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NELSON VAILS



PHOTO BY CIBELL.COM

American cycling legend Nelson Vails, at right, spoke on Friday, Feb. 22 at REI Seattle to celebrate diversity in bicycling during Black History Month. The event was also held to raise money for the Cascade Bicycle Club Education Foundation's Major Taylor Project.

Olympic Cyclist Speaks at REI

Inspirational athlete appears in support of Major Taylor Project

By Ellans Bowen
UW News Lab

Back in 1984, Ed Ewing was watching the Los Angeles Summer Olympics on television when he witnessed Nelson Vails win the silver medal in the individual 1,000-meter match sprints. Vails became the first African American to earn an Olympic medal in bicycling. That moment had a tremendous impact on Ewing.

"You know, you talk about

what would it be like if there were a woman president?" said Ewing. "What would it be like if there were an African American president? And you can talk about it and you can dream about it, and until you see it. ... I mean when you saw Obama become president it was like this hammer, just boom. Wow. It happened. And it was the same thing seeing Nelson race in the '84 Olympics. It had the same effect on me. That was like a catalyst for me."

American cycling legend Vails spoke on Friday, Feb. 22 at REI Seattle to celebrate diversity in bicycling during Black History Month. The event was also held to raise money for the Cascade Bicycle Club Education Foundation's Major Taylor Project.

This project, named for the first African American world champion cyclist, is a year-round youth development program with after-school clubs in South King County.

Produced by the Cascade

Bicycle Club Education Foundation, the program seeks to empower young people in underserved communities by combining bicycling, a healthy lifestyle and leadership development.

Marshall "Major" Taylor grew up on a farm in Indiana and started racing professionally in 1896, at the age of 18. He became the first African American to win a world title when he became the world sprint champion in 1899.

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Super-Majority Is Over

High court strikes down major obstacle to raising taxes

By Donna Gordon Blankenship and Rachel La Corte
The Associated Press

SEATTLE (AP) — The Washington Supreme Court on Thursday made it easier for the Legislature to raise taxes, ruling that the only way to require a supermajority vote is to enshrine it in the Constitution.

Democrats said potential taxes need to be part of the conversation in Olympia, but Republicans in the House and a Republican-dominated majority in the Senate said they would work to keep the two-thirds vote requirement.

A divided high court ruled 6-3 that an initiative requiring a two-thirds requirement for tax increases was in conflict with the state Constitution and that lawmakers and the people of Washington would need to pass a constitutional amendment to change from a simple majority to a supermajority.

A coalition of lawmakers and education groups sued the state over the issue, and a King County judge decided last spring that the state constitution requires only a simple majority to pass tax proposals.

Chris Korsmo, CEO of the League of Education Voters, lead plaintiff with the Washington Education Association, called the decision a huge win for kids and schools, because it could make it easier to find money for the state to fully pay for basic education in Washington, as required by the Supreme Court's ruling last year in the McCleary case.

Democrats controlling the House have indicated support for taxes and fees to help balance the budget and add new money to the state education system. However, a Republican-dominated coalition in the state Senate has focused its message on spending restraint and Gov. Jay Inslee vowed during his campaign last year to veto tax increases.

Rep. Ross Hunter, a Democratic budget writer, said voters elected legislators to represent them.

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Sacramento Kings—Seattle's New Team?

Mayor of Sacramento unveils plan to counter possible move

By Tracie Cone
The Associated Press

SACRAMENTO, Calif. (AP) — The wealthy investors that are partnering on a plan to keep the Sacramento Kings from moving to Seattle have finally been revealed, and they're the two almost everybody expected — with a twist.

Mark Mastrov, founder of 24 Hour Fit-

ness, will submit a bid to buy the team to the NBA on Friday, Sacramento Mayor Kevin Johnson said in his State of the City address Thursday night. While Ron Burkle, the billionaire co-owner of the NHL's Pittsburgh Penguins, will instead only lead the effort to build a new downtown arena that he hopes will also lure back a WNBA franchise.

"With all due respect to Seattle, I do hope they get a team someday. But let me be per-

fectly clear: it is not going to be this team," Johnson said. "Not our team. No way."

The Associated Press and other news outlets have reported since Jan. 22 that Mastrov and Burkle were working on a plan to keep the Kings from relocating to Seattle.

Burkle, who also expressed interest in buying the Kings two years ago, had met

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