

Sugar Ray has no regrets about retirement

United Press International
BALTIMORE — World welterweight champion Sugar Ray

Leonard says his retirement is definite and he has "no regrets" about ending a career that

earned him almost \$40 million and two world championships. "No way I'm going to change," Leonard said. "There's a lot of people who think I'm going to get back into the ring. I'll prove them wrong."

Leonard said he decided to retire only moments before speaking to, among other fans, Marvin Hagler, Muhammad Ali and Ken Norton Tuesday night at the Civic Center.

"I didn't make the decision until tonight," the champion said. "I didn't feel the electricity. I have no regrets whatsoever." His decision ended months of

speculation over his return to the ring and a fight against Hagler for the middleweight crown — a bout that could have earned him \$20 million.

"(It) would be one of the greatest fights in boxing history," Leonard said. "But that, unfortunately, won't happen."

Leonard underwent successful surgery in May to repair a partially detached retina in his left eye. Leonard said his vision has returned to normal and Dr. Ronald Michels, the ophthalmologist who performed the surgery, gave him the freedom to make his own choice.

Mike Trainer, Leonard's manager, said the champion may have "run out of challenges."

Trainer said Hagler turned down \$7 million to fight Leonard. He also claimed Alexis Arguello and Aaron Pryor, who go at it Friday night in Miami, do not want to face Leonard.

"No one was really falling over themselves to fight him," Trainer said.

The champion's decision pleased most of the estimated 7,000 fans, and especially his wife, Juanita.

"I definitely don't want him to

box again," she said. "He's got a million and one things he can do."

In his career, Leonard used his enormous skills to become a consummate boxer. In 33 professional fights, he lost only to Roberto Duran, a 15-round unanimous decision in Montreal on June 20, 1980. He avenged that loss five months later with an eighth-round technical knockout in New Orleans when Duran quit late in the round.

Leonard gained undisputed claim to the world welterweight crown with a 14th-round TKO over Thomas Hearns on Sept.

16, 1981. The fight earned Leonard \$12 million, the purse paid to one fighter.

Three weeks before a scheduled title defense on May 7, a Buffalo, N.Y., eye doctor discovered a tear in the left eye was blurred.

On May 7, a Buffalo, N.Y., eye doctor discovered a tear in the left eye was blurred. Two days later Michels performed successful surgery.

Leonard, who proclaimed himself the Olympic medalist in 1976, "This is my fight," scored 16 TKOs and was not knocked down in 100 professional career.

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NFLPA threatens Saints' Erxleben

United Press International
NEW YORK — The NFL Players Association, which has filed unfair labor practice charges against the Management Council claiming the owners have not bargained in good faith, has been hit with charges that it "threatened, restrained

and coerced" an outspoken union member.

The NFLPA filed unfair labor practice charges Tuesday on the 50th day of the players' strike, stemming from reports that union representatives allegedly threatened New Orleans' player representative

Russell Erxleben.

The charge stated that union President Gene Upshaw and Elvin Bethea of the Houston Oilers were among those who "threatened, restrained and coerced" Erxleben, who has criticized the union's conduct. The NFLPA has denied the threats.

Part of a statement from the NFLPA said: "Today, Erxleben admitted he was the player mentioned in the published reports as having been threatened with bodily harm because of his criticism of the union."

The statement said Erxleben told the New Orleans Times-Picayune: "I have received threats, indirectly from several sources, saying (NFLPA executive director) Ed Garvey would have my leg broken and all this stuff."

Jim Miller, spokesman for the owners, said Tuesday no new negotiating sessions are planned at this time.

"If they say there are prospects, we don't know what they're saying, because we're not going to be there," he said.

The eighth week of the season officially was lost Tuesday with the NFL announcing no games will be played this weekend.

In another development,

Garvey claimed all 28 team owners rejected management's proposal to end the strike, announced acceptance of the Saints, Oilers and Angeles Rams. The union contended those three were not fully informed of the proposal, and their management's actions concerning the offer constituted a vote of approval.

"When you get to the heart of it, they posed questions required good hard bargaining," Garvey said.

At least three teams — Cincinnati, Minnesota and Denver — have not polled their players.

Meanwhile, cities and businesses in Southern California that stand to gain as much as \$60 million in Super Bowl

venues await the outcome of the first in-season workout in league history. The Super Bowl is scheduled for Jan. 30 in Pasadena, Calif. The Rose Bowl in Pasadena, Calif., is the site of the game.

Rockets, Hayes lost to Phoenix, 119-91

United Press International
HOUSTON — Houston Coach Del Harris is optimistic about the future of the Rockets, and he says practice is the answer to the team's losing dilemma.

"Our team just needs to continue to practice and work hard to get used to each other and run our offense," Harris said Tuesday night after the Rockets' lopsided 119-91 loss to the Phoenix Suns.

"We are getting 100 percent game, but we must demonstrate more patience and pass more. We are shooting too much. Our young players — Taylor and (Terry) Teague played well, but they are not and need more experience."

Walter Davis and Mark Lucas scored 17 points each in Phoenix.

The Suns blocked seven in the first quarter, including five by Larry Mance, to set tempo for the game and led 16-0 at the end of the quarter. Dunleavy won the Houston Rockets 59-46 at the half.

The Suns outscored the Rockets 16-2 at the beginning of the third quarter to put the game out of reach.

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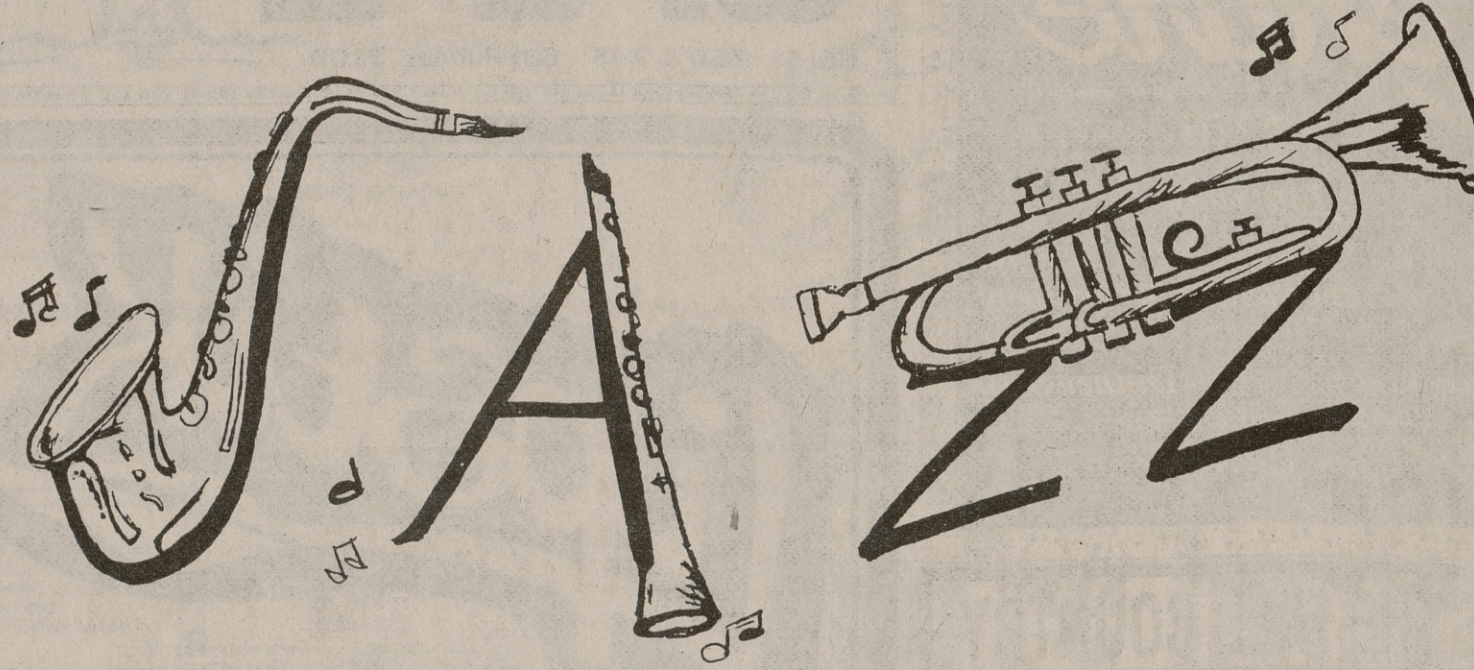
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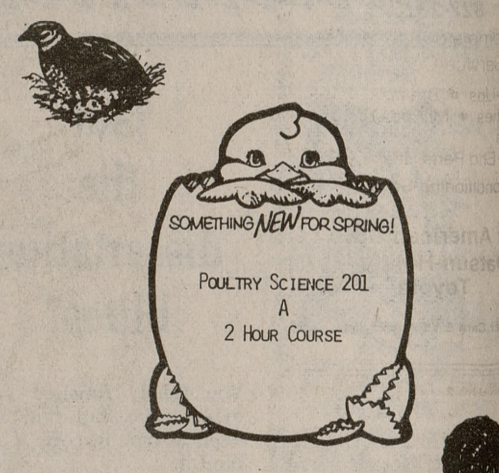


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