuring her back in a car accident a year ago.

### NBA Standings

#### EASTERN CONFERENCE

##### Atlantic Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
x-Miami	55	24	.696	
New Jersey	42	36	.538	12 1/2
New York	42	37	.532	13
Orlando	39	40	.494	16
Washington	38	40	.487	16 1/2
Boston	35	43	.449	19 1/2
Philadelphia	30	49	.380	25

##### Central Division

z-Chicago	60	19	.759	
y-Indiana	56	23	.709	
y-Charlotte	48	30	.615	11 1/2
y-Atlanta	47	31	.603	12 1/2
y-Cleveland	45	33	.577	14 1/2
Milwaukee	35	43	.449	24 1/2
Detroit	35	44	.443	25
Toronto	15	63	.192	44 1/2

#### WESTERN CONFERENCE

##### Midwest Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
x-Utah	59	19	.756	
y-San Antonio	53	26	.671	6 1/2
y-Minnesota	43	36	.544	16 1/2
y-Houston	40	39	.506	19 1/2
Dallas	20	59	.253	39 1/2
Vancouver	18	60	.231	41
Denver	10	68	.128	49
Pacific Division= y-Seattle	59	20	.747	
y-L.A. Lakers	58	21	.734	1

y-Phoenix	54	25	.684	5
y-Portland	44	34	.564	14 1/2
Sacramento	27	51	.346	31 1/2
Golden State	16	63	.203	43
L.A. Clippers	16	63	.203	43

x-clinched division title  
y-clinched playoff spot  
z-clinched conference title

### Sports Transactions

#### BASEBALL

##### American League

**KANSAS CITY ROYALS**-Assigned INF Joe Vitiello to extended spring training.

**SEATTLE MARINERS**-Fired Nardi Contreras, pitching coach. Named Stan Williams pitching coach. Placed OF Jay Buhner on the 15-day disabled list, retroactive to April 7. Recalled OF Ryan Radmanovich from Tacoma of the Pacific Coast League.

**TEXAS RANGERS**-Sent RHP Danny Patterson to Oklahoma of the PCL and RHP Xavier Hernandez to Tulsa of the Texas League on rehabilitation assignments.

##### National League

**ARIZONA DIAMONDBACKS**-Promoted Sandy Johnson to assistant general manager.

**CINCINNATI REDS**-Placed LHP Steve Cooke on the 15-day disabled list, retroactive to April 3.

**NEW YORK METS**-Signed INF Robert Eenhoorn and assigned him to Norfolk of the International League.

**ST. LOUIS CARDINALS**-Placed C Tom Pagnozzi on the 15-day disabled list. Activated C Eli Marrero from the 15-day disabled list.

#### BASKETBALL

**INDIANA PACERS**-Placed F Austin Croshere on the injured list. Activated F Mark West from the injured list.

##### Women's National Basketball Association

**WNBA**-Signed G Christy Smith, G Brittney Ezell, F Octavia Blue, F Jayme Olson, C Angela Jackson, and C Quacy Barnes.

#### FOOTBALL

##### National Football League

**DALLAS COWBOYS**-Agreed to terms with RB Chris Warren on a three-year contract.

**NEW YORK JETS**-Announced that RB Curtis Martin has exercised his option for a four-year contract extension through the 2002 season. Matched the St. Louis Rams' offer sheet to LB Chad Cascadden.

**SAN DIEGO CHARGERS**-Re-signed QB Casey Weldon to a one-year contract.

**TENNESSEE OILERS**-Named Tony Wyllie director of media relations.



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### 1998 PIL STANDINGS

#### BASEBALL

	W	L	To
Grant	5	0	
Madison	5	0	
Cleveland	4	1	M
Lincoln	3	2	G,C
Roosevelt	3	2	M,G
Franklin	2	3	C,R,L
Marshall	2	3	F,L,G
Benson	1	4	C,R,F,M
Jefferson	0	5	
Wilson	0	5	

#### MENS TENNIS

	W	L	To
Lincoln	4	0	
Grant	4	1	L
Cleveland	3	2	R,G
Roosevelt	3	2	W,L
Wilson	3	2	G,L
Benson	2	1	W
Franklin	2	3	G,C,B
Marshall	0	3	F,L,C
Jefferson	0	4	
Madison	0	4	

#### MENS TRACK

	W	L	I
Benson	2	0	
Franklin	2	0	
Cleveland	1	1	
Grant	1	1	
Lincoln	1	1	
Madison	1	1	
Marshall	1	1	
Wilson	1	1	
Jefferson	0	2	
Roosevelt	0	2	

#### MENS GOLF

	W	L	I
Cleveland	3	0	
Franklin	3	0	
Lincoln	3	0	
Grant	2	1	
Wilson	2	1	
Roosevelt	2	2	
Benson	1	2	
Madison	0	3	
Marshall	0	3	
Jefferson	0	4	

#### SOFTBALL

	W	L
Wilson	6	0
Franklin	5	1
Benson	4	1
Lincoln	4	2
Marshall	4	2
Cleveland	3	2
Grant	3	2
Madison	3	2
Roosevelt	2	4
Jefferson	0	18

#### GIRLS TENNIS

	W	L
Lincoln	5	0
Cleveland	4	1
Wilson	3	1
Grant	3	2
Marshall	3	2
Franklin	2	3
Benson	1	3
Roosevelt	1	3
Madison	1	4
Jefferson	0	4

#### GIRLS TRACK

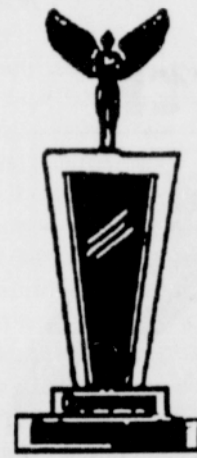
	W	L
Benson	2	0
Grant	2	0
Lincoln	2	0
Cleveland	1	1
Franklin	1	1
Jefferson	1	1
Wilson	1	1
Madison	0	2
Marshall	0	2
Roosevelt	0	2

#### GIRLS GOLF

	W	L
Lincoln	2	0
Cleveland	1	0
Franklin	1	0
Benson	1	1
Wilson	1	1
Grant	0	2
Roosevelt	0	2

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### Golf-Els displaces Wood as world number one

South African Ernie Els displaced Tiger Woods as the world number one on Monday after the American failed to retain his U.S. Masters title.

Woods had held top spot for the past 13 weeks.

New Masters' champion Mark O'Meara moves back in to the top 10 in ninth position while Jack Nicklaus, who tied for sixth at the age of 58, returns to the top 200 at 189th place.

#### Top 20 (U.S. unless stated):

1. Ernie Els (South Africa)	12.30 points
2. Tiger Woods	11.86
3. Greg Norman (Australia)	10.07
4. Davis Love III	9.17
5. Justin Leonard	8.81
6. Colin Montgomerie (Britain)	8.77
7. Nick Price (Zimbabwe)	8.62
8. David Duval	8.377
9. Mark O'Meara	8.375
10. Masashi Ozaki (Japan)	8.00
11. Phil Mickelson (U.S.)	7.96
12. Tom Lehman	7.79
13. Vijay Singh (Fiji)	6.35
14. Lee Westwood (Britain)	6.29
15. Scott Hoch (U.S.)	5.98
16. Tom Watson (U.S.)	5.75
17. Jim Furyk	5.64
18. Jesper Parnevik (Sweden)	5.62
19. Mark Calcavecchia	5.54
20. Fred Couples	5.43