

Hearns looking to make boxing history vs. Roldan

LAS VEGAS, Nev. (AP) — Thomas Hearns will try to become the first boxer to win titles in four weight classes when he fights Juan Domingo Roldan tonight.

At stake will be the World Boxing Council middleweight championship, which became vacant when Sugar Ray Leonard retired after upsetting Marvelous Marvin Hagler last April 6.

Leonard and Hagler will both be on hand for Hearns' bid to make history. Leonard stopped Hearns in the 14th round of a battle for the undisputed welterweight championship in 1981, and Hagler knocked out Hearns in the third round of an undisputed middleweight title defense in 1985.

Leonard will attend as a spectator, while Hagler will be a commentator on the closed-circuit and pay-per-view telecast of the scheduled 12-round bout at a 10,100-seat outdoor stadium at the Las Vegas Hilton.

"I'm evaluating the situation," said Hagler, who is a possible opponent for the winner. "I want to sit back, watch these guys and see what happens."

"This fight will put me above everyone else out there," the 29-year-old Hearns said. "This fight definitely will make up for those two losses."

Hearns, an 8-5 favorite, is one of 10 men to win at least pieces of three titles. Six of those 10 won their third titles in the 1980s when the number of weight classes doubled from the traditional eight and most championships have been split.

Only two of those six champions held an undisputed title — Roberto Duran, lightweight, and Leonard, welterweight.

However, Hearns' road has not been an easy one. If he succeeds, his four titles would span weight classes ranging from 147 pounds to 175 pounds.

Hearns, the former World Boxing Association welterweight (147) and WBC super welterweight (154) champion, relinquished the WBC light heavyweight (175) title to fight for the 160-pound title.

He is the fourth man to attempt to win a fourth title. The three who failed were Henry Armstrong, who fought a 10-round draw with Ceferino Garcia in a bid for the middleweight title in 1940; Alexis Arguello, who was knocked out by Aaron Pryor in bids for the junior welterweight title in 1982 and 1983, and Duran, who lost a decision to Hagler in 1983.

Hearns' attempt is scheduled to begin at 8 p.m. PST, following Bobby Czyz's scheduled 15-round defense of the International Boxing Federation light heavyweight title against Charles Williams. That fight will begin about 7 p.m. and will also be televised.

Hagler, who stopped Roldan in the 10th round of a title defense in 1984, thinks "the

fight should be very even. Roldan is very awkward and very quick."

The 30-year-old Roldan said through an interpreter, "I know it's a difficult task, but on Oct. 29 whatever is in front of me will lose by a knockout. We need a title in Argentina, and that's why I'm working so hard." Roldan would be the third Argentine to be middleweight champion since 1970. Carlos Monzon was undisputed champion from 1970 until he retired in 1977 after 14 defenses, and Hugo Corro was the undisputed champion in 1978-79.

"Juan Roldan says this is a stepping stone for him," said Hearns. "He picked a big stone to step over. I think he should have tried someone else."

The 6-foot-1 Hearns from Detroit has a six-inch height advantage and 8 $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch edge in reach over Roldan. The weigh-in will be held at 9 a.m. today. Hearns weighed 173 $\frac{3}{4}$ pounds

when he knocked out Dennis Andries in the 10th round for the light heavyweight title last March 7.

"My thing is to make Juan Roldan reach and lunge to hit me," Hearns said. "Once I get him to reach and lunge, the fight will be no problem."

Hearns, whose purse is \$1.1 million, has a 44-2 record, with 37 knockouts. Roldan, who will earn \$250,000, has a 63-3-2 record, with 41 knockouts and one no contest.

Promoter Bob Arum said the fight will be available to 8 million homes on pay-per-view television at an average price of \$20 and that the buy rate is between 5 and 6 percent. He also said the fight will be seen at 400 closed-circuit television sites, mostly bars and clubs.

Czyz will go into his fourth title defense sporting a 32-1 record, with 23 knockouts. Williams has a 21-4-2 record.

Steelers sign Woodson to contract

PITTSBURGH (AP) — The Pittsburgh Steelers said they signed a contract last night with defensive back Rod Woodson, their top pick in the spring college player draft.

"We're pleased that we've reached an agreement and that Rod will be joining us," said team President Dan Rooney. "We expect him to come in and become a productive member of the team."

Woodson, who has been at home in Fort Wayne, Ind., is expected in Pittsburgh by Thursday, although it was not clear whether he would dress for Pittsburgh's game in Miami Sunday against the Dolphins, said Steelers spokesman Dan Edwards.

The team withheld the terms of the contract, although published reports have said the Steelers offered him \$1.9 million, including incentives, over four years.

'We're pleased that we've reached an agreement and that Rod will be joining us.'

— Dan Rooney, team president

Woodson's contract had been unresolved since Pittsburgh made him the 10th player selected in the April draft. The former Purdue player was one of the longest contract holdouts in team history.

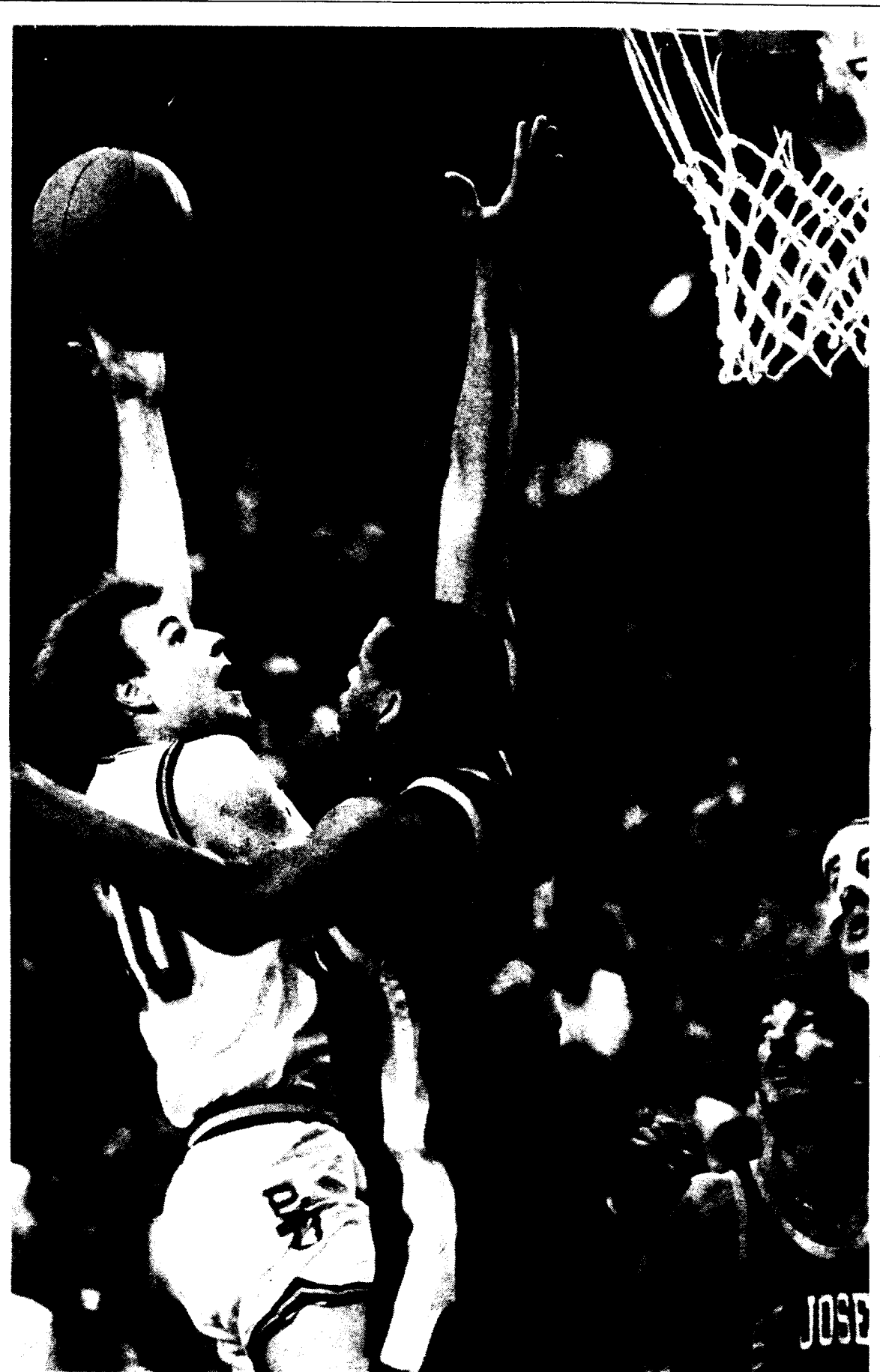
Woodson had said the two sides were \$150,000 to \$200,000 apart, and his agent, Marvin Demoff, had said they were \$200,000 to \$300,000 apart.

The player had also said an agreement was being delayed by his desire to run the 110-meter hurdles in the 1988 Olympics.

Coach Chuck Noll last Thursday apparently made peace with Woodson after criticizing him several times.

"All that stuff was cleared up," Demoff said this week after Noll and Woodson talked privately.

Steelers officials led Woodson and his mother on a tour of the city and introduced them to Mayor Richard Caliguiri and to various team officials at Three Rivers Stadium, where the guests also watched the Steelers practice.



To the hoop

Penn State's Mike Peaplos and his teammates battled St. Joe's to the wire in the Atlantic 10 playoffs a year ago. For a look at this season's team turn to Page 18.

SEC's leading passer declared ineligible to play for Auburn

By CURT ANDERSON
Associated Press Writer

AUBURN, Ala. — Senior Auburn quarterback Jeff Burger, the leading passer in the Southeastern Conference, was declared ineligible yesterday along with teammate Jim Thompson after the NCAA said they broke a rule by taking a free flight to go hunting with a Thompson family friend.

Their eligibility could be restored by the NCAA on appeal, even in time for sixth-ranked Auburn's SEC showdown with No. 10 Florida on Saturday night, but it was uncertain when, or how, the NCAA might respond.

David Housel, Auburn sports information director, said the school was notified yesterday morning that an Oct. 11 trip to south Alabama on a small, private plane was considered a violation of the "extra benefits" rule by the National Collegiate Athletic Association.

"Both players have been declared ineligible by Auburn University pending an appeal for restoration of their eligibility by Auburn," Housel said. "Auburn officials are in the process of making that appeal."

The decision comes as Auburn, 6-0-1, heads into its final four games against four Top 20 teams, beginning with Florida at Auburn's Jordan-Hare Stadium. Also on the slate are No. 4 Florida State, 12th-ranked Georgia and No. 16 Alabama.

Coach Pat Dye said yesterday he was uncertain if an appeal could be resolved in time for Saturday's game.

"We're in an appeal for restoration of their eligibility for the game this weekend," Dye said. "Their status of course right now is uncertain. There's no timetable on the appeal as far as an NCAA response."

Burger, who had two other brushes with ineligibility this year, has made up for a weak Auburn running attack by completing 105 of 154 passes for 1,314 yards and 10 touchdowns, with only three interceptions, to lead the SEC.

Thompson, a junior offensive tackle, was a starter at the beginning of the year but has been out several weeks with a knee injury.

Dye suspended the senior quarterback and Thompson prior to last Saturday's game against Mississippi State after he learned of the hunting trip.

Burger, a fifth-year senior, and

Thompson reportedly got a ride on a small plane belonging to Covington County Commissioner Johnny Mack Weed, a friend of Thompson's family, who had invited the two to go hunting in south Alabama on the Sunday after Auburn's victory over Vanderbilt.

Dye, in a weekly news conference Tuesday, said he didn't think the trip violated any rules.

"I don't see how they could punish them for that," Dye said. "Sometimes what I think and what they think aren't the same."

The week after the hunting trip, Burger led Auburn to a come-from-behind victory at Georgia Tech. Dye, however, did not learn of the trip and its possible ramifications until the Friday before the Mississippi State game. It was not certain yesterday whether Auburn might have to forfeit the Tech game if Burger is ultimately ruled ineligible.

If Burger fails to win his appeal, sophomore Reggie Slack will suit up at quarterback Saturday against Florida. Slack, playing in place of Burger last week in his first collegiate start, filled in admirably with three touchdown passes.

"If he plays Saturday, he'll be ready," Dye said, although he said nothing could make up for Burger's experience in big games.

There is a chance that Burger will be allowed to play against Florida and he can still practice with the team. But Housel said there was no way to tell when the NCAA would rule.

"Obviously, we'll do it as quickly as we can," Housel said. "The NCAA is very much aware of the need for fair and quick decisions in situations like this and they have a system in place for handling appeals quickly."

Burger almost didn't get to play at all this season when the Auburn Academic Honesty Committee suspended him for two quarters after he allegedly plagiarized parts of a term paper. But that suspension was lifted by Warren Brandt, the school's vice president for academic affairs, who said Burger had suffered enough because of intense media coverage.

Then, Auburn declared Burger ineligible when he was bailed out of jail by Assistant Coach Pat Sullivan following a fight in a restaurant parking lot. The NCAA restored his eligibility because Sullivan only signed a property bond and no money ever changed hands.

Maple Leafs top Islanders, 5-2

By The Associated Press

TORONTO — Mark Osborne and Ed Olczyk each scored twice and Allan Bester played steady in goal as the Toronto Maple Leafs ended a three-game losing streak with a 5-2 triumph over the New York Islanders.

Bester began his first start of the season with a 10-29 goals-against average, but he stopped 17 shots as the Leafs smothered New York's offense.

Olczyk scored both his goals in the third period, including one on a power play, to help the Maple Leafs pull away.

Kings 4, Rangers 3

NEW YORK — Bobby Carpenter and Jim Fox scored third-period goals and goaltender Glenn Healy recorded his first NHL victory to lead the Los Angeles Kings to a 4-3 victory over the New York Rangers last night.

Carpenter broke a 2-2 tie when he scored from the side of the net off a rebound of a shot by Fox at 1:02. Fox then clinched it for the Kings with a breakaway goal at 10:15, putting the puck between the pads of goaltender John Vanbiesbrouck from 20 feet.

Healy made 31 saves in his third NHL start as the Kings improved their current road record to 2-2-1, including three straight unbeaten games.

Canadiens 3, Oilers 1

MONTREAL — Defenseman Chris Chelios set up all three Montreal goals and goaltender Patrick Roy

blocked 22 shots as the Canadiens defeated the Edmonton Oilers 3-1.

The Oilers, who had gone 100 games without being blanked before the Quebec Nordiques shut them out Tuesday night, seemed destined for the same fate until Charlie Huddy scored on a 25-foot slapshot on a power play with 3:14 left.

But it was too little, too late for the Oilers, who had won six straight games against Montreal, including the last four played at the Forum.

Whalers 2, Sabres 2

HARTFORD, Conn. — John Tucker's goal at 16:38 of the second period gave the Buffalo Sabres a 2-2 tie with the Hartford Whalers.

Tucker's third goal of the year, a low shot from about 15 feet that dribbled past Whalers goalie Steve Weeks with 3:22 left in the second period, evened the score at 2-2.

After that, Weeks and Buffalo's Tom Barrasso took turns preserving the tie.

Red Wings 5, Jets 1

WINNIPEG, Manitoba — Steve Yzerman scored two goals to lead the Detroit Red Wings to a 5-1 victory over the Winnipeg Jets.

Yzerman, who has scored at least one point in seven consecutive games, scored on a great individual effort during a first-period power play and added his second goal of the goal and seventh of the season in the second period.



Toronto Maple Leaf's Al Iafate (left) battles for the puck with Greg Gilbert of the New York Islanders last night.

NFL players start to form new union

PHILADELPHIA (AP) — A movement has started to form a splinter football union with players who are disgruntled about their unsuccessful 24-day strike against the NFL, according to a report yesterday.

The NFL Players Representation Organization has filed with the U.S. Labor Department to register as a union, according to WTAF-TV.

The group would be led by Philadelphia-based agent Arthur Wilkinson as managing director, the station said, adding that labor attorney Dale Bach also will be involved.

A union election was scheduled for December, and the group will need approval from 30 percent, or roughly 480, of the players before it can demand recognition from the league, according to the station.

The strike, which ended Oct. 15, saw 228 of the 1,585 members of the NFL Players Association cross the picket lines to join replacement teams hired by the owners to play during the strike.