



Drivers start your engines...

staff photo by David Fisher

It was off to the races Monday night with the Silver Bullet Minicar races at Tecs restaurant. Jeny Moller, a general studies freshman from Corpus Christi, and

Todd Handwerk, a building construction senior from Katy, line up their cars at the start. Coors and Tecs sponsored the races to raise money for Spina Bifida.

Mafia head awaits word on freedom

United Press International
NEW ORLEANS — Aging Mafia patriarch Carlos Marcello, guarded around the clock by federal marshals because of threats on his life, hoped a court would free him from jail Monday pending appeals of federal racketeering charges.

Marcello and former state Commissioner of Administration Charles Roemer were ordered to jail earlier this month when the 5th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals upheld their 1981 convictions for plotting to trade bribes for lucrative state insurance contracts.

The 5th Circuit has been asked to rehear the so-called Brilab case, and the U.S. Supreme Court has been asked to free both men during appeals. Marcello's lawyers so far have managed to keep the ailing 73-year-old Mafia kingpin behind bars in New Orleans instead of in a Missouri prison hospital where he should serve his term. A federal judge last week re-

commended to the U.S. Justice Department that Marcello be allowed to serve his seven-year racketeering sentence in his hometown until all appeals are exhausted.

The 5-foot-1 "Little Man" of Gulf Coast organized crime, whose holdings have been estimated at \$60 million, has been jailed in New Orleans since April 15. Marcello was arrested after prosecutors said they feared he would leave the country before his federal sentence started.

He is isolated on a lower floor of the 10-story Community Correctional Center where he is being held.

"I don't want him unnecessarily around a lot of persons," said Criminal Sheriff Charles Foti. He said Marcello was watched closely because of his age and his history of health problems.

He is also being watched

closely since federal officials confirmed there have been threats on Marcello's life.

In addition to his Brilab conviction, Marcello also was found guilty in 1981 in California of conspiring to pay off a federal judge.

With a criminal record dating to his teenage years, Marcello managed until Brilab to minimize his confrontations with the law. Even though he was the undisputed head of the Cosa Nostra in the Gulf South and dealt heavily in bookmaking, prostitution and narcotics he was not arrested frequently. In more than half a century the FBI made only robbery, marijuana and assault charges stick.

Roemer, the most powerful official under former Gov. Edwin Edwards, was given until May 16 to begin his three-year term.

Houston's metro probed by FBI

United Press International
HOUSTON — FBI agents are investigating allegations of kickbacks to present and former officials of the city's Metropolitan Transit Authority, a radio station reported today.

KTRH radio, in a copyrighted report, said federal sources had confirmed a probe into alleged manipulation of two multimillion dollar bus rehabilitation contracts with the nation's biggest bus rebuilder, the Blitz

Corporation of Chicago.

Blitz received two contracts in late 1980 and 1981 to repair the MTA's badly damaged bus fleet which was under criticism for inefficiency in early 1980.

Internal memos obtained by KTRH revealed key metro staff members expressed concerns of irregularities and illegalities in the handlings of the contracts with Blitz.

Among the charges being investigated are double billing, falsification of work orders and possible theft of metro parts, KTRH reported.

The station reported former MTA operations manager Clarence Jiliani and current General Manager of Administrative Services Beverly Grisby were the focus of the FBI investigation.

Jiliani resigned with former MTA Executive Director Walter Addison in 1981, who was unavailable for comment.

Grisby was in charge of contracts in 1981. She confirmed the FBI had questioned her about her role in drawing up the contracts with Blitz.

The station said the FBI has contacted the Justice Department about expanding the probe and assigning parts of the investigation to other federal agencies with more immediate jurisdiction.

Additional allegations unco-

vered include alleged fraudulent real estate deals, bid rigging, misuse of federal funds and conflict of interest charges.

MTA board chairman Dan Arnold refused to say if he had been contacted by FBI and had no comment on FBI investigation, KTRH said.

FBI Agent Tim Moody, who is in charge of the investigation, would neither confirm or deny the reports of the investigation.

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