

# Miss Black America Ends Her Reign On August 18

For Claire Ford, a 19-year-old beauty from Memphis, Tennessee, the end is almost here.

That is, the end of her reign as Miss Black America.

On August 18, at the Civic Center in Philadelphia, Pa., she will crown her successor in the national finals of the 11th Annual Miss Black America Pageant.

"I'm not disappointed that it's coming to an end," Claire says in her soft, southern drawl, "because I entered this knowing that it would be over in a year. So I'm not sad about it at all. I'm happy and grateful that I've had a chance to enjoy such an interesting and educational experience."

Claire won her title on September 9, 1977 in the national finals of the 10th Annual Miss Black America Pageant. The event was staged at the Civic Auditorium in Santa Monica, California and televised live

over the NBC network. Claire, who stands 5'10", weighs 135 pounds and measures 34-25-37, competed against thirty other contestants from the United States and Puerto Rico.

Along with the title, she won \$10,000, two Hollywood screen tests and a role in the forthcoming sequel to Roots.

During her reign, Claire has made personal appearances in churches, on college campuses and on television talk shows throughout the United States. In February, she spent four weeks in Europe where she headlined her own show for the USO. She also guest-starred in a



LOVELY CLAIRE FORD  
...Miss Black America  
segment of the ABC-TV series,

Fantasy Island, playing a contestant in a beauty pageant. Despite all the glamour and excitement, Claire says being Miss Black America hasn't

changed her very much. "No, I haven't really changed much," she says, "but my life has been faster paced than it was before."

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