

Roberts Recognized By NAESP

Wayne B. Roberts represented North Carolina in the first annual National Distinguished Principals Program sponsored by the National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP) and the U.S. Department of Education. This program honors elementary and middle school principals "who set the character and quality of education during the early school years that shape children's future in the classroom and in life," said Secretary of Education Terrell H.

Bell. Roberts was selected by a committee of the state Principals' Association using guidelines established by the Department of Education and NAESP. On Oct. 12, he joined honorees from other states in Washington, D.C. for a White House reception, consultation with national education officials, and an awards banquet. A native of Duplin County, Roberts has been principal of Davidson Elementary School for 18

years and is in his 28th year as a principal. He holds a master's degree in reading from Appalachian State University as well as a bachelor's degree from Chapel Hill and an Ed.S. degree from Peabody College. Roberts has been active in various professional and community organizations during his career. He is a past district governor of Lion's International and has received the Melvin Jones Fellows award for humanitarian service.

Bonecrusher To Fight Again

After almost 12 rounds with world heavyweight boxing champion Larry Holmes, James "Bonecrusher" Smith, of Duplin County, lost the fight but gained respect as a worthy opponent.

The respect credited Bonecrusher among boxing officials after the fight with Holmes allows the Magnolia native to continue in his quest to be world heavyweight champion. According to a recent article in the Raleigh NEWS AND OBSERVER, Bonecrusher continues to train for future fights that will lead him back to another chance at the world title. That change begins with a scheduled fight March 15 at the Riviera in Las Vegas. His opponent is Tony Tubbs, a top-10 contender. A victory in the next match would lead Bonecrusher to opponent Greg Page and the World Boxing Association crown.

Bonecrusher, labeled as a worthy opponent in the Holmes match, did not have an easy time breaking into competition. Bonecrusher, a late bloomer, has been fighting only three years — turning pro at 28 years of age. Managers and Bonecrusher found his age to be a problem and would say he was two years younger than his true age. Smith explained in the News and Observer interview. Even the Holmes fight, Bonecrusher was billed as 29 years of age when in reality he was 31.

After only 15 fights, Bonecrusher faced the world champion, who, in his career, had fought 45 matches. Bonecrusher attributed the fast pace his career had taken to the top to his manager and hype.

"I think it was because I ran my mouth so much," Smith commented in the News and Observer interview. "It helped having my managers and Emile. But I kept right on telling anybody who would listen that I was the best heavyweight puncher in the world. I started believing it, they started believing it."

"Yes, I had to convince myself. But I was no different than Larry Holmes when he started. He had to

convince himself. He heard that stuff: 'You shouldn't. You can't. Your legs are too skinny.' I heard it, and I'd never had the benefit of exposure, never had the attention the Olympics bring.

"All made money by making people mad," Smith said. "I won't go that far. He hurt feelings, and people paid to see it. Sure, what I do is hype. At least part of it. Have you ever applied for a job? Aren't you selling yourself? Sure. But for me, it stops when you're going to make people mad. For All, there was no

end. "As far as King, promoters buying 'class' goes, I don't know. I know I was the first with a college degree to fight for a title. And since so many people think boxing is related to something evil, maybe that was a reason. I want to be, hope to be, associated with something good. If I can help change the image, I'd love it."

Bonecrusher and his wife and two children reside in Harnett County where he continues to train for the March 15 fight.

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