



Top Stories

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Wikinews interviews Mike Lebowitz, Chairman of The Modern Whig Party

In the United States, there are two major political parties; the Republican and the Democratic.

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However, there are several other minor - commonly referred to as "third" - parties. One of these is the Modern Whig Party, which has been steadily increasing in popularity over recent months. Last week, Wikinews reporter Joseph Ford was able to speak with MWP Chairman Mike Lebowitz about how his party was formed, what it stands for, and why you should consider joining.

Chinese restaurant closed in Toronto after rat photos published

Canadian authorities report that a Chinese restaurant in the Chinatown area of Toronto has been closed down by the Board of Public Health for the second time yesterday after investigators saw a video and pictures of a rat in the window.

Wikipedia Current Events

The Prime Minister of Australia Kevin Rudd announces that the Government of Australia will guarantee all deposits in all Australian banks for three years as a result of the subprime mortgage crisis.

- New Zealand and the United Arab Emirates will also guarantee all bank deposits in their banks.
- Alphonsa Muttathupadathu, a nun from Kerala, becomes India's first female saint in the Roman Catholic Church.

Florida officials investigating controversial MMA fight

Boxing regulators in the state of Florida have started a preliminary investigation into allegations of corruption and fight fixing after mixed martial arts fighter Seth Petruzelli defeated Kevin "Kimbo Slice" Ferguson in the main event of the EliteXC: Heat on Saturday, October 4, 2008.

Petruzelli, who was scheduled to fight Aaron Rosa on an untelevised undercard match, was approached by EliteXC officials to take on Ferguson, who fights under the nickname Kimbo Slice. Slice's announced opponent, legendary mixed martial arts and professional wrestling veteran Ken Shamrock, was declared medically ineligible to fight after injuring himself during a Saturday morning workout session, requiring stitches to be applied to a cut over his eye. News of the injury and substitution was not made until after CBS Sports started broadcasting the show.

"Press reports that EliteXC suggested or paid money to heavyweight fighter Seth Petruzelli to keep his fight against Kimbo Slice off the ground are false. Let me be perfectly clear with no ambiguity - that did not happen." —Jeremy Lappin, EliteXC

The show had been heavily promoted over the last two months on Shamrock's reputation and the credibility of his name, along with the media buzz around Kimbo Slice. CBS Sports was

expecting to cash in with a huge ratings success after securing a record-setting 4.85 million viewers on their inaugural broadcast of EliteXC, the highest ratings ever for a MMA broadcast. Fourteen seconds into the main event, however, Petruzelli scored and upset win over Slice. Petruzelli hit Slice with a right cross to Slice's jaw that sent the phenom staggering backwards. Petruzelli moved in, as Slice was not defending himself, and finished off his opponent with a flurry of punches. The referee stopped the fight a few seconds later.

The controversy started the next morning after Petruzelli was interviewed on the "Monster in the Morning" radio show on WTKS-FM 104.1 in Orlando, FL and simulcast on XM Satellite channel 152. In the 18-minute interview, Petruzelli made the statement, "The promoters kind of hinted to me and they gave me the money to stand and trade with him. They didn't want me to take him down, let's just put it that way. It was worth my while to try to stand up and punch with him."

It was inferred through this statement that an EliteXC official approached Petruzelli and attempted to influence the outcome of the fight. Slice, whose fight strategy is largely based on punching power, had been training to face Shamrock, another noted strike artist. Petruzelli, on the other hand, has a noted reputation of being a ground specialist, scoring wins by submissions. Critics during the fight noted that if Petruzelli could force Slice to the mat that it would be a humiliating upset, but if Slice could maintain control through his striking it would be an easy win.

With the statement from Petruzelli

about being paid to stand up and fight on Slice's skill level, allegations of tampering with the fight began to arise within hours. EliteXC's Jeremy Lappin, Director of Fight Operations, responded to MMA Weekly's inquiries, saying "Press reports that EliteXC suggested or paid money to heavyweight fighter Seth Petruzelli to keep his fight against Kimbo Slice off the ground are false. Let me be perfectly clear with no ambiguity – that did not happen." Lappin stated that they offered him a "Knockout of the Night" bonus if he could score a win by KO. Bonuses such as "Knockout of the Night", "Submission of the Night" and "Match of the Night" are often offered to fighters who can deliver entertaining and crowd-pleasing performances. Lappin also stated, "Elite XC organizes and promotes fights. We have not, do not, and will not suggest or dictate fighters' strategies or tactics. How the fighters perform in the cage is at the sole discretion of the athletes involved."

Petruzelli also started making immediate amends the next day, blaming himself for misrepresenting his intentions. In a blitz of media interviews in an effort to retract his statement, he said, "Honestly, when I woke up in the morning my words were jumbled and obviously my head was in a daze from drinking (laughs) the entire night. Reading the transcript, I actually now feel I worded it perfectly in what I wanted to say. I wanted to keep the fight standing and they offered a knockout bonus and I wanted to get the knockout bonus."

Florida officials from the Department of Business and Professional Regulation (DBPR) did not appear to be interested in

performing an investigation. In an interview with MMAWeekly.com, DBPR press secretary Alexis Antonacci said, "Our interpretation is that the comments made were in reference to the promoter asking [Petruzelli] to join a fight that he wasn't originally scheduled for. We don't believe any wrongdoing occurred." The DBPR regulates all business and professional licenses in the state, including promotion of sports such as boxing, professional wrestling and mixed martial arts.

After being hounded by the media and fight critics all week long, the DPBR announced on Thursday that they would start a preliminary investigation. Communications director Jennifer Meale made a statement to the press. "While the Department of Business and Professional Regulation doesn't have any reason to believe there was a problem with the Slice-Petruzelli fight, given the interest in it, the Department has begun a preliminary investigation to thoroughly review the circumstances of the fight."

Pro Elite, Inc, the parent company of EliteXC, has struggled over the last year. The company is over \$50 million in debt, with \$24.4 million of that debt accrued in the first half of 2008. Trailing behind industry leader Ultimate Fighting Championship (UFC), EliteXC has rallied behind Kimbo Slice to drive up ratings on their specials with CBS Sports and Showtime Networks, attendance at live events and other merchandise sales. The October 4 broadcast drew in 4.56 million viewers, making it the third most-watched viewed event in MMA history to go along with it's record-setting May 31 debut of 4.85 million viewers. Both events featured Kimbo Slice in the main event.

The corruption issue could go deeper than just fixing a fight for the company's star fighter. Further fueling the allegations are the actions of EliteXC's president, Jared Shaw. Immediately after the fight was stopped, Shaw rushed to the side of the cage and yelled to the referee that Slice was hit illegally.

"He spent a lot of money to build up Kimbo," Seth Petruzelli said. "If I saw one of my guys I spent millions on getting his face pounded I'd get upset also." Shaw later apologized for his actions, calling them improper.

EliteXC's Lappin told ESPN, "We were not trying to protect Kimbo. He had been training to fight a guy in Shamrock who has a better ground game than Seth. If we were trying to protect Kimbo we would have sent him home. We put him in a dangerous fight." Frank Shamrock, MMA color analyst for CBS Sports, and brother of Ken Shamrock, feels that EliteXC is looking out for Slice's best interests. "As for Pro Elite, are they looking after their baby? I hope so. Are they conspiring to ensure he wins? I don't think so."

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The move was announced yesterday in The Herald, a newspaper run by Zanu-PF, and was criticized heavily from the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC), which is led by Morgan Tsvangirai.

"The MDC dismisses the Zanu PF's unilaterally gazetted wish list of ministries, which is a betrayal of the wishes, expectations and aspirations of the majority of Zimbabweans," said the MDC in a press release. "The Herald-published list of ministries is a product of unilateral, contemptuous and outrageous machinations by Zanu PF. In fact, it is a giant act of madness which puts the whole deal into jeopardy. Zanu PF cannot nocturnally allocate ministries barely hours after the three principals agreed to disagree by referring the matter to the mediator after a logjam over all key ministries."

"Zanu PF's ploy is to pre-empt the visit of the mediator and any attempt by SADC to try and help Zimbabweans locate exit points to the current impasse," added the press release.

Fernando Alonso wins 2008 Japanese Grand Prix

Renault driver Fernando Alonso won the FIA 2008 Formula One Fuji Television Japanese Grand Prix on the Fuji Speedway at Oyama, Sunto District, Shizuoka, Japan.

This became the second in a row victory for the Spaniard since the previously won Singapore Grand Prix.

Although Alonso started only fourth, after two McLaren-Mercedes drivers, Lewis Hamilton and Heikki Kovalainen with Kimi Räikkönen's Ferrari third on the grid, he raced second behind

Robert Kubica from BMW Sauber after the leaders missed the first corner.

The first shortened pit stop and the following sprint of Alonso allowed him to make a comfort gap in front of Kubica, who finished second.

Alonso's teammate, Nelson Piquet Jr. also performed well, finishing fourth from the 12th place on the starting grid. The Renault rookie driver even tried to push on Kimi's third on the dying laps of the race.

Jarno Trulli gained two positionz from the starting place for Toyota finishing fifth, while his teammate Timo Glock retired from the race after 6 laps.

Both Scuderia Toro Rosso drivers, Bourdais and Vettel, finished higher on 6th and 7th place.

Felipe Massa was penalized by a drive-through penalty for causing a collision with Hamilton. Still he was able to run up and overtake Mark Webber's Red Bull. His Ferrari finally closed the top eight. He was promoted to 7th after Bourdais was given a 25-second penalty for colliding with Massa.

In the Drivers's standings, Lewis Hamilton retains his lead losing two points to Felipe Massa and is five points ahead of him. Robert Kubica came much closer to Lewis, now only 12 points behind. Alonso is on a distant 7th in the provisional standings. Earlier Alonso said that he "remained realistic as it will be difficult to race the Ferraris and McLarens, but we will give our maximum to score as many points as possible because the fight for fourth in the Championship remains very close." Ferrari is now seven points ahead of McLaren and fourteen over BMW

Sauber in the Constructors' Championship.

Bush deploys military in the US for active duty as federal response force

US President Bush deployed the 3rd Infantry Division's 1st Brigade Combat Team to a new role on United States soil last Wednesday, training for dealing with national crises. Critics claim that act of the Executive Branch violates the Posse Comitatus Act, which prohibits military participation in domestic matters.

In 2007, the John Warner National Defense Authorization Act was introduced; it overturned the Posse Comitatus Act by allowing the Commander in Chief to suppress 'insurrection' and 'restore order'. When it was repealed in 2008, Bush stated that he did not respect the later repeal.

The combat team, renamed CCMRF, has been assigned for year-long duty and training at Fort Stewart to prepare them for "civil unrest and crowd control or to deal with potentially horrific scenarios" such as security or natural disasters. After a year, a new unit will take its place.

CCMRF will be under the control of the Northern Command, and now has the same legal authority as a unit deployed to Iraq under the direct control of the Executive Branch. The unit will have use of engineer and medical units, the Marine Corps Chemical, Biological Initial Reaction Force, and a Navy weather team, as well as members of the Defense Logistics Agency and the Defense Threat Reduction Agency. A spokeswoman for Northern Command added that both wheeled and tank vehicles would be available for the CCMRF.

In July the unit was assigned a new commander, Col. Roger Cloutier. "If we go in," he said proudly of the deployment, "we're going in to help American citizens on American soil". CCMRF will be training in both traffic and riot control equipment, and will be the first to use the Army's new nonlethal package, which is intended for war-zone and not domestic use.

The action has raised concerns for some citizens like journalist Naomi Wolf, an author critical of the Bush administration, who referred to the deployment as a 'coup' in a well-circulated viral video and issued Americans a call to action.

NorthCom is a joint command established post-9/11 to provide command and control for federal homeland defense efforts and coordinate defense support of civil authorities. When Hurricane Katrina damaged Mississippi and Louisiana, several active-duty units were pulled from various posts and mobilized to those areas, but were not assigned to Northcom, but instead individual commands under provisional authorities.

Military officials have not yet responded to a request for comment.

Today in History

54 – Claudius was fatally poisoned by his wife Agrippina the Younger, making her 16-year-old son Nero the next Roman Emperor.

1307 – Agents of King Philip IV of France launched a dawn raid, simultaneously arresting many members of the Knights Templar, and subsequently torturing them into "admitting" heresy.

1773 – French astronomer Charles Messier discovered the Whirlpool Galaxy, an interacting, grand-

design spiral galaxy located at a distance of approximately 23 million light-years in the constellation Canes Venatici.

1843 – The Independent Order of B'nai B'rith, the oldest continually operating Jewish service organization in the world, was founded in New York City.

1972 – Uruguayan Air Force Flight 571 crashed into a remote area in the Andes mountains near the border of Chile and Argentina; the last of 16 survivors were not rescued until December 23.

October 13 is Sukkot begins at sunset (Judaism, 2008); Columbus Day in the United States (2008); Health and Sports Day in Japan (2008); Thanksgiving in Canada (2008)

Quote of the Day

I think it's a disgrace for the international community that we have allowed so many conflicts to become frozen, and we are not making a serious effort to solve them. ~ Martti Ahtisaari

Word of the Day

foist v

1. To introduce or insert surreptitiously or without warrant.
2. To force another to accept, especially by stealth or deceit.

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