

The Living Room Times

EXTRA

256th overall edition — Third special edition of 1995-1996 season

Thursday, October 5, 1995

THE JUICE IS LOOSE

Jury finds O.J. Simpson not guilty

Reuters News Service

In a remarkably swift conclusion to a trial that transfixed America for a year, the mostly black jury deliberated for less than four hours Monday before reaching the verdict, which the judge ordered kept secret overnight.

When it was announced, Simpson -- the most famous murder defendant in U.S. history -- smiled quietly with relief, patted his hand over his heart and hugged his lead attorney, Johnnie Cochran.

But shocked relatives of the two victims -- Nicole Brown Simpson and Ron Goldman -- broke into loud sobs when they realized the man they had repeatedly called the killer would be freed. They staggered and

(Continued on page 2)



Simpson not guilty of murder

(Continued from page 1)

clung to each other for support as they left the courtroom.

His voice trembling and eyes filled with tears, Goldman's father Fred told reporters it was the second "worst nightmare" of his life after the morning he learned of his son's murder. "Justice has not been served," he said.

In contrast Simpson's family, including his wheelchair-bound mother Eunice, wept tears of joy.

As the jury filed out of the courtroom, one of its members -- a 44-year-old black man -- smiled at Simpson and raised a clenched fist.

Outside the courthouse, hundreds of Simpson supporters celebrated wildly on the sidewalks.

But many Americans expressed shock that the jurors had ignored what prosecutors described as a "mountain of evidence" linking Simpson to the crime.

"This was money versus no money. If you have got enough money in this country, obviously you can hack up your wife," said Jewel Holt, 47, a white television producer.

District Attorney Gil Garcetti told reporters his office considered the case closed.

Simpson had pleaded not guilty to murdering Nicole Brown Simpson, 35, and Goldman, 25, who were stabbed and slashed to death on June 12, 1994, outside her Brentwood townhouse. He could have been sentenced to life in prison if convicted.

In a statement read by his son, Jason, Simpson said "my first obligation is to my young children who will be raised the way Nicole and I had always planned."

"But when things have settled a bit I will pursue as my primary goal in life the killer or killers who slaughtered Nicole and Mr. Goldman. They are out there somewhere. Whatever it takes to identify them and bring them in, I'll provide somehow."

Returning home in a white van, Simpson was greeted at the door of his mansion by longtime friend and former football teammate Al Cowlings, who drove the Hall of Fame running back down the freeway on June 17, 1994, in a dramatic police chase.

Simpson -- who glided smoothly from football stardom to a second career as a sportscaster, actor and advertising pitchman -- is reportedly set to earn millions with a pay-per-view TV interview.

(Continued on page 3)



America stopped for a few minutes to watch verdict Millions watched on TV as Simpson's fate was decided

Associated Press

It was as if an entire nation was holding its breath and, in an instant, let it go in a sigh, a gasp, a whoop and a curse.

"Oh my God!" shouted a factory worker in Toledo, Ohio. "Yes!" exclaimed an airport worker in Chicago. "I just can't believe this!" said a YMCA staffer in Concord, N.H.

Fifteen months after the slow-motion chase of a white Ford Bronco stopped Americans in their collective tracks, a national obsession came full circle Tuesday when a Los Angeles jury pronounced O.J. Simpson innocent.

Once again, people stopped what they were doing. Once again, they turned to television or radio. And once again, what they saw and heard seemed almost too much to believe.

"Wild, absolutely wild," declared Mike Bailey, a clerk at the federal courthouse in Oklahoma City, who listened to the verdict read over the radio. He had been left alone to guard the courthouse counter after other workers -- from clerks to judges -- streamed into a jury assembly room to watch the verdict on

(Continued on page 3)



Millions watched Simpson verdict Reaction varied widely

(Continued from page 2)
television.

Few events have so held the nation in thrall as the Simpson trial, and few events have brought the country to such a standstill -- if only for a few minutes -- as the reading of the verdict.

The normally tumultuous trading floors of Chicago's giant commodity exchanges grew still as traders turned to TV and newswire screens. At Hill & Barlow, a prestigious law firm in Boston's financial district, more than 120 people -- nearly half the firm's employees -- filled a lunch room to watch.

Offices in New York's Rockefeller Center emptied as hundreds of people gathered in the street outside NBC's "Today" show studio to watch the news on 10 large outdoor monitors.

At a pizza restaurant in Springfield, Mo., a hospital in Grants Pass, Ore., a state office building in Albany, N.Y., a high school in Albuquerque, N.M. -- in short, almost everywhere -- ordinary business stopped while people watched the verdict.

Even politics took a breather. Sen. Sam Nunn of Georgia had scheduled a news conference to announce whether he would seek re-election next year. He postponed it so as not to compete with Simpson.

(Continued on page 4)

The verdict: Not guilty

(Continued from page 2)

Legal analysts said Simpson's legal "dream team" prevailed with the jury -- made up of nine blacks, two whites and one Hispanic -- by playing the "race card" and by poking holes in the prosecution's mounds of physical evidence.

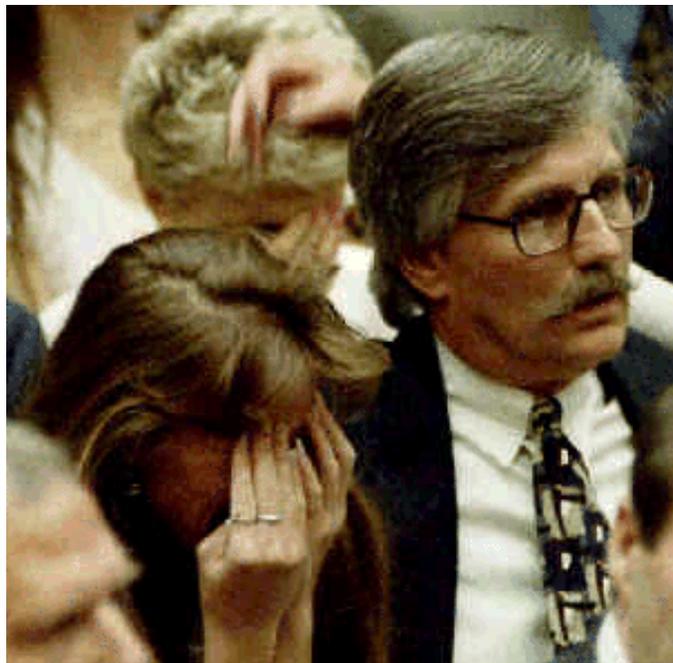
The defense painted Simpson as the innocent victim of police evidence-planting conspiracy lead by a racist rogue cop, now-retired Detective Mark Fuhrman, one of the prosecution's star witnesses.

Polls showed that whites mostly thought Simpson was guilty and blacks believed in his innocence, and legal analysts thought the jury would be split by the same racial divide, possibly even leading to a deadlock.

Most analysts had expected the panel to deliberate at least for several days, if not for several weeks. Instead, they took less than four hours before reaching a verdict.

It was the dramatic culmination of the most closely watched criminal trial in U.S. history, a case that has placed the justice system under the microscope, raised troubling questions about U.S. race relations and inspired more marketing spinoffs than a Disney movie.

(Continued on page 4)



Simpson jurors find reasonable doubt Acquit history's most famous murder suspect

(Continued from page 3)

As crowds gathered outside the downtown courthouse, the police department mobilized hundreds of extra officers in case of unrest. But the city remained calm.

Every major U.S. television network and a number of overseas stations cut into their regular programming for live broadcasts of the grand finale of the so-called "Trial of the Century."

Reaction mixed across America

(Continued from page 3)

It was too soon for television ratings to give an accurate picture of how many Americans were tuned in to the live network broadcasts from Los Angeles Superior Court.

There was this evidence, however: Between 1:05 p.m. and 1:10 p.m. EDT, the minutes leading up to the announcement of the verdict, AT&T, the nation's largest long-distance telephone carrier, reported a 58 percent drop in long-distance calls.

In the minutes ticking up to the verdict, the response was almost universal. People were mostly quiet, jittery. Some cracked jokes, seemingly to break the tension. "This is sooo agonizing," said one woman in New York.

At The Downtown Athletic Club in Baltimore, about 75 sweating people in gym clothes stopped their workouts and leaned forward silently to watch and listen.

After the verdict was read -- after the court clerk crisply pronounced Simpson innocent of the murders of his former wife Nicole Brown Simpson and her friend Ron Goldman -- the reactions varied from place to place, and from race to race.

Cheers outweighed any other response from the multiracial crowd outside the Los Angeles courthouse where Simpson was tried. The reaction was similar outside the NBC studio in New York, where the crowd was mostly white, young and dressed in conservative business attire.

"There WILL be a Naked Gun Part IV!" one young New Yorker yelled. The crowd laughed.

But elsewhere -- at a senior citizen's center in Concord, at a shopping mall in Toledo -- the response was mostly

(Continued on page 5)

At NHS, reaction to O.J. verdict mainly surprise Simpson case decision came in sixth period

"They let a murderer go free," stated Tim Stevens, shortly after watching the announcement of the Simpson verdict live on a television in Mrs. Norby's classroom during a sixth period class Wednesday.

Lisa Williams, who was in another class and didn't get to watch the announcement on television, found out at the beginning of seventh period what the jury's decision had been. Her reaction was similar to Tim's.

"I can't believe it!" she said. "He's so guilty!"

Those reactions reflect how many Newington High School students and teachers felt about the verdict in the "Trial of the Century."

"I was kind of disappointed, to tell you the truth," said Mrs. Perkins. "I thought that—and I still do—I think he's probably guilty, and I think that justice wasn't done. And I feel sorry for the families of his wife and that kid [Ronald Goldman] that got killed."

"I'm very surprised," said Mrs. Wood. "I really anticipated that he would be found guilty."

"I think that one sure message that has been given is that the jury simply did not believe the police department. Period," said Mr. Ruggerio. "And I think that the fallout from this will be that police will be less credible than they have been in the past. Period."

"I can't believe it," Ruggerio added.

"I think he's guilty and they just said innocent because they're tired of being in this jury. He's just guilty and they don't want it to turn into a racism thing," said Meg Slattery.

"I think he's guilty as anything," said an upperclassman identified only as 'Courtney.'

An unidentified upperclassman predicted that "Ron Goldman's father is gonna kill [O.J.]."

"I think if you have money, you can do anything," said another upperclassman.

Mrs. Deutsch said she was "very surprised" at the verdict.

School principal Paul Hoey was also "surprised." When asked whether he had thought Simpson was guilty, Mr. Hoey responded, "Well, I don't know. It just appeared that way, so it was hard to tell.

(Continued on page 5)

Hurricane Opal's 125 mph winds smash Florida

Hurricane Opal, a strong category four hurricane with sustained winds of 150 miles per hour early Wednesday morning, weakened to a strong category three storm with sustained winds of 125 mph by the time it made landfall Wednesday evening at about 6:00 PM.

Opal, the fifteenth tropic cyclone of the Atlantic hurricane season, made landfall east of Pensacola and west of Panama City on the Florida panhandle Wednesday evening after threatening much of the Gulf Coast all week.

Despite the fact that it weakened dramatically during the day Wednesday, former National Hurricane Center director Dr. Neil Frank predicted "that we'll see billions of dollars of damage" as the storm moves through the Florida panhandle.

(Continued on page 8)

NHS reaction to verdict: surprise

(Continued from page 4)

It seemed that there was a lot of evidence that pointed to him, but obviously the jury didn't think so."

"I thought he was guilty," stated Mike D'Amore.

"He should be in hell right now," said Mary Belizzi.

"They didn't convict a guilty man," commented Keith Druckenmiller.

"I think that Ron Goldman's father should have pulled out a gun and killed O.J.," Tina Lentini said emphatically.

"I think it sucks," Stacey Karalus added. "He's guilty."

"I don't like it! I think he's guilty, and he should have been [found] guilty, because he did it," Jen Persaud complained.

"This system is so screwed," Sean Vivier stated.

(Continued on page 6)

Americans' reactions split by race

(Continued from page 4)

limited to gasps of shock. In Omaha, Neb., the verdict was met with silence from a racially mixed crowd of about 60 at a Sears department store.

"I was stunned. I was sure he would be found guilty," said Air Force Tech. Sgt. Sherwyn Kilkenny, who is black and is based at nearby Offutt Air Force Base.

"I'm going to move to Australia," one white man said in disgust as he strode angrily toward the exit.

There were exceptions, to be sure, but most blacks seemed relieved and pleased by the verdict, while whites seemed far more divided. Some people argued that the verdict was a triumph of the justice system; others said it was a triumph of money and fame.

Almost everyone seemed surprised.

At the athletic club in Baltimore, some people gasped, others shook their heads, still others sat silently as if stunned.

"I was noticing everyone else," said Orrin Sharpless, 29, who works for an insurance company in Washington. "All the black people were smiling. All the whites had their mouths hanging open, like, 'I don't believe this.'"

Sharpless, who is black, said he was convinced Simpson was innocent. He organized his weight workout so he wouldn't miss the verdict.

"I wouldn't have been surprised if they found him

guilty, or lynched him," he said. "I would hate to see the ugliness if he was found guilty. I would have totally lost faith in the system."

Dennis Potts, 41, was playing basketball with nine other men until seconds before the verdict came in. They didn't stop the game, but the last point was scored just in time.

"Not to be cynical, but it used to be if you were rich and white you could buy justice," he said. "Now it seems if you're rich and black you can."

Whether they approved or not, most people embraced the verdict as the long-overdue conclusion to an exhausting case that has drawn comparisons to both soap opera and Greek tragedy.

In Raleigh, N.C., about 40 customers and employees of Circuit City, a home appliance store, gathered around a bank of television sets to watch the verdict come in. They let out a loud, collective gasp upon hearing "not guilty."

With some people shaking their heads, the silent crowd broke up and slowly left the store. One of them, 30-year-old Ray Mason, said he had followed the case since the beginning and could not miss seeing the verdict read.

"I left work to see this," he said. "This is the biggest thing in my lifetime. This is the biggest thing since man walked on the moon."

Across Newington, O.J. reaction mixed

(Continued from page 5)

"I believe that the outcome of the O.J. Simpson Trial is very unfair," said Lauren Correll. "I'm steamed."

"I'll respect the jury's decision, because I'm not part of the jury...and I was not part of the jury mentality," said Mr. Turner.

Having said that, he added, "My personal feeling was that he was involved with it. I did not think it was a Murder One. I thought maybe they'd [give him] Murder Two, or manslaughter...There's a big difference between planning something out and a crime of passion."

But Mr. Turner, known to many students as 'Taco,' said he'd respect the decision which was made "because I want to still believe in our jury system."

"My question is....'Okay, we have two people who are dead. They did not just die by the will of God, and they were not shot down by Martians. Who killed them?'"

There were some who went against the majority and said they were happy with the verdict.

"I thought he wasn't guilty, so I was right," Stacy Allen said.

"O.J. did not do it," claimed Mark Almeida.

One upperclassman, named Ian, implied that he thought Simpson committed the murders, but that he's glad the former football star is free anyway.

"I'm glad that he's out," Ian said, "because he won't do it again anyway, and he's a good football player."

And then there were those people who just don't care.

"I don't even want to talk about it," Mrs. Victor said.

"I really don't care," stated Dayna Madore.

After finding out what students and teachers at Newington High School thought, *Living Room Times* chief editor Brendan Loy walked over to Martin Kellogg Middle School to get a sampling of opinions from teachers and a few students there. Reaction was similar, with most people surprised and disappointed, but some happy and others indifferent.

Mrs. DuFault was quite vehement. "Need I say there is no justice here. He's guilty. I was very upset...I think everybody [felt] shock and disbelief. How could [they] say that he's not guilty?"

Mr. Robison expressed his own personal opinion by saying, "I was surprised. I was surprised. I thought the evidence was pretty clear that he had done it." But defending the nation's justice system, he added, "But in America, when the jury has spoken, that's the end of that."

"I still think he did it, but I think he's not guilty in terms of the law, and that's the way I'm leaving it."

"The justice system has sunk to an all-time low," Mr. Correll stated. "I think he's guilty as sin. But, you know, the jury didn't think so."

"It's too bad. He got away with it. But, he only got away with in this life. He's still going to have to answer for it in another life."

"So that's my saving grace: He will pay."

(Continued on page 9)

LATE SHOW TOP TEN

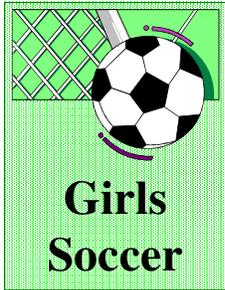
TOP TEN OTHER O.J. DEFENSE RHYMES

10. Please, please let O.J. go...
he just bought a place in Mexico
9. Even if you think he did
all this stuff... wasn't playing
for the Bills punishment enough?
8. O.J.'s too full of love...
to have dropped a bloody glove
7. DNA? Give me a break...
it's too small to see, for heaven's sake
6. The Bronco's idling right outside...
so acquit the man and let him ride!
5. Make the right decision and
stand tall... and you'll all go home
with an autographed football
4. If you must find
O.J. guilty of a crime...
try watching "Naked Gun 2"
sometime!
3. The real killer's a lady...
by the name of Mrs. Brady!
(Florence Henderson in audience;
stands up and leaves theater)
2. If the mood is right and
I feel a spark...I wouldn't
mind nailing Marcia Clark
1. Evidence, shmevidence

Thursday, September 28, 1995
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Girls' varsity soccer team wins again

Allows first goal in six games but remains undefeated



The Newington girls' varsity soccer team won its sixth game this season, defeating Maloney on Tuesday by a score of 6-1. It was the 199th varsity win in the history of girls' soccer at Newington High School.

With the win, the Newington team maintained their perfect 6-0-0 record. They lead the CCC

South division over second-place teams Southington (5-2-0) and New Britain (4-1-2). Maloney is in fourth place with a record of 4-2-1.

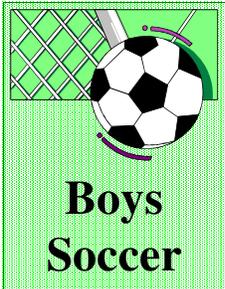
Ela Lapciuk scored three goals and had one assist. Dena Bacinskas, Emily Bartowski, and Kelly Ryder each scored one goal. Maloney goalie Jackie Pelosi had 16 saves.

Kaitlin Kisil scored once for Maloney, the first time Newington has allowed a goal to be scored against them all year. They have outscored opponents by a combined score of 28-1 in their six games. Sarah Reginio made 7 saves against Maloney, the most saves a Newington goalie has made this year.

In the Week Two coaches poll from The Hartford Courant, Newington was just a few votes short of the Top Ten. They finished thirteenth in total votes.

Boys' team streak continues with win

Varsity soccer has six straight wins since season-opening tie



The tenth-ranked Newington boys' varsity soccer team is trying its best to keep up with the girls' varsity team.

If only the boys could throw out their first game, they'd be equal with the girls. Since tying RHAM-Hebron 1-1 in their September 13 season opener, the boys' team has outscored their opponents 24-3 in

six consecutive victories. They have played one more game the girls, and have a record of 6-0-1.

The boys won again Tuesday, beating Maloney (0-5-1) by a score of 4-1. Enzo Faienza scored two goals in the game. James Kulesa and Justin Wengell each scored once.

Enzo Faienza has led the way for Newington all season. He has scored at least one goal in five of his team's seven games, and at least two goals in four games. He has a total of ten goals.

In Tuesday's game, Marc Cappa had 5 saves for Newington. Marc Lefort and Arnaldo Rivera combined for 12 saves on the Maloney side.

Josh Egan scored Maloney's goal.

Newington was ranked tenth in the Week Two coaches poll from the Hartford Courant. They lead the CCC South over New Britain (6-1-0) and Southington (4-1-2). Newington will play third-place Southington today at 7:00 PM.

Other NHS sports

Varsity football loses again; Volleyball team improving

The Newington varsity football Indians remained winless and in last place in the CCC South with a 20-0 loss to Bulkeley last Friday. The loss came in the Indians' first divisional game. They had lost two games previously to CCC West teams, falling 41-12 to Conard and 21-0 to Glastonbury. In total, they have been outscored 82-12 in their first three games.

As the football team continues its winless ways, the Newington varsity girls' volleyball team has been on the way up. After starting the season 1-3, they won three straight, beating New Britain 3-0 (15-1, 15-4, 15-12), Bulkeley 3-1 (9-15, 15-12, 15-10, 15-8), and East Hartford 3-0 (15-2, 15-5, 15-5). However, they suffered a setback on Tuesday with a 3-0 loss to Maloney (15-11, 15-4, 15-0).

The boys' cross country team finished eleventh in the Open race of the Greater Hartford Invitational meet on Saturday. Pat Solonia finished eleventh in the individual 3.1-mile run with a time of 17:23. The top finish in that race was 16:15 by Ryan Eckel of Simsbury.

The girls' cross country team finished seventh in the same meet, and Daniella O'Hara finished twentieth in the individual scores for the 2.7-mile run with a 20:13 time, compared to Simsbury's Meghan Callahan's winning time of 18:06.

The field hockey team is in second place in their division, the CCC West. They finished in a scoreless tie with Conard on Tuesday. First-place Simsbury has a record of 5-0-0, all conference games; Newington is 3-2-1, with a conference record of 3-1-1.

Hurricane Opal steamrolls Florida

(Continued from page 5)

A wind gust of 144 mph was reported at a weather station four miles west of Fort Walton Beach early Wednesday evening.

The *CBS Evening News* had anchorman Dan Rather reporting live from Panama City. The timing couldn't have been better for a dramatic newscast, as the storm was making landfall just as the news was going on the air.

Rather's report was interrupted several times by satellite malfunctions due to the storm. His words were often drowned out by the howling winds, and ocean water sprayed onto the beach from which he reported.

"The hurricane has been hitting full-force right here into Panama City Beach, and the area just to the east and to the west," Rather reported, speaking slowly and loudly so he could be heard over the incredible wind.

"It's been hitting full-force for long, long minutes now," he continued, all the while holding on to some kind of metal post so he wouldn't be blown away. "And you can feel the wind picking up, still picking up as it comes."

"Remember that hurricanes turn in a counter-clockwise direction," he shouted. "And we're on upside of the hurricane, which is the worst side of the hurricane. The winds don't get much worse than it is right here. The eye has hit Pensacola, Florida, which is, as you know, to the west of here."

At that point, the satellite signal was cut off. A few seconds later, it came back, and Rather continued, "The sea behind us is reaking almost unimaginable havoc with everything up and down the beach. These winds just keep increasing! They just keep coming! About an hour ago, they were estimate to be gusting..."

And again, the signal was cut off, this time for good.

Preparations and evacuations in Florida didn't begin until Wednesday mornign, perhaps partially because Floridians, like everyone else, were too busy on Tuesday watching the O.J. Simpsion verdict to pay attention to the storm, then just a minor hurricane in the southwest Gulf of Mexico.

Overnight, Opal strengthened from a category one



Above: Dan Rather, anchorman of the CBS Evening News, reports live from Panama City, Florida as Opal makes landfall a few miles to his east. Rather, whose reports were often drowned out by howling winds, and several times completely cut off by satellite problems related to the storm, said, "The wind doesn't get much worse than it is right here....These winds just keep increasing! They just keep coming!"

NHS, Kellogg students and teachers react to verdict in O.J. Simpson trial

(Continued from page 6)

“Well, I’m surprised and not surprised,” Mr. Spitzer said. “I mean, I don’t know. I didn’t know what they would do, so I guess I should just expect what they did.”

Student council advisor Mrs. Siano and student council officer Kristin Vasil both said that Simpson “should have been fried.”

Sara Dylan, also a student council officer, disagreed, saying that “He was innocent.”

“I don’t have an opinion,” said Mrs. Kopcha.

Mrs. DesRosier’s statement may have the most surprising of all. She said, referring to the whole trial, “I read the paper the very first day this happened, about a year ago. I have never watched it on TV; I have never read an article in the paper since then; I have absolutely no interest in it, and I don’t know why anybody wastes their time on it.”