

WEEKEND

Low tonight **-6**

High tomorrow **8**

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Refs walk

NHL referees prepare to strike on Monday

— Page B1

More talks wanted

Hat MLA Rob Renner wanted more discussions before education cuts

— Page A3

WEEKENDER

Green Bay, a pleasant place to vacation, with more to offer than just football

— Inside Today



Medicine Hat News

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Not quite dead yet

LONDON (Reuters) — Mortified news bosses apologized Friday for mistakenly announcing the death of the Queen Mother and fired an Australian journalist who sparked the rumor.

In a bizarre chain of coincidences, an Australian videotape editor with Sky News in London mistook footage being prepared in the event of the 93-year-old Queen Mother's death for the real thing and contacted his mother in Brisbane with the "news."

The misunderstanding reached a local radio station and was then broadcast on Australian television breakfast news.

The Sky News satellite television channel said it deeply regretted any distress or embarrassment to the Queen Mother and the Royal Family.

It said the editor, who was not named, was fired Friday after an internal inquiry.

Prisoner caught

CALGARY (CP) — A prisoner who was free for nearly three days after bolting from a bus on his way to provincial court was apprehended at a northeast Calgary home Friday.

John Leslie Woods, 33, surrendered when 10 police officers, acting on a tip, located him at the house.

Woods was being taken to court Tuesday to face charges arising from a hostage-taking when he managed to duck out a bus window, dash across downtown streets, change clothes and make a getaway on a bicycle.

Police said he also shed his handcuffs and leg irons.

Michael Edward Walker, 18, a resident of the house where Woods was found, has been charged with being an accessory.

Woods is considered dangerous. He faces charges including pointing a firearm, threatening to kill and unlawful confinement arising from an incident last July in which a man held a woman and children hostage for several hours.

Hat queen wins

Medicine Hat will again represent Canada on the international rodeo circuit with the crowning Friday night of Miss Rodeo Canada 1994.

Wendi Lund, 20, of Duchess beat out 10 other contestants from across Canada to follow in the footsteps of Miss Rodeo Canada 1993, Dode Minor.

Both Lund and Minor are former Medicine Hat rodeo queens, Lund in 1992 and Minor in 1991.

"It's kind of neat. I crowned Wendi as the Medicine Hat queen and then I crowned her as Miss Rodeo Canada. That's very rare. In fact, I think it has never happened before," said Minor from Edmonton this morning.

Lund could not be reached for comment.

Lund was also named the winner of the queen contest's horsemanship category. The ceremony took place at the Canadian Finals Rodeo at Edmonton's Northlands Coliseum about 9 p.m.

Following the ceremony, Lund was presented with several gifts including keys to a Dodge mini-van and a saddle.

Liberals promise to review final Mulroney appointments

OTTAWA (CP) — The Liberal government will review hundreds of appointments made by Brian Mulroney in his final months as prime minister and may fire people not qualified for their new jobs, Jean Chretien's spokesman said Friday.

Critics say up to 500 of the 650 final Mulroney appointments to various federal jobs were clearly partisan rather than professional, with the cost reaching \$50 million by the end of the decade.

Liberal spokesmen have previously indicated there will be no large-scale firings of Mulroney appointees.

But Patrick Parisot, Chretien's press spokesman, said Friday the government "will review all of those appointments that have been made in the dying days of the former regime."

"Maybe some will stay. Maybe some will be changed. But there will be a review on the basis of the competence of the people that are handling the job."

Parisot was asked directly if some of the Mulroney appointees could be removed, if found incompetent.

"When there is a review, everything is possible," he replied.

Earlier Friday, the Industrial Cape Bre-

ton Board of Trade asked the new prime minister to revoke the 500 "blatantly political" patronage appointments. Board member Harvey Webber said the 500 are "friends, backroom boys, bagmen, defeated candidates and other political hangers-on."

Critics say few of the appointees are qualified for the positions they now hold despite the fact some of them are making life-and-death decisions.

Reform Leader Preston Manning took particular exception during the election campaign to Mulroney's appointments to parole boards.

"The function of the parole board — to control the release of convicted criminals back into society — is much too important to be left to political hacks," he argued.

Many new parole board members have no experience in the criminal justice system. Full-time members earn \$80,100 to \$94,500 annually.

Author Stevie Cameron, who has written extensively about patronage since the 1984 election, wrote in June that one of the worst examples of Mulroney appointing unqualified people is the Montreal immigration and refugee board.

Charges stayed on Clarkson

EDMONTON (CP) — All charges have been stayed against a New Zealand millionaire in a murder conspiracy case in which a celebrity photographer alleged he was injected with the virus believed to cause AIDS.

Defence lawyers said Friday problems with police wiretap evidence caused the collapse of much of the case against Geoffrey Clarkson.

Charges against two private investigators were also set aside.

Altogether, 24 of 26 charges were stayed by the Crown. The charges can be reactivated within a year, although this is rarely done.

It does not mean the charges have been dropped.

Now only Marilyn Tan, the one-time lover of both Clarkson and Edmonton photographer Con Boland, still faces charges. She is accused of aggravated assault against Boland and uttering death threats against his friend Jeanette Kunkel.

The stay of charges against Clarkson, private detective Russell Forsythe and his assistant Walter Peel came only three days before their preliminary hearing was to begin. The three had been charged in a murder attempt and an aggravated assault on Boland.

Boland was attacked with sulphuric acid when he answered his door last February. And last summer, as he slept, he was allegedly jabbed with a needle tainted with HIV, the virus linked to AIDS.

Clarkson comes from a prominent Toronto family and taught business administration at several universities before getting into the cattle business in New Zealand.

The charges landed him in jail for five days in July, but he had no harsh words for police, prosecutors or even Tan, with whom he is now embroiled in a legal battle.

"It's broadened my horizons," a dapper-looking Clarkson said with a sly smile. "It's increased the number of experiences I've enjoyed, although I wouldn't commend this to anyone."

He can now return to New Zealand, but Clarkson said he is in no hurry to leave Edmonton.

Boland, who says the needle attack infected him with HIV, was disappointed but philosophical.

"Today I'm a little bit sad for society and the justice system as a whole because the police have done so much work and they've gathered so much evidence (and) it's all thrown out because of who knows why," he said. "It's a bit scary."

But Boland — photographer of such celebrities as hockey star Wayne Gretzky, former prime minister Pierre Trudeau and business tycoon Peter Pocklington — said he's relieved in a way because the stay means he will have to go through a less difficult court case.



ANARCHISTS RIOT — Firefighters in Athens, Greece try to extinguish a fire truck that was set alight during a demonstration Friday. About 5,000 high school students disrupted traffic and a band of anarchists smashed windows and lit fires during protests over violence by right-wing extremists. — AP photo

250,000 couples unable to have child Reproduction report completed

TORONTO (CP) — As many as 250,000 Canadian couples of child-rearing age are unable to have a baby, the Royal Commission on New Reproductive Technology says in a report to be submitted next week.

There's also a severe shortage of children available to adopt to those would-be parents, the controversial, \$28-million commission says in its 1,328-page report.

For every one of the 1,698 children adopted in 1990, there were eight couples waiting, the Toronto Star reported from Ottawa today. The commission's findings will be presented to Prime Minister Jean Chretien Monday.

"Seven per cent of Canadian couples of a reproductive age are affected by infertility," commission chairwoman Dr. Patricia Baird said Friday.

"That translates into 500,000 Canadians." The commission was established in 1989 to advise the government on ethical and legal guidelines for the use of new reproductive technologies, such as embryo transfers, sex-selection techniques and fetal tissue transplants.

The report makes 193 recommendations and one of them is expected to be that all Canadians, regardless of their income, get equal access to medical procedures for inducing pregnancy.

It's also expected to condemn the use of surrogate mothers because it reportedly found the notion of selling or giving away a child to another human being to be repugnant.

During the commission's stormy four years, four of the original commissioners were fired, numerous time extensions were granted and researchers attacked the secrecy and methodology of the commission. The budget jumped by about \$3.5 million to \$28.2 million, Baird said.

She rejected criticism of the body. "It is a very substantive and serious and caring report, I think," said Baird.

"There's a lot of meat in it and I would like to see it implemented."

The commission based its infertility findings on three telephone surveys conducted in late 1991 and early 1992. Only childless couples between the ages of 18 and 44 who had been living together for at least two years were questioned.

The combined results suggested that more than 80 per cent of couples were either using some contraception or were voluntarily sterile, meaning that either the woman had a tubal ligation or the man a vasectomy.

'Seven per cent of Canadian couples . . . are affected by infertility.'

— Baird

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this paper

Canada, Mexico free trade possible if NAFTA fails

OTTAWA (CP) — Canada could opt for free trade with Mexico even if the United States backs out of the North American deal, says Canada's ambassador in Mexico.

David Winfield also confirmed that senior Canadian business leaders are already pressuring the new Liberal government to look at that option if NAFTA dies in the U.S. Congress next week.

Winfield said even though the Canadian government has that legal option, it first wants to see if Congress passes the necessary legislation.

"The Canadian government has not taken that decision and I would have to very carefully look at the agreement and how it could proceed if it would decide that," said Winfield.

The House of Representatives is scheduled to vote on American legislation for the North American free-trade agreement on Wednesday and Presi-

dent Bill Clinton has made it clear he's worried about losing the deal.

Tom d'Aquino, president of the Business Council on National Issues, has been among those telling Trade Minister Roy MacLaren that free-trade with Mexico shouldn't be scuttled by the actions of the Congress.

The council represents 150 of Canada's largest corporations.

Canada initially joined talks on North American free-trade to prevent Mexico from gaining any better deals with the United States. But increasing business leaders have seen the fast-maturing Mexican economy as a promising market.

"Tom d'Aquino and others from the private sector have, indeed, I think counselled Roy MacLaren and the government that this step should be considered, if not taken," Winfield said in a telephone interview from Mexico City.

Overdose killed actor Phoenix

LOS ANGELES (AP) — The image of River Phoenix as a quiet, clean-cut Hollywood actor shattered with autopsy results that revealed he died from a potent mix of cocaine and heroin.

Toxicological tests conducted on Phoenix showed extremely high levels of the drugs, coroner's spokesman Scott Carrier said Friday. Phoenix, 23, died outside a Sunset Boulevard nightclub on Oct. 31.

The tests on Phoenix also showed marijuana, the prescription sedative Valium, and an over-the-counter cold medication, Carrier said.

The test said morphine was found in Phoenix's blood. Carrier said heroin shows up as morphine as it is metabolized by the body.

Comedian John Belushi died 11 years ago from the same lethal mix. Unlike Belushi, who died in 1982, Phoenix did not inject heroin and cocaine in a mixture referred to as a "speedball."

"There were no needle marks," Carrier said. "Maybe it was ingested, maybe it was inhaled. How it was introduced into his body is unknown at this time."

The coroner's office ruled the death accidental.

Phoenix spokeswoman Susan Patricola said she hoped the overdose would send a message.

"Hopefully, it's a wake up call to the world," she said. "If any good can come from this death, it can come from saving someone's life."

Patricola said the actor's reputation as a clean-living vegetarian belied his drug use.

"It wasn't about clean living," she said about Phoenix's lifestyle. "It was about not killing animals, not eating or wearing anything that came from an animal. This doesn't even play into clean living."

The Sheriff's Department said Friday it had closed its investigation into Phoenix's death outside the Viper Room, a trendy West Hollywood music club co-owned by actor Johnny Depp.

Viper Room patrons said the actor had been weaving and acting strangely before he went into convulsions at the club and was led outside, where he collapsed on the sidewalk.



PHOENIX