

'AND STILL CHAM-PEEEEN:' Atlanta's Evander Holyfield.

Holyfield catches up to Ocasio for TKO

Special to The Journal-Constitution

ST. TROPEZ, France - It took Evander Holyfield 11 rounds Saturday to catch up with Ossie Ocasio, but once he did the Atlanta fighter retained his World Boxing Association junior heavyweight and International Boxing Federation cruiserweight titles on a technical knockout.

Holyfield, making his fourth successful title defense, dropped Ocasio with a right to the head early in the 11th round. Ocasio took an eight-count before referee John Coyle motioned for the fight to continue. Holyfield then backed Ocasio into a corner and pummeled the 32-year-old Puerto Ri-

can with a flurry of punches before Coyle stopped the fight.

The 24-year-old Holyfield raised his record to 16-0. Ocasio is 32-5.

Ocasio, the WBA's No. 1 junior heavyweight contender, is known for moving around the ring and clinching, making it difficult for his opponent to set him up. Holyfield knew what to expect, but still was frustrated by Ocasio's running.

"He moved a lot," Holyfield said. "It was kind of difficult. He tied me up at times, but I had some good spurts.

"I got frustrated at times because he holds a lot. I kind of fell off my game plan, but then I picked it up with the jabs." Though frustrated, Holyfield completely

dominated the fight. He was never in trouble.

After looking sluggish in the middle rounds, Holyfield picked up the pace.

A source of sweet inspiration for Holyfield was the music of saxophonist Kenny G. As Holyfield was warming up before the fight, the music of Kenny G. was playing in his room. According to Holyfield, one of his trainers said to him, "'When I holler Kenny G., double jab and throw the right hand and drop the guy.'

"I was jabbin' when I heard 'Kenny

G.,'" Holyfield said. "It was early in the round. He (the referee) could have stopped

"Then I hit him with a lot of combinations and the referee stopped it. He (Oca-

sio) was really out of it." According to Kathy Duva, publicist for Main Events, which promotes Holyfield's fights, the next title defense probably will be late in the year against Dwight Muhammad Qawi.

Qawi, who knocked out Lee Roy Murphy in the sixth round on Saturday's undercard, is the IBF's No 1 cruiserweight contender.

Burger's hoping his worst times are behind him

By Darryl Maxie Staff Writer

AUBURN, Ala. - Auburn University quarterback Jeff Burger said Saturday he wants to put the scars of this summer behind him and "get back to being a student and an athlete again."

"I hope you realize what I've been through," Burger said at a morning press conference at an Auburn hotel. "After I leave this room, I'm not going to answer any more questions about it."

Dr. Warren Brandt, the university's vice president of academic affairs, on Friday overturned a recommendation from the Academic Honesty Committee that Burger be suspended for two quarters because of plagiarism on an industrial psychology term paper.

Burger said that Brandt told him in a letter that attention generated by the situation caused him to reconsider the suspension. It was the first time Brandt has gone against the committee's recommendation.

"In the letter it was worded like that," said Burger, 22, a senior from Cedartown, Ga. "But he also realized that I made some errors. I'm not sure why he did it, but I'm grateful he did it. I think he understood the evidence. I never showed any dishonesty at all. I'm

not a dishonest person." Burger, who said he was confident his suspension would be lifted, said he's also confident the NCAA will reinstate the athletic eligibility he lost after assistant coach Pat Sullivan bailed him out of jail on July 14 on charges of intoxication and carrying a concealed weapon. The intoxication charge has since been

dropped. "I have to have a positive attitude," Burger said of his eligibility case.

At another press conference, one hour after Burger's, Auburn coach Pat Dye said he expects to hear from the NCAA "in three or four days" about Burger's eligibility.

"Jeff's status with the NCAA is still being handled, and from all indications in a problem of this nature, l don't think he'll lose his eligibility as far as any playing time is concerned," Dye said.



The Associated Press

MEET THE PRESS: Auburn quarterback Jeff Burger tells reporters he's ready to put troubles behind.

Dye expressed relief that the suspension was lifted and sympathized with Brandt.

"When it came down to the final decision, Dr. Brandt felt he had to uphold the committee and support it and at the same time give Jeff the benefit of the doubt for his life and his future," Dye said. "I think it's lifted a little cloud. I've talked to Stacy (Searels, Burger's dormmate) and this has been more of a distraction than I realized. But had it not turned out this way, we would've fallen in behind Reggie Slack (the second-string quarterback) and kept right

Like his teammates, Searels was happy about the ruling. "It's been a big burden over our shoulders," Searels said. "I've seen what the situation did — all the worry — and I knew it would be ridiculous for Jeff not to play."

Burger said he didn't blame the instructor, Dr. Philip Benson, for turning him in.

"He did what the university asks professors to do," Burger said. "If they have a doubt (about a student's work), turn it over to the honesty committee. A lot of teachers would handle it themselves. Maybe he

thought this wasn't one he could do."

But Burger said he was bothered that the academic dishonesty will remain on his transcript until he passes the industrial psychology course. He also must take an English course.

"I've got some deep feelings about it," Burger said. "I never could see the justice of that punishment. I haven't been dishonest, but I'll do anything I can to resolve this as long as they'll let me be eligible to play football."

Burger, who thanked his supporters, said he hasn't received one negative letter from a fan, despite his troubles. "And I've had Alabama people writing me and they're for me 100 percent," he said. "They're concerned for me not as a football player."

He is eligible to practice while his NCAA appeal is pending, and Burger said he needs the work.

"I've been on pins and needles for a month," he said. "As long as I'm practicing, I'll be all right. If I couldn't practice that would be different. I couldn't stand the guys to be out there practicing and not be able to do anything."

NFL union bans Bloom forever

By Chris Mortensen Staff Writer

Lloyd Bloom this week will become the first agent permanently de-certified by the National Football League Players Association, sources said.

The NFLPA will make the announcement this week, possibly Monday, the sources said.

If the NFLPA gains jurisdiction over college seniors in current collective bargaining talks with the NFL Management Council, the de-certification could eliminate Bloom and associate Norby Walters from representing any football players in NFL contract negotiations.

Bloom was certified by the NFLPA; Walters was not. An NFLPA official said it has only de-certified one agent, whom he did not name, and that penalty is subject to review after one year.

The union began its certification procedure in 1983. Under national labor law and as part of the effective Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA), NFL teams cannot negotiate with an agent who is not certified by the players union.

The NFLPA disciplinary committee, which consists solely of players, made the decision based upon evidence that Bloom has violated several standards of conduct set down by the union. The most blatant violation involves inducing college players into signings that jeopardize their eligibility. The agents' contracts also do not meet union standards.

Notice of de-certification by the NFLPA was sent to Bloom late this week.

"Who cares?" responded Bloom. "De-certification is meaniningless. I don't care about what the union does." Bloom said he will file a lawsuit against the union.

"They can't keep me from working," said Bloom. "If anything, I'll sue 'em just to give them aggravation. As for being de-certified, hey, we'll just pull our players out of the union."

Even if Bloom's clients were not union members, NFL teams could not negotiate with an agent who is decertified, an NFLPA official said.

Bloom and Walters had five players in this year's draft, including first-round picks John Clay of the Los Angeles Raiders and Paul Palmer of the Kansas City Chiefs. The agents have at least seven players in the

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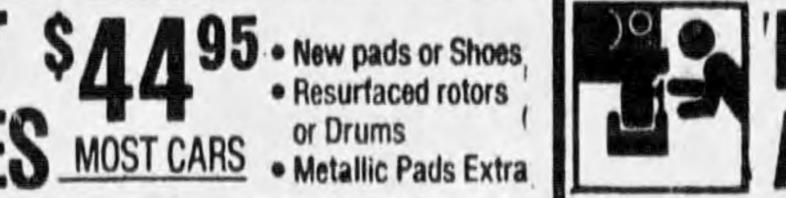
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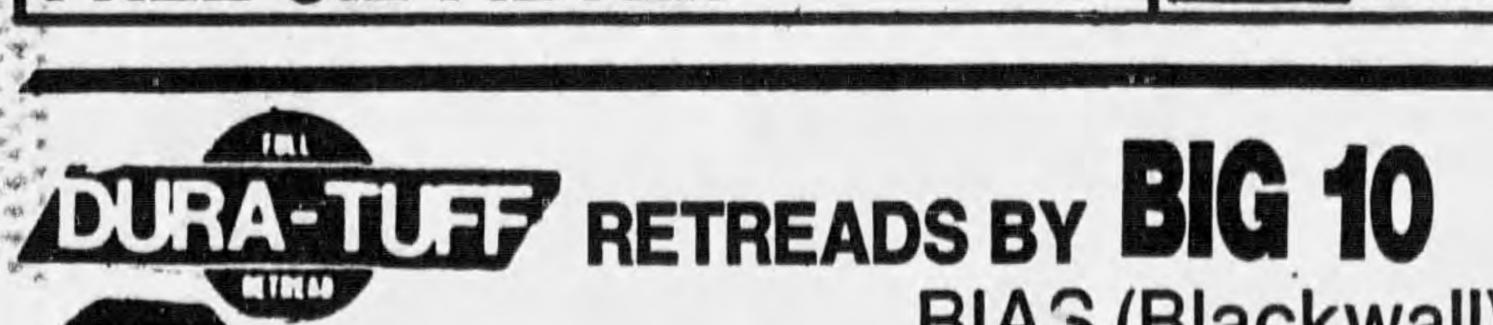
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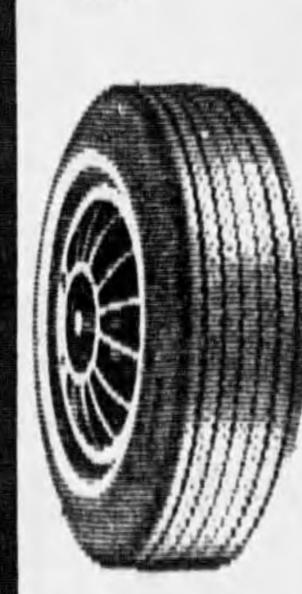


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