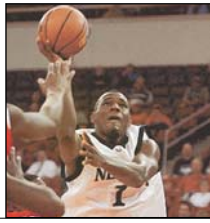


Wolf Pack advances

Defense strangles SMU as Nevada moves to WAC semifinals, 1B



RGJ

Reality TV comes to Nevada

Filmed on a ranch near Elko, dating show tests one woman's "gaydar," 1E

RENO GAZETTE-JOURNAL

FRIDAY, MARCH 12, 2004

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50 CENTS May be higher outside metro area

California high court halts gay weddings

Justices to hear arguments later: Massachusetts ban gets initial OK.

By David Kravets
ASSOCIATED PRESS

SAN FRANCISCO — The California Supreme Court ordered an immediate halt to same-sex wed-

dings in San Francisco on Thursday as Massachusetts lawmakers gave preliminary approval to a constitutional amendment to ban gay marriages in the only state where they have been

ruled legal.

Teary-eyed couples were quickly turned away at San Francisco's City Hall, where 4,161 gay couples have tied the knot in the past month. "We were filling out the application and they told us to stop," said Art Adams, who was the first to be denied as he and partner Devin Baker sought a license. "It's

heartbreaking. I don't understand why two people in love should be prevented from expressing it."

The high court moved to block any more marriages, at least for now, until they decide whether San Francisco Mayor Gavin Newsom had the power to authorize such unions. The court said it would hear arguments in

May or June on whether Newsom had that authority.

On the other side of the country, Massachusetts legislators returned to the Capitol to consider a constitutional amendment that would strip gay couples of their court-granted right to marriage but allow civil unions.

The amendment won approval during three prelimi-

nary votes, before the Legislature recessed just before midnight Thursday. Lawmakers planned to return March 29 to resume deliberations.

Massachusetts took center stage in the national debate over gay marriage following a landmark decision by its highest court in November that was reaf-

firmed last month. The rulings set the stage for the nation's first legally sanctioned gay marriages on May 17.

Lawmakers seeking to put a gay marriage ban before Massachusetts voters were unsuccessful during a joint House-Senate session last month.

See **GAY WEDDINGS** on 4A

Spain reels after blasts

Rush-hour bombings kill 198, injure more than 1,400



Peter Dejong/Associated Press

DISASTER: Rescuers work around the destroyed train at Atocha station in Madrid after several blasts rocked railway stations in the city Thursday, just three days before Spain's general elections. The blasts killed 198 rush-hour commuters and wounded 1,421.

Suspects include separatists, group linked to al-Qaida

By Mar Roman
ASSOCIATED PRESS

MADRID, Spain — A series of bombs hidden in backpacks exploded in quick succession Thursday, blowing apart four commuter trains and killing at least 198 people and wounding more than 1,400. Spain at first blamed Basque separatists but a shadowy group claimed responsibility in the name of al-Qaida for the worst terrorist attack in Spanish history.

Panicked rush-hour commuters trampled on each other, abandoning their bags and shoes, after the first three bombs went off in one train in the Atocha station in the heart of Madrid. Seven other bombings followed on other trains.

Train cars were turned into twisted wrecks and platforms were strewn with corpses. Cell phones rang unanswered on the bodies of the dead as frantic relatives tried to call them.

"March 11, 2004, now holds its place in the history of infamy," Prime Minister Jose Maria Aznar said.

The bombings came three days ahead of Spain's general election on Sunday. A major campaign issue was how to deal with ETA, the Basque militant group that is seeking greater autonomy.

See **SPAIN** on 4A



J.L. Pino/EFE

INJURED: Medical personnel help an injured survivor after a bomb exploded Thursday in the railway station at El Pozo del Tio Raimundo, southeast of Madrid, during the morning rush hour. Ten explosions rocked trains in and around Madrid.

UNR scholar says attacks unlike past Basque terrorism

By Steve Timko
RENO GAZETTE-JOURNAL

Thursday's bombings in Madrid were uncharacteristic of others done by the Basque terrorist group ETA, says the director of the Center for Basque Studies at the University of Nevada, Reno.

ETA typically has targeted government officials, police or military, professor Joseba Zulaika said.

Even accidentally killing innocent bystanders produced public outrage against ETA, Zulaika said. In 1997, ETA kidnapped and executed the Spanish equivalent of a town council member and 6 million Spaniards took to the streets in protest, he said.

"They've never done a random kind of killing," Zulaika said. "Their public would not accept this."

In June 1987, ETA attacked a Barcelona supermarket and killed 21, but Zulaika said there were indications the group tried to warn people in advance of that.

See **BASQUE** on 4A

Conventions likely to draw large crowds

Democrat, Republican gatherings: Parties to meet Saturday in Reno.

By Anjeanette Damon
RENO GAZETTE-JOURNAL



Republican convention

Where: Harrah's Reno, Convention Center, 219 N. Center St.

When: Saturday at 10 a.m., Nondelegates must first attend the central committee meeting at 8 a.m.

Information: 851-2467.
Cost: \$30.

Democratic convention

Where: Atlantis, Second Floor Ballroom, 3800 S. Virginia St.

When: Saturday at 9 a.m.; registration starts at 7:30 a.m.
RSVP required: 348-8691.
Cost: \$40; students and senior citizens on a fixed income are admitted free.

RGJ.com poll

Do you plan to attend the Washoe County Democratic or Republican party political conventions this weekend? Tell us at RGJ.com/news.

publicans haven't had as much attention recently. But party spokesman Bob Larkin

See **CONVENTIONS** on 4A

President unleashes TV attacks on Kerry

By Judy Keen
USA TODAY

WASHINGTON — President Bush's re-election campaign began a broadcast critique of Massachusetts U.S. Sen. John Kerry by name on Thursday, an unusually rare tactic at this time in a presidential race.

New television ads claim Kerry wants to raise taxes and would weaken the war against terrorism.

"John Kerry: Wrong on taxes. Wrong on defense," says one ad. Kerry, it says, wanted to delay "defending America" until the United Nations approved. It also says Kerry wants to change the USA Patriot Act, which gives the government broad powers to investigate suspected terrorists. The ads are running in 18 states expected to be competitive in November.

INSIDE

Bush strategy: President defies critics and keeps Sept. 11, 2001, at the center of his campaign. **Details, 3A**

Kerry comments: Democrat says he won't apologize for calling his GOP critics "crooked, lying." **Details, 3A**

Kerry spokesman David Wade said Kerry repeatedly has said "we never need permission from the U.N. to go to war." Kerry's advisers said he wants to add privacy protections to the Patriot Act.

A second ad does not mention Kerry by name but says Americans face a choice between going forward "with confidence, resolve and hope" or the "dangerous illusion that terrorists are not plotting and outlaw regimes are no threat."

SPORTS

Prep baseball

The Reno Huskies open their season with an 8-0 win over the Galena Grizzlies. **Page 1B**

BUSINESS

Gaming win falls

Casinos in Washoe County experience a 9.3 percent slide in January. **Page 1D**

CALENDAR

One-man jam band

Musician's life of kicking around has turned into a full-fledged career. **Inside**

WEATHER



70° HIGH 34° LOW
Mostly sunny today and clear tonight. **Details, 8A**

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