

State / National

Jenner portrays Grambling quarterback in fall film

United Press International
GRAMBLING, La. — Students on the all-black Grambling State University campus were apprehensive and amazed at the arrival of the school's first white quarterback in 1968.

Thirteen years later, the event is being revived amid just as much excitement with the arrival of an NBC movie crew filming the story of "Grambling's White Tiger."

Bruce Jenner, the former Olympic decathlon winner, plays Jim Gregory, who left his predominantly white California neighborhood to face discrimination and somewhat hostile teammates at black Grambling.

Harry Belafonte, best known for his Calypso singing, portrays

football Coach Eddie Robinson. LeVar Burton of Kunta Kinte "Roots" fame plays Gregory's roommate, Charlie Smith, now with the Philadelphia Eagles.

"I always said I never would do athletic roles because that's what everybody expected of me," Jenner said during a lunch break on campus, where the crew was to remain on location through next week.

"But this is a good, meaningful story. Football is really just a side-light. It's a good human story, and it's very interesting to look at discrimination from the other side."

The movie was scheduled to air sometime this fall and was being shot entirely on the Grambling campus, in nearby Ruston and at

Louisiana Tech — unique for TV movies that usually shoot interior scenes in Hollywood studios.

More than 100 students milled around the set one day last week in front of the student union building. Lights, the canvas director's chair, makeup and hairstyling men fussing with Jenner and other actors gave a thrilled air to the usually quiet, red-bricked campus of 4,000 students.

One faculty member said some students were angry because the movie portrayed the life of a white player at a school where so many black players have become pro football stars.

"Some of them were a little upset, but a lot of the players from Grambling who have gone on to

be pro players are mentioned in the movie, so that's all right," said the faculty member.

Hard feelings were not apparent on the set.

Hundreds of excited students — many of them senior football players who portray team members in the film — are being used as extras.

And a look at one day's "rushes" — the dozens of different-angled shots of various scenes — showed students as adept at taking orders from director Georg Stanford Brown as professionals.

"Okay, he's running for a touchdown, running, running. And he's made it!" yells the director.

Students packing the stadium

stands jump and shout and cheer their Tigers on as convincingly as if it were an honest to goodness game.

The prejudices and problems that greeted Gregory, who played at Grambling from 1968-1972, are the focus of the film. Jenner said he talked to Gregory, now a high school coach in California, to get a feel for what he went through at the black Southern college.

"There are some players on the team who don't like him because he took a scholarship away from a black player when there weren't that many scholarships to go around," said Jenner, whose job as an NBC sports commentator helped convince the network to star him in "Grambling's White Tiger."

"It got to the point where he was sorry he was white."

"A lot of the storyline is that

he's not that good a football player. Why did Eddie Robinson want him to come to Grambling?"

Burton, who has starred as a deaf-mute boy accused of killing a

prostitute and as baseball player Ron LeFlore in other TV movies, said he had always wanted to visit the Southern college because "Grambling is legendary."

Harrelson faces dual charges

United Press International
VAN HORN — Charles V. Harrelson, suspected by federal law officials of assassinating U.S. District Judge John Wood, was indicted Monday on charges of possessing cocaine and illegally possessing a firearm.

Represented by El Paso attorney Joe Chagra, Harrelson pleaded not guilty to the two felony indictments in arraignment proceedings in the 205th district court in Culberson County.

Harrelson, handcuffed and dressed in a county jail uniform of white pants, white shirt and tennis shoes, was flown from Houston to the hearing in a private plane and flown back to Houston immediately after the hearing.

Harrelson was arrested in Van Horn last September after fending off police with a pistol for seven hours and threatening to commit suicide. He was talked into giving up by Virgi-

nia Farrah, of the clothing manufacturing family, for whom he worked as a body guard.

He was indicted in October by a Culberson County grand jury. Because of a prior murder conviction, his possession of cocaine charge was raised from a second degree to a first degree felony.

Chagra, who has been one of a team of attorneys representing Harrelson on charges of bond jumping, gambling and an illegally possessing a firearm in Harris County, arrived at the hearing to represent Harrelson.

However, Harrelson told Judge Sam Callan he was "destitute" and could not afford to retain Chagra. Callan then appointed Chagra to represent Harrelson.

Trial on the Culberson County charges was set for April 27, but Harrelson is scheduled to appear at a hearing in Houston on April 26 to

seek dismissal of his two charges there.

Chagra said a tape recorder was found in the attorney-client visiting room in the Harris County jail and charged officials there had illegally recorded confidential conferences with his client.

William Ellis, an El Paso assistant district attorney directing the prosecution against Harrelson in west Texas, said he would agree to an extension in the trial.

Harrelson was convicted in 1973 for the \$2,000 contract slaying of Sam Degelia Jr., a Hearne grain dealer. In 1971 he was accused but never convicted of another contract killing in Angleton.

Harrelson appeared before the first grand jury investigating the death of Woods, but at the time denied any knowledge of how or why the federal judge was killed.

'Professora Palma' awaits sentence

United Press International
BROWNSVILLE — "Professora Palma" told a Mexican businessman and his wife they had cancer and their son would soon die, but she could cure all of them for \$22,300, federal investigators said.

Gypsy palm reader "Professora Palma," whose real name is Dinah Adams, is scheduled for a May 15 sentencing after pleading guilty to a reduced charge of transportation of property with intent to steal in the con game.

Government prosecutors have called the con game "the most bizarre ever" in south Texas. Offi-

cial said she led the Mexican couple through candlelit ceremonies, prayers over money stacked in the shape of a cross and gypsy incantations.

Adams pleaded guilty Friday in Brownsville federal court on a reduced charge as part of a plea-bargain arrangement in which she promised to repay the Mexican couple.

"I've handled thousands of cases and this is the most bizarre I've ever seen," said Assistant U.S. Attorney Charles Lewis.

Lewis said the con game victims, a Ciudad Victoria, Mexico, liquor store owner and his wife,

traveled to Brownsville several times in late 1980 and early this year, seeking the advice of Professora Palma.

After reading the palm of the businessman she told him he had cancer, but she could cure the disease for \$200. On subsequent trips to Brownsville, the woman diagnosed the businessman's wife as having cancer and said one of their children also would die.

Eventually, the cost of the cancer cure increased to about \$10,000 each for the man and his wife, said FBI agent Robert Nixon. During the last gypsy ceremony in which \$20,000 was laid

out on the floor, Nixon said Madam Palm switched the cash for paper.

"Madam Palm told him (the businessman) the money was gone and it had to be burned as part of the cure," Nixon said. "She advised him that the money had taken the evil from his body and his wife's body, the evil was put into the money and now they had to burn the money."

Federal prosecutors have recommended three years probation for Madam Palm. She faces formal sentencing on May 15 before U.S. Magistrate William Mallet.

I&R amendment chances are good

United Press International
AUSTIN — A proposed amendment to the Texas Constitution giving citizens the power to limit taxes and government growth by initiative and referendum has a

good chance of passing the Legislature this session if citizens will speak out for it, the leader of a group called "Texas 13" said Monday.

Former Attorney General

Waggoner Carr said the proposal by Rep. John Sharp, D-Victoria, is scheduled for House debate on Thursday.

"We're on our way," Carr told a news conference. "We've waited a

long time. We're full of fight. We want this bill very badly and we're going to do everything we can to see that it receives its due consideration."

Carr said Sharp's proposal would allow Texas citizens to use the initiative and referendum process to reduce taxes, but not to increase taxes or shift the tax burden from one group to another.

That apparently would negate one threat of the Texas AFL-CIO, which opposes initiative and referendum. AFL-CIO President Harry Hubbard has said if such an amendment were approved, labor leaders throughout the state would collect petitions to abolish property taxes and replace them with corporate profits taxes.

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