SPORTS

In the flower holders, in the beer tubs, beneath the plates, overturned cups, under the tables and chairs, in the large token packages at each head table seat, in the linen closet, the cloakroom and the VIP Room . . . . Yeah, the VIP Room, especially.

No bombs!

Geez, what a waste!

The neo-Nazis and Skinheads who recently claimed the genius of bombing folks they don't like — by mail and otherwise — blew a great opportunity Friday night at Towson Center . . . . blew a great chance by not blowing up the place.

In one large whoom! they could have rid society of hundreds of people who either don't fit their ethnic preference or those who tolerate people who don't measure up to their sleazy standards.

The occasion was the 37th annual "Tops In Sports" Banquet, and taking out any one or more of the individuals on the 90-foot-long head table would have netted a handsome bounty.

What a chance!

Since the recent mail-bomb violence is said to have been racially motivated, and since the perpetrators obviously targeted Blacks and persons who encourage or support Blacks, here assembled were Frank Robinson, Ken Singleton, Kevin Mitchell, Joe Morgan, Sam Lacy, Elrod Hendricks; Gov. William Donald Schaefer, Lt. Gov. Mickey Steinberg, Brooks Robinson, Jim Palmer, Roland Hemond, Jim Fry, Frank Cashen, Mickey Tettleton, Gregg Olson, Cal Ripken, Jr., Larry Luchino, Vince Bagli, Rex Barney, John Steadman and 2,500 ticket-buyers.

It isn't difficult to understand that there could be some resentment in the sick mind against Frank Robinson who broke the white stranglehold on baseball managerial jobs, and against Joe Morgan who twice was regarded the best player in his league (two successive MVP's) and is about to take a seat at the same table in Cooperstown beside their beloved Babe Ruth, Ty Cobb, Stan Musial, et al.

What a miss!

And I was there.

Now, deserved or not, the dinner committee was honoring me for *contributing* to the desegregation of baseball, and serving as a confidant for players of both races during the difficult transition period.

Let's not argue the accuracy of the assessment . . . . Instead, let's look at what I might have represented in the mind of the Skinhead.

Here's the guy who may be at least partially responsible for (a) 24 Black busts in the holy shrine at Cooperstown; (b) six Black managers, including Frank three times; (c) a league president; (d) 34 Most Valuable Player Award winners; and (e) 39 league batting champions in 42 years.

Glad they missed!

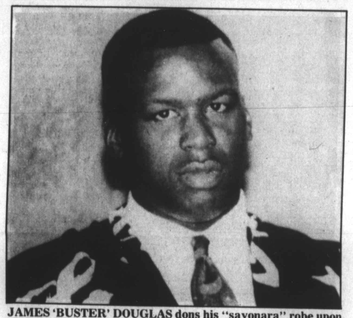
Sam Lacy

No bombs!

Notable quotable

Asked what he plans to do in the retirement he awaits next December, tennis star Yannick Noah:

"Coach old ladies in private clubs, I suppose. But on second thought, I'm not ready for the biddies yet."



JAMES 'BUSTER' DOUGLAS dons his "sayonara" robe upon arriving for his challenge to heavyweight champ Mike Tyson, Feb. 10.

OVERVIEW

YACKITY YACK! — Track and field contemporaries wish Carl Lewis would stop "yacking so much about Ben Johnson."

Among remarks heard at George Mason University where a number of them were on hand to promote the Feb. 4 meet there: "He's a man consumed by a need to demean Johnson; his behavior stinks."

Set to compete are brilliant sprinter Dawn Sowell, hurdlers Renaldo Nehemiah and Sandra Farmer-Patrick.

* * *

The "Babe Ruth Crown," presented annually at the "Tops In Sports" Banquet to the homerun champion in major league baseball, was claimed Friday night by Kevin Mitchell (47 HRS) of the San Francisco Giants.

Among earlier winners were Ernie Banks ('58), Willie Mays ('62-'65), Hank Aaron ('63), Frank Robinson ('66), Willie Stargell ('73), George Foster ('77), Jim Rice ('78-'83), Jesse Barfield, and Andre Dawson ('87).

* * *

BELATED HAPPY BIRTHDAY — If he were alive, Jackie Robinson who was the focal point of the most revolutionary turn in baseball history, would be celebrating his 71st birthday on Friday (19th).

* * *

HOLY, HOLY, HOLY! — Not exactly a Christian substitute for Hallelujah, but as good a way to bring up the subject of the June 18 fight between champion Mike Tyson and Evander Holyfield.

Evander has chased Mike for more than a year and finally will catch him at Las Vegas. No better for him — except monetarily.

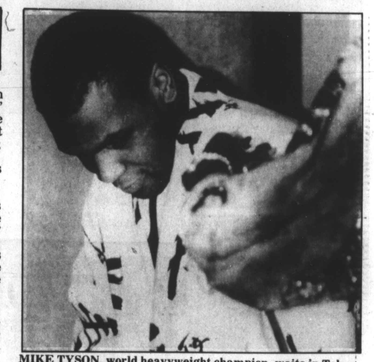
* * *

THE DC BLACKERY — The latest, ongoing commercial televised by the DC Lottery Board, shows 13 persons dancing, laughing, high-fiving, hopping up and down displaying unrestrained joy.

Twelve of the 13 are Black, the 13th could be. Does that tell us who the DC board is targeting as suckers?

* * *

BONUS OR PUNISHMENT? — When the Washington Bullets announced that anyone who paid to see them play the worst team in the NBA Monday night, could stay to watch the closed-circuit telecast of the George Foreman-Gerry Cooney fight. Were they doing their fans a favor or penalizing them?



MIKE TYSON, world heavyweight champion, waits in Tokyo for his Feb. 10 title defense against little-known James "Buster" Douglas.

Victory for George Foreman produces an ominous reward

ATLANTIC CITY, NJ — After all the talk of comebacks and new beginnings, Gerry Cooney was reduced to this Monday night: flat on his back and staring into the flashlight of the ringside physician.

"I caught him with a couple of shots in the first round," Cooney said from the middle of the ring 15 minutes later. "I just wish it would have come out different."

George Foreman, with a meat cleaver right hand, knocked Cooney into retirement at 1:57 of the second round in a bout that had more to do with circus trappings than serious boxing.

As a result, Foreman gained the dubious honor of meeting Mike Tyson — maybe.

Tribute to a dead horseman

Laurel Racing Association pays tribute to one of Maryland's outstanding trainers today (Monday) as the annual Harrison E. Johnson Memorial Handicap is run, commemorating Martin Luther King's birthday.

Harrison Johnson was born on November 13, 1939 in Milwood, Virginia. As a boy he exercised horses for the local breeders. At age 17, Johnson won his first race as a jockey at Charles Town Race Track in West Virginia. His mount was Pelage . . . his first mount . . . his first win.

Johnson's most notable win as a trainer came in 1973, when he won the Hopeful Stakes, at Saratoga; the horse was Gusty O'Shay. He also trained stakes winner Full Partner, and many others. Yet, he was a man known for his principles and had a reputation for never running a sore horse.

On August 12, 1985, Johnson's life was tragically ended in a plane crash.

Laurel honors Harrison E. Johnson by donating $1.00 from every paid admission to the Frank J. De Francis Athletic Fund of the Morgan State University Foundation.

Joe Black: saver turns savior

Here's a huge fellow who makes quiet noise

By Sam Lacy

Last week's piece here on Roy Campanella seemed to have gone so well, the thought has occurred that two of the fellows who pitched to the pudgy catcher may deserve some post-Dodger notice.

Joe Black and Don Newcombe were Campanella battery mates during the halcyon days of the Brooklyn club that dominated National League baseball in the aftermath of Jackie Robinson's arrival in Ebbets Field.

Both are doing quite well, thank you.

— —

Since Newcombe and wife Billie — as this is written — are in the process of moving into the new home they have just purchased on Kauai Island in Honolulu, this week's concentration will be on Black.

It may not be remembered that Joe Black — notwithstanding Satchel Paige, Bob Gibson and Dave Stewart — was the first Black pitcher to win a World Series game.

(He defeated the Yankees, 4-2, in the opening game of the 1952 series).

He also was the first to star in a relief role, being credited with 22 "saves" in the '52 season.

— —

At this point perhaps it should be recalled that Joe was graduated by Morgan State, and was picked up by the Dodgers when Branch Rickey sent two of his trusted scouts to Baltimore on a suggestion by an Afro wise guy that they should come down to look at Jim Gilliam and another member of the Elite Giants.

(The second player busted out).

Aside from the preceding reminder, it isn't generally known that Joe was the first Black major league ball player to crack the acknowledged line of corporate America.

Joe Black
post baseball career broadens

— —

For 27 years, he served as a vice president (special markets) for Greyhound.

At a 1975 dinner, an Afro sportswriter introduced him as "Joe Black a man who left us to work for a bus company, comes back tonight as large as the vehicle he promotes."

The reference, of course, was to the 315 pounds Joe was carrying around the country representing Greyhound.

— —

But now to Black today.

Approached by the late Bart Giamatti to serve as a consultant, Joe took early retirement from Greyhound and joined the baseball commissioner's staff. And when Giamatti died, his successor, Jay Vincent, reappointed him.

In his consultant's role, Black works to convince members of the new multi-million-dollar breed of ball players to consider the future.

— —

He says he makes no attempt to choose for them; instead he presents a variety of saving programs for them to weigh and make their own decisions.

"The commissioner," says Joe, "is deeply concerned about fellows in their early twenties who are suddenly endowed with small fortunes, and what they do with them."

— —

The intriguing aspect, Black tells the Afro, is that the sphere of his activity crosses racial and ethnic lines.

"Mr. Vincent, as did Mr. Giamatti," Joe declares, "is emphatic about this.

"Advise anyone who wants it," they said.

Coppin State Basketball

With a record of 1-9, the Lady Eagles of Coppin State wouldn't have much to cheer about, so far this season,if it were not for their high - powered forward Regina Noland.

The 5'10" Hilbert Junior College (Buffalo, New York) transfer leads Coppin in scoring with a 13.4 and rising per game average and is second on the team in rebounding averaging 10 caroms per contest.

Noland, who scored 22 points in the lost to UMES) has been named to the All-Tournament teams at the Big Four Classic (Baltimore); Carolina Classic (Chapel Hill, N.C.); and the Dartmouth Classic (Hanover, New Hampshire).

For the men, who currently are at 10-5, junior guard Reggie Issac is leading the MEAC in scoring with a 22.3 per game average and in total steals with 35.

Junior forward Larry Stewart is second on the Coppin team in scoring averaging 16.3 per game and Stewart leads the conference in field goal percentage at .632 percent. Stewart is rebounding at a 10.8 per game clip.

Orioles challenge Bryn Mawr

Cal Ripken, Jr. and company have challenged the Bryn Mawr varsity basketball squad to a rematch with the Baltimore Orioles at 7:30 p.m., January 26 (Friday) in the Katherine Van Bibber Gymnasium.

The fundraiser will feature three quarters of play between the O's and Bryn Mawr's basketball stars and one quarter between the O's and Bryn Mawr faculty and staff. Food and beverages will be sold in the school's cafeteria from 5:30 p.m. until after halftime.

Tickets are $5 for adults and $3 for children and may be purchased in advance at the Bryn Mawr Development Office, or at the door.

Maryland's Indoor Track Meet

This Saturday at Baltimore's Fifth Regiment Armory, beginning at 10:00 a.m., more than 3,000 Maryland high school students will compete in the 28th Annual Maryland National Guard Indoor Track Scholastic Games, the largest indoor meet in the state.

Teenagers from more than 76 Maryland high schools statewide will try to unseat the 1989 boys champion from Anne Arundel County Meade Senior High and the girls champion from Prince George's County Central High, for team honors.

Each individual winner and his or her school will receive an award. Additionally, the school whose members and teams win the most events will receive a final trophy.

Teachers, staff members and volunteers from the Baltimore County Board of Education and the Maryland Public Secondary Schools Athletic Association will administer this day-long event.

Competion is open to all Maryland high schools whose individual and team entries have met or exceeded the qualification requirements for the various events.

For more information, call Mr. Edward Walker at (301) 887-1424.

SPORTSCENE

By Fred Lindsey

D.C. Congressman Walter Fauntroy and U.S. Olympic sprint star Carl Lewis, promoting the Coke-sponsored Black History "Essay" Contest.

Black History Month

By Fred Lindsey
Local Sports Editor

This is the last week for entries to the Coco-Coca/WMAR Channel TV-2 Black History "Essay" Contest.

Held in all Baltimore area high schools, the theme of the essay contest is entitled "The Value Of An Education," and it should consist of compositions of 500 words or less, typed and double spaced.

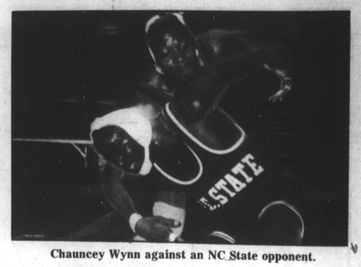
Essays will be judged on originality, grammar and vocabulary and is limited to one entry per student. The contest is designed to increase the awareness of education and its value to the future.

"We are pleased to be the sponsor of this Black history contest," said Adrienne Greene, manager, Youth Markets, Mid - Atlantic Region, Coca-Cola Bottling Company. "Because it will give us the opportunity to give financial assistance to youth in the Baltimore area in the form of a scholarship."

All completed essays should be directed to the student's English teacher, who will select the best received and forward them to Ms. Greene at 2012 Hammonds Ferry Road, Baltimore, 21227, by January 26th.

The 1st place winner will receive a $2,000 scholarship and the runner-up will receive a $500 saving bond. Commemorative posters will be available for all finalists.

An Awards reception will be held Wednesday, February 28th at 6:30 p.m. at WMAR-TV.



Chauncey Wynn against an NC State opponent.

MSU's Wynn is tough

By Fred Lindsey
Local Sports Editor

When the No. 1 rank collegiate wrestling team invaded Hill Field House, last Monday, the struggle was most difficult for the Golden Bears.

As Arizona State University dominated the overall dual meet, MSU's senior Chauncey Wynn emerged as its only winner.

Wynn, ranked No. 8 in the country in the 158 pound class, defeated No. 9 Ray Miller to improve his collegiate record to 32-3.

Competing against the best in the NCAA, Wynn is a sure bet to gain All-American honors at the end of the season.

Randallstown JV on a roll

In the Baltimore County League, Randallstown JV Girls are having their way with most of the competition.

Currently 8-1 and riding the crest of some pretty impressive victories, Randallstown, in winning, has distributed its leadership equally where on any given night anybody can put the ball through the hoop.

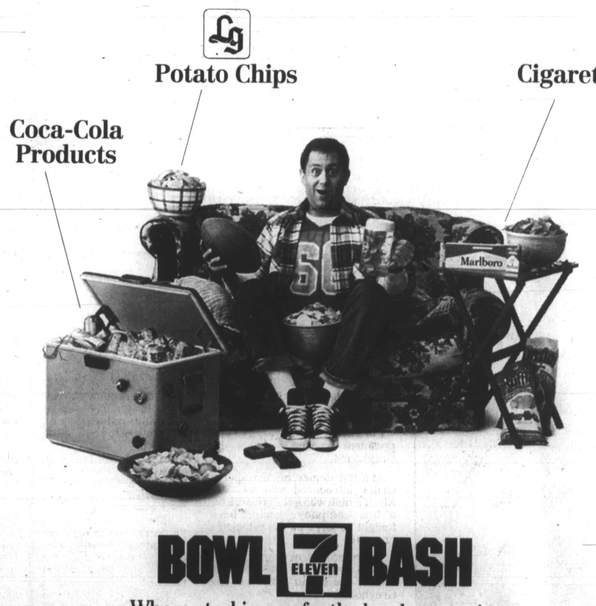
Thus far, freshmen and sophomores La Nae Hill, Kim Williamson, Melanie Fuller, Kim Arthur, Ilyse Cramer, Nicole Smith and Evette Jones have shared their guidance in beating Parkville and Dulaney twice; Dundalk 36-10; Woodlawn 51-41; Landsdowne 50-38 and the defending champions Catonsville 45-37.

Coached by Charles McCloud, a retired teacher, many of the Randallstown team were former students/players of McCloud at the Campfield Recreation Center often referred to as the Liberty Road Girls Basketball Program.

"We're just a little junior varsity team, taking one game at a time," McCloud said. "We still have a long way to go and some tough teams ahead of us. Hopefully, we can maintain our level of play throughout the year."

Other members of the team who are playing well include Arlene Abel, Nicole Odom, Elvera Yusupov, Leila Johns, Angie Marrow, Paula Finkelstein, Helen Jolley and Aretha Brown.

Football equipment is now on sale at 7-Eleven.



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