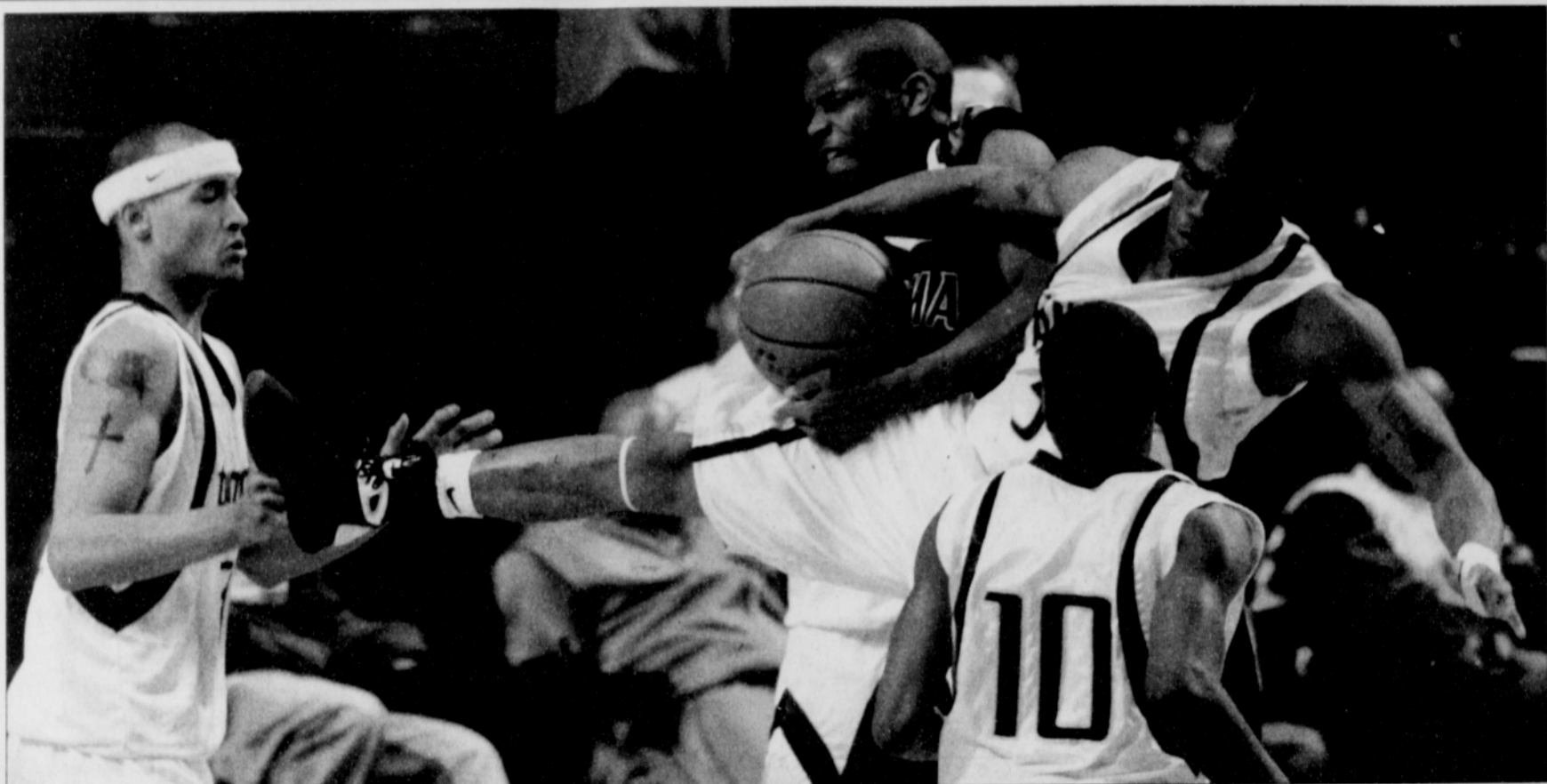


Panthers Open Season

For the second straight year, the Portland Community College Panthers, whose home is the Cascade Campus gym on North Killingsworth Street, played their season opening game in the Rose Garden.

On Nov. 26, the Panthers fell to Tacoma Community College 70-54 after fighting to a 25-25 tie at half-time.

PCC will start a home series in January to be played at Cascade's gym. The Panthers will battle Chemeketa CC at 7:30 p.m. on Wednesday, Jan. 14; Southwestern CC at 6 p.m., Saturday, Jan. 17; and Clackamas CC at 7:30 p.m., Wednesday, Jan. 21. Tickets are \$3 for general admission.



Portland Community College guard and former Jefferson High School star Mike Richmond (center) battles for the ball while teammates Jordan Inge (left) and Anthony Steward look on in the season opener against Tacoma Community College.

Weary O.J. Sent to Prison Chokes back tears with apology

(AP) -- A weary and beaten-looking O.J. Simpson was put away Friday for at least nine years — and perhaps the rest of his life — for an armed robbery in a Las Vegas hotel room, bringing a measure of satisfaction to those who believed the football star got away with murder more than a decade ago.

The 61-year-old Hall of Famer listened stone-faced, his wrists in shackles, as Nevada Judge Jackie Glass pronounced the sentence — 33 years behind bars with eligibility for parole after less than a third of that.

Moments before, Simpson made a rambling, five-minute plea for leniency, simultaneously apologizing for the holdup as a foolish mistake and trying to justify his actions.

He choked back tears as he told her: "I didn't mean to steal anything from anybody ... I'm

sorry. I'm sorry for all of it."

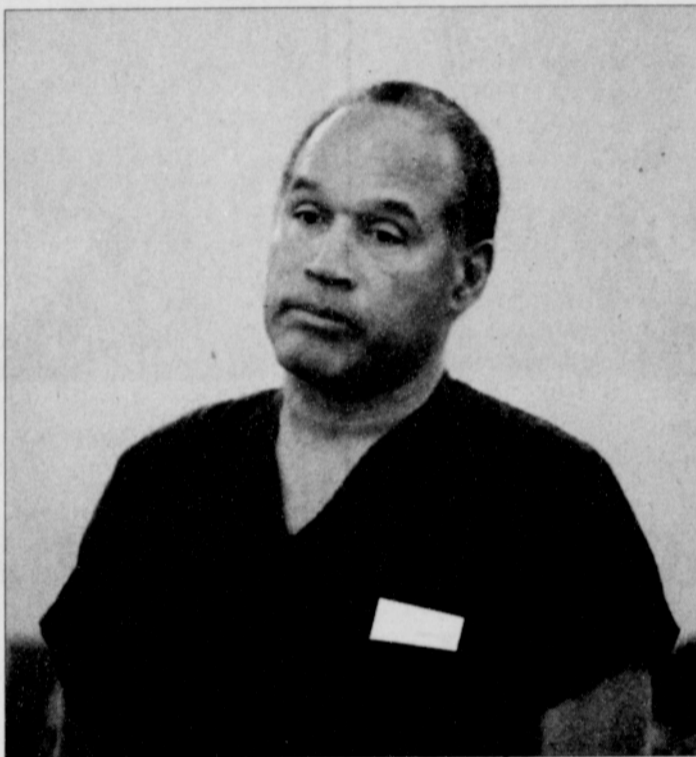
The judge said several times that her sentence in the Las Vegas case had nothing to do with Simpson's 1995 acquittal in the slaying of his ex-wife Nicole Brown Simpson and her friend Ronald Goldman.

"I'm not here to try and cause any retribution or any payback for anything else," Glass said.

But Goldman's father, Fred Goldman, and sister, Kim, said they were delighted with the sentence.

"We are thrilled, and it's a bit-sweet moment," Fred Goldman said. "It was satisfying seeing him in shackles like he belongs."

Simpson said he and five other men were simply trying to retrieve sports memorabilia and other mementos when he stormed a Las Vegas hotel room occupied by two dealers on Sept. 13, 2007. He insisted the



O.J. Simpson pleads for leniency at his sentencing Friday for an armed robbery.

items, which included his first wife's wedding ring, had been stolen from him.

But the judge emphasized that it was a violent confrontation in which at least one gun was drawn, and she said someone could have been shot. She said the evidence was overwhelming, with the planning, the confrontation itself and the aftermath all recorded on audio or videotape.

Glass, a no-nonsense judge known for tough sentences, imposed such a complex series of consecutive and concurrent sentences that even many lawyers watching the case were confused as to how much time Simpson got.

Simpson could serve up to 33 years, according to Elana Roberto, the judge's clerk.

In state prison, he will remain in his own cell protected from the general prison population because of his celebrity.

Simpson's lawyer suggested again that his client was a victim of payback for his acquittal in Los Angeles.

"It really made us all aware that despite our best efforts, it's very difficult to separate the California case from the Nevada case," attorney Yale Galanter said.

Some people who followed the case said justice had finally caught up with Simpson.

"You do things and you've got to expect karma to come around," said Greg Wheatley, 32, of Los Angeles.

Simpson was led away to prison immediately after the judge refused to permit him to go free on bail while he appeals.

Simpson's co-defendant and former golfing buddy, Clarence "C.J. Stewart, was sentenced to up to 27 years in prison but would be eligible for parole after 7 1/2 years, court officials said.

Diversity Grows on Obama Cabinet with Veterans Affairs Secretary

(AP) -- President-elect Barack Obama has chosen retired Gen. Eric K. Shinseki to be the next Veterans Affairs secretary, turning to a former Army chief of staff once vilified by the Bush administration for questioning its Iraq war strategy.

Obama announced the selection of Shinseki, the first Army four-star general of Japanese-American ancestry, at a news

conference Sunday in Chicago. He will be the first Asian-American to hold the post of Veterans Affairs secretary, adding to the growing diversity of Obama's Cabinet.

Shinseki's tenure as Army chief of staff from 1999 to 2003 was marked by constant tensions with Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld, which boiled over in 2003 when Shinseki testified to

Congress that it might take several hundred thousand U.S. troops to control Iraq after the invasion.

Rumsfeld and his deputy, Paul Wolfowitz, belittled the estimate as "wildly off the mark" and the general was marginalized and later retired from the Army. But Shinseki's words proved prophetic after President George W. Bush in early 2007 announced a "surge" of additional troops to

Iraq after miscalculating the numbers needed to stem sectarian violence.

Obama said he chose Shinseki for the VA post because he "was right" in predicting that the U.S. will need more troops in Iraq than Rumsfeld believed at the time.

"When I reflect on the sacrifices that have been made by our veterans and I think about



how so many veterans around the country are struggling even more than those who have not served — higher unemployment rates, higher homeless rates, higher substance abuse rates, medical care that is inadequate — it breaks my heart," Obama said.

Gen. Erick K. Shinseki

Obama Plans Hawaii Christmas

(AP) -- President-elect Barack Obama, returning to his home state of Hawaii for the holidays, plans a beachside vacation at one of Oahu's most exclusive properties, according to an islander involved in the planning.

Arrangements are being finalized for the Obamas and the families of two or three friends to stay at a Kailua beachfront location with three modern, multi-million-dollar homes. Obama and his friends plan to rent the privately owned homes for several days including Christmas, said the islander, a Democratic activist who spoke on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to reveal the details.

Obama was most recently in Hawaii in October to visit his ailing grandmother, Madelyn Dunham, who raised him for much of his youth. Dunham died Nov. 2 at the age of 86, two days before Obama won the presidency.

While in Hawaii Obama also is expected to pay tribute to his grandmother, who was cremated, with a private family ceremony.

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