

A Raycer in the sun



JAKE SCHRICKLING/THE BATTALION

Chris Jamieson, a senior mechanical engineering major and a driver for the Sunrayer team, helps Robert Marshall, a wind tunnel operator, and Dr. Dennis Waugaman, a mechanical engineering professor and the Sunrayer team adviser, adjust a 1/2 scale model of the Sunrayer during an aerodynamics test at the Texas A&M low-speed wind tunnel.

The Greys

By Gab



Andy in Aggieland

By Step



Three men face charges for Jasper man's death

JASPER (AP)—Prosecutors presented evidence Monday to a grand jury considering indictments against three white men accused of chaining a black man to a pickup truck and dragging him to his death.

Jasper County District Attorney Guy James Gray planned to seek capital murder indictments against at least two of the suspects in the June 7 slaying of James Byrd Jr. It was not known when the grand jury would reach a decision.

John William King and Shawn Allen Berry, both 23 of Jasper, and Lawrence Russell Brewer, 31, of Sulphur Springs, remain jailed without bond in connection with what authorities call a racially motivated crime.

All three have prison records and authorities have said at least two wear tattoos of white racist prison gangs. Racist literature also was seized from their homes.

Gray was meeting with the grand jury all day and could not be reached for comment. Attorneys for the three suspects did not return telephone messages from The Associated Press.

Gray has said he would seek capital murder indictments against at least King and Brewer, making them eligible for the death penalty upon conviction. Berry has been cooperating with authorities and could receive a lesser charge.

Investigators believe Byrd, 49, accepted a ride from the suspects as he walked home from a niece's bridal shower. But police believe that instead of taking him home, the men drove Byrd to a wooded area, beat him, chained him behind Berry's truck and sped down a bumpy road just east of town.

Byrd's severed head, neck and right arm were discovered about a mile from where his shredded torso was dumped. A trail of blood, body parts and personal effects stretched for two miles, police said.

According to one court affidavit, Berry told authorities that Brewer sprayed Byrd's face with black paint before he was killed.

In addition to any state charges, federal authorities are considering federal hate crime charges against the trio, which also could make them eligible for the death penalty.

World cycling competition to feature two Texans

FRISCO, Texas (AP)—National champions crowned Sunday in four events at the EDS Elite National Championships will go on to the World Championship track cycling competition Aug. 24-30 in Bordeaux, France.

Winning the men's Olympic sprint were 1996 Olympic silver medal winner Marty Nothstein of Trelxertown, Penn.; Trey Gannon of Frisco, Texas; and Erin Hartwell of McKinney, Texas.

It was Team EDS' third straight national championship. Nothstein won the men's match point and keirin championships earlier in the week.

Erin Veenstra of Colorado Springs, Colo., won the women's 25-kilometer points race final with 41 points at the EDS Superdrome north of Dallas. It was her first senior national title.

Mark Garrett of Arcadia, Calif., and Nick Chenoweth of Dallas won the tandem 250-meter sprint final.

In the Madison final, James Carney of Durango, Colo., and brother Jonas Carney of Asheville, N.C., were first with 27 points.

State regulation

Texas governs consumer property insurance in 1999

AUSTIN (AP)—Consumer credit property insurance rates will be regulated by the state beginning in 1999, Texas Insurance Commissioner Elton Bomer announced Monday.

Consumer credit property insurance protects property, such as computers, refrigerators and stereos, from theft or other loss while property is being paid off. It does not cover homes or cars.

The coverage is generally sold by department stores and specialty stores marketing such goods as electronics, furniture and appliances.

Until adoption of the new regulations, which take effect Jan. 1, 1999, rates and policy forms have been unregulated.

"I want to make sure that consumers know exactly what they are paying for and that they are making informed decisions when they decide whether to purchase consumer credit property insurance," Bomer said.

"These regulations accomplish those goals and are fair to both the sellers and the buyers of this type of insurance."

Insurance industry spokesman Jerry Johns, of the Southwestern Insurance Information Service, raised no objections to the regulations.

"We believe that people need to make informed choices when purchasing any type of insurance, and if the commissioner's rules will help do that we are supportive," Johns said.

In January, Bomer and officials of Montgomery Ward signed a consent order under

which the company agreed to offer returns to customers who bought a "Credit Security" policy without realizing it was insurance.

Refunds could total as much as \$5 million for customers who unwittingly bought the insurance and seek a refund.

Under the adopted regulations, TDI will control rates and policy language. Also, regulations must clearly point out to prospective buyers the coverage might duplicate existing residential property coverage.

Other key points that must be explained to a purchaser include:

- The policyholder's right to cancel the policy at any time.
- The price of the insurance.
- The fact that the policy pays on any covered property before any homeowners coverage kicks in.

Bomer held a hearing on the credit property insurance issue on April 9. A TDI staff representative at that hearing said allowing the coverage to be sold "in its current unregulated status invites consumer abuses."

Bomer said Monday that studies showed ratios on credit property insurance industry in 1996 were lower than on any other type of credit insurance.

He said that indicates not only that rates were too high but also that many consumers may not know the coverage exists.

The Memorial Student Center

◆ELS◆

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THE BATTALION

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Deadline: Wednesday, July 8 by 5:00 p.m.

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Please type your responses on a separate piece of paper

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