

THE OKLAHOMAN

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C HOT TOPIC

Sooners rally past Nebraska

Oklahoma stayed alive in the Big 12 Tournament, rallying in the second half to beat Nebraska 63-59 in Dallas. **Page 1C**

A STATE

Youth, 15, to be tried as adult

LATEST NEWS: A Porter boy has been given "adult" status while he is on trial for murder.

BACKGROUND: He is charged in the stabbing death of a classmate.

WHAT'S NEXT: If convicted, he could be released by age 19.

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A NATION

Indecency bill clears House

LATEST NEWS: The maximum fine for broadcast would be increased to \$500,000.

BACKGROUND: The penalty is now \$27,500.

WHAT'S NEXT: The Senate will vote. **Page 9A**

California court halts gay unions

LATEST NEWS: The California Supreme Court stopped gay marriages in San Francisco.

BACKGROUND: The mayor has been issuing licenses since Feb. 12.

WHAT'S NEXT: The court will decide whether the mayor should have allowed the weddings.

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A WORLD

Former press aide accused of spying

LATEST NEWS: A former Capitol Hill worker is charged with conspiring to act as an Iraqi intelligence agent.

BACKGROUND: The indictment said she accepted pay for intelligence work from 1999 to 2002.

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B WEATHER

Cloudy
High: 59
Low: 40
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TODAY'S PRAYER

Lord, we are saddened by needless deaths. Protect us and teach us peace. Amen.

Five sections
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Encouraging settlements: Proposal limits attorneys' fees

House passes workers' comp bill

By Ryan McNeill, Capitol Bureau

A bill designed to encourage settlements and limit attorney involvement in workers' compensation cases passed the House on Thursday, sending to the Senate a bill supporters say will bring jobs to Oklahoma.

The vote was 95-1. "I live in a district with a lot of working families, and I thought it was a bad bill," said the lone opponent, Rep. Rebecca Hamilton, D-Oklahoma City.

It's the first workers' compensation reform bill advocated by Republicans

— who've used several news conferences to complain about what they considered a lack of interest by Democrats in the subject — to make it through either the House or Senate this session. A companion bill by Sen. Scott Pruitt, R-Broken Arrow, was not heard in the Senate this year.

Supporters have said the bill could save Oklahoma companies \$100 million.

The bill now goes to the Senate. The title was stricken from the bill, which ensures it will end up in a joint House-Senate conference committee.

"These things usually have more trou-

CAPITOL
Senate rejects junk food bill **Page 6A**

ble in the other chamber," said Rep. Ron Peterson, R-Broken Arrow, who authored the bill. "I urge the governor to show some leadership and make sure it gets a hearing in the Senate."

Senate President Pro Tempore Cal Hobson, D-Lexington, said he would

examine the bill.

"The House just passed it this morning, and so I can't say at this point what fate it will meet in the Senate," he said.

Peterson said House Bill 2619 prevents dueling doctors by giving preference to doctors treating the worker.

Settlements also would be encouraged by allowing attorney fees to be deducted only from the difference between an actual award and an employer settlement offer, Peterson said. He said attorneys will be less willing to take cases to trial.

Al-Qaida link examined in Madrid attack



ASSOCIATED PRESS

Spanish firefighters work Thursday outside a bomb-damaged passenger train in Madrid. Explosions ripped apart four commuter trains and killed at least 192 people. About 1,200 people were wounded.

More than 190 killed in series of backpack explosions on trains.

By Mar Roman
Associated Press Writer

MADRID, Spain — A series of bombs hidden in backpacks exploded in quick succession Thursday, blowing apart four commuter trains and killing at least 192 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

INSIDE

- President Bush expresses sympathy and solidarity.
- Oklahoma students studying in Spain believed to be safe

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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

See **SPAIN, Page 12A**

Two die in shoot-out; law officer wounded

Deputies were pursuing a man who was wanted on drug complaints.

By Chad Previch, Staff Writer

A Thursday afternoon shoot-out in southwest Oklahoma City between officers and a man wanted on felony drug complaints left two men dead and a sheriff's deputy injured.

Oklahoma County Sheriff's deputy Curtis Back, 42, was shot in the left ear.

He was treated and released from Integris Southwest Medical Center.

The names of the dead weren't released.

One of the men, who was killed by a law officer, was wanted on five illegal drug trafficking arrest warrants. He was a passenger in a pickup that officers were tailing, Oklahoma County Sheriff John Whetsel said.

Whetsel said the passenger realized he was being followed by undercover deputies and U.S. marshals for a half-mile when the pickup stopped.



BY PAUL B. SOUTHERLAND, THE OKLAHOMAN

An Oklahoma City police officer investigates a shooting near SW 44 and May Avenue on Thursday that killed two men and wounded an Oklahoma County sheriff's deputy. A school bus was nearby, but no children were hurt. The numbers mark where bullet casings fell.

The passenger shot and killed the pickup's driver about 3:45 p.m. at SW 44,

See **SHOOTING, Page 3A**

Jurors, alternates picked for Nichols' state trial

By Nolan Clay, Staff Writer

McALESTER — Terry Nichols ended up Thursday with 12 jurors and six alternates who say they know few details about the Oklahoma City bombing.

Jurors will return at 9 a.m. March 22 to hear opening statements in the state murder case.

"Keep yourself healthy," Judge Steven Taylor said. "You are the most important people in this courtroom."

Jurors were instructed not to discuss the case with anyone and avoid news accounts during the long break. "You must totally isolate yourself," the judge said.

The final selection came on the trial's ninth day.

Prosecutors and defense at-

torneys took turns striking candidates from a pool of 42 candidates until only the 12 jurors and six alternates remained.

"They picked some people who are up there for the wrong reasons," one candidate, Julie Ward of McAlester, complained to reporters after she was excused.

She claimed some jurors said they plan to write books or hope to get famous from the trial. Her comments were a surprise because she had told the judge earlier she didn't know of anyone lying or having personal reasons to get on the jury.

The judge had moved the case to McAlester in hopes

See **NICHOLS, Page 2A**

Riverside says o-si-yo to basketball glory

By Jenni Carlson, Staff Writer

Perched above the State Fair Arena court, David Scott put on his headphones and adjusted his microphone. "O-si-yo," he said.

That was Scott's way of saying "hello" to radio listeners and welcoming them to a historic high school basketball game in Oklahoma. Sequoyah-Tahlequah and Riverside played in the opening round of the Class 3A tournament on Thursday, a first for the Native American boarding schools.

And folks in northeastern Oklahoma could tune in to KTLQ AM-1350 in Tah-

lequah and hear Scott's call of this modern game in an ancient tongue. With airtime purchased by the Cherokee Nation, which operates Sequoyah, Scott called the game in Cherokee.

Difficult to imagine there was anyone out there listening.

Who wasn't at State Fair Arena for Riverside's 58-51 upset of top-ranked Sequoyah?

Fans started arriving before 3 p.m. The crowd was so big officials from the Oklahoma Secondary School Activities Association opened the arena

See **GAME, Page 3A**



BY JIM BECKEL, THE OKLAHOMAN

Nashoba Simmons cheers for Riverside against Sequoyah-Tahlequah during the Class 3A state high school basketball tournament at State Fair Arena on Thursday.

total coverage
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Kingfisher fans find comfort in basketball **Page 5C**

Class 6A, 5A, 4A, 3A and 2A action **Pages 5C-10C**

Watch NEWS 9
Reports from the state tournament at 6 and 10 p.m.

Online at NewsOK.com
Updated scoreboards

