

# News at a Glance

## Zina Garrison named Olympic coach

**NEW YORK (AFP)** — US Fed Cup captain Zina Garrison and US Tennis Association (USTA) men's director Rodney Harmon were named last week as coaches for the US Olympic women's and men's tennis team at Beijing.



Garrison

The Olympic tennis tournament will be played in China August 10 to 17. US teams of up to four men and four women for singles and two doubles teams of each gender will be selected by June 23.

Garrison and Pam Shriver won the 1988 Olympic women's doubles in crown in Seoul as the sport made its return to the Games after a 64-year absence.

"I'm honored to be selected again as the Olympic coach," Garrison said. "Some of my fondest tennis memories are from the Olympics and the incomparable thrill of winning a gold medal. The goal is to share in that Olympic experience with our team this summer."

The 15 medals won by Americans since tennis returned to the Olympics are the most of any nation.

"We have the nucleus of a very competitive international men's team who will all be medal contenders," Harmon said. "I know the American men will relish the opportunity to compete on one of the biggest stages in sport."

## Newspapers featuring story of Obama blackface skit disappear

**FARGO, N.D. (AP)** — The editor of the North Dakota State University student newspaper has filed a police report saying 4,500 issues disappeared.

The issue of The Spectrum contained a special section that listed salaries of all NDSU employees. It also included a news story on a campus skit in which a white student in blackface portrayed Barack Obama receiving a lap dance.

Spectrum Editor Stephen Baird says he doesn't know if the newspapers were stolen after they were distributed last Thursday. But he says he finds it hard to believe readers would have snagged them all in one night.

The Spectrum prints 7,000 copies of each issue and distributes 4,500 the first night. Editors spent Friday distributing the remaining 2,500 issues around campus.

## MLK III and Hank Aaron join panel on baseball and civil rights

**MEMPHIS, Tenn. (AP)** — Ahead of this weekend's Civil Rights exhibition game, civil rights and baseball luminaries met in Memphis on Friday to discuss the declining participation of blacks in baseball.



Aaron

Hall of Famer Hank Aaron said the expense of the sport was one of the reasons for a declining interest.

Mets general manager Omar Minaya said it was up to Major League Baseball to lead the effort to renew interest in baseball.

Ideas included marketing baseball to minority youths, funding fields and equipment for those who can't afford it, and providing leadership opportunities within professional baseball for minorities.

Other panelists included Martin Luther King III and Sharon Robinson, the daughter of baseball pioneer Jackie Robinson.

## Black writers conference honors Princeton writer Cornel West

**NEW YORK (AP)** — Prominent writer, hip-hop artist and Ivy-League professor Cornel West is being honored by The Ninth National Black Writers Conference in Brooklyn.

West, who has published 17 books, edited 13 more and played a small role in the two Matrix movie sequels, is receiving the W. E. B. Du Bois award Saturday.

"We're giving it to him because of the work he's done promoting social justice, global peace and harmony," said Dr. Brenda Green, director of The National Black Writers Conference. "He's raised national awareness of the importance of talking about race and democracy."

The 55-year-old Princeton University professor is well-known for his books "Race Matters," which explores racism in America, and "Democracy Matters," which focuses on democracy in America and the Middle East.

He has also released three spoken-word and hip-hop recordings.

"He speaks to the fact that we live in a society constructed by race and if we choose to ignore it it's not going to go away," Green said. "Black writers have an impact on the world."

More than 1,500 students, writers and academics are expected to attend three-day National Black Writers Conference, which opened last Friday.

## UCC supports Obama's church

**CHICAGO (AP)** — One leader from the Cleveland-based United Church of Christ has told members of Barack Obama's church that the national denomination stands behind them.

The Reverend Edith Guffey is associate general minister of the church. She spoke at Trinity United Church of Christ in Chicago on Sunday. The church has been in the spotlight since Obama condemned certain sermons given by its fiery former pastor, the Reverend Jeremiah Wright Junior. The sermons were broadcast on TV and viewed by millions on YouTube.

Guffey told church members Sunday that they support and encourage a strong sense of identity as African-Americans and as an African-American church in the predominantly white denomination.

# South Africa honors Rep. Waters

SPECIAL TO THE CHRONICLE

Last week in Pretoria, South African President Thabo Mbeki presented U.S. Rep. Maxine Waters, a California Democrat, with the "Order of the Companions of OR Tambo Silver Award," one of the most prestigious awards granted by the South African government.

Waters received the honor because of her work on behalf of the people of South Africa throughout her career, especially her role in fighting against the former apartheid regime in South Africa.

"I am deeply honored to receive South Africa's most prestigious award ... I thank President Mbeki for recognizing my contribution to ending apartheid. This is a day I will never forget," said Waters during the presentation ceremony.

Throughout the 1980s, Waters organized marches and rallies in Los Angeles to protest the racist system of apartheid in South Africa. She led sit-ins at the South African consular office in Los Angeles and put her own freedom on the line when she was arrested for protesting the apartheid regime in front of the South African Consulate in Washington, D.C.

In 1986, as a member of the California Assembly, Waters called for the divestment of funds from corporations doing business with South Africa's apartheid regime and helped to make the call for divestment a national movement sweeping from state to state and city to city. She did this by authoring Assembly Bill 134, to divest a record \$12 billion from public pension funds in California, thus fortifying California's opposition to the apartheid regime.

In 1987, the Los Angeles Free South Africa Movement, which Waters chaired, welcomed President Oliver Reginald Tambo, the president



Rep. Maxine Waters is greeted by President Thabo Mbeki.

Submitted Photo



of the anti-apartheid African National Congress (ANC) and the man for whom the OR Tambo Award was named, at a standing-room only gathering at Trinity Baptist Church.

In 1990, when ANC leader Nelson Mandela made an 8-city tour of the US, Waters chaired the welcoming committee that greeted him and his wife Winnie Mandela with a motorcade to City Hall, a Hollywood star-studded reception, and a 6-hour concert and rally attended by 90,000 supporters.

The following year, Rep. Waters traveled to South Africa for the first time to attend the ANC national conference in Durban, South Africa, the first ANC conference since the unbanning of the ANC and Nelson Mandela's release from prison. Three years later, following the dismantling of apartheid and South Africa's

See Waters on A4

# Court: Abu-Jamal deserves new penalty hearing

BY KATHY MATHESON THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

**PHILADELPHIA** — An appeals court last Thursday upheld Mumia Abu-Jamal's conviction for murdering a police officer 27 years ago but rejected prosecutors' request to reinstate the death penalty for the former Black Panther.

A three-judge panel of the 3rd U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals said that because the jury that sentenced Abu-Jamal to die was given flawed instructions in the penalty phase, he must either get a new sentencing hearing or be sentenced to life in prison.

Abu-Jamal's lead attorney, Robert R. Bryan of San Francisco, said he was glad the judges did not reinstate the death sentence, but added that he will continue fighting to get his client a new trial.

"I've never seen a case as permeated and riddled with racism as this one," Bryan said. "I want a new trial and I want him free. His conviction was a travesty of justice."

Prosecutors are weighing their options, but said they were expecting Abu-Jamal to request a hearing before the full appeals court.

A Philadelphia jury convicted Abu-Jamal, who is black, of killing white Philadelphia police Officer Daniel Faulkner in 1981 after the patrolman pulled over Abu-Jamal's brother in an overnight traffic stop.

Prosecutors say Faulkner, 25, managed to shoot Abu-Jamal during the confrontation. A wounded Abu-Jamal, his own gun lying nearby, was still at the scene when police arrived, and authorities consider the evidence against him overwhelming.

Since Abu-Jamal's 1982 conviction, activists in the United States and Europe have rallied in support of his claims that he was the victim of a racist justice system. Abu-Jamal, 53, has kept his case in the spotlight through books and radio broadcasts.

District Attorney Lynne Abraham said she was pleased Abu-Jamal's conviction had been upheld and believes the ruling should dispel some myths about him.

"For all those here who believe that the system might have went awry, the 3rd Circuit has finally decided ... that Mr. Jamal is guilty when he was convicted and he's still guilty

today," she said. "So don't shed any tears for Mr. Jamal; he's where he ought to be, at least in prison for the rest of his life."

Abu-Jamal, born Wesley Cook, has argued in numerous appeals that racism by the judge and prosecutors corrupted his conviction at the hands of a mostly white jury. Prosecutors, meanwhile, had appealed a federal judge's 2001 decision to grant Abu-Jamal a new sentencing hearing because of the jury instructions.

The issue over the instructions relates to whether jurors understood how to weigh mitigating circumstances that might have kept Abu-Jamal, 53, off death row. Under the law, jurors did not have to unanimously agree on a mitigating circumstance.

"The verdict form together

with the jury instructions were misleading as to whether unanimity was required in consideration of mitigating circumstances," the appeals court wrote.

The appeals court heard arguments in May that focused on several constitutional issues, including whether prosecutors improperly eliminated black jurors in the 1982 trial.

Ten whites and two blacks served on the jury. Prosecutors struck 10 blacks and five whites from the pool, while accepting four blacks and 20 whites, according to Bryan, who argued that prosecutors at the time fostered "a culture of discrimination."

Associated Press writers Maryclaire Dale and JoAnn Loviglio contributed to this report.



Mumia Abu-Jamal

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