

BY ANDY MARTINO, MICHAEL O'KEEFFE AND GARY MYERS

A red bandana day for Citi Field on Sept. 11



In keeping with their tradition of heartfelt ceremonies on Sept. 11, the Mets will recognize a man who lost his son in the terrorist attacks.

When **Jeff Crowther** takes the mound this Sept. 11, before the Mets' 7:10 game with Washington, his thoughts will turn to his son **Welles**, one of the unsung heroes of 9/11.

With his trademark red bandana strapped around his head, Welles was credited for saving at least a dozen lives at the World Trade Center. He lost his own life in the process.

"I know Welles will be looking down on me," says Crowther. "He was a great athlete, too. Baseball was his first sport and then he played hockey and lacrosse. I have been practicing because I certainly don't want to bounce (the pitch)."

Welles, who was 24 when he died, went to Boston College and worked as an equities trader in the South Tower.

"The other day I was walking in Manhattan and someone stopped me and said, 'Sir, are you the father of the man in the red bandana who saved all those lives?'" said the elder Crowther.

"They saw a story about it on TV. It's a great feeling when someone says something like that."

The Crowthers have started the Welles Remy Crowther Charitable Foundation to reach out to deserving young men and women.

"Someone said to me that we raised Welles good," said Jeff. "If you didn't do such a good job he might have walked away and thought of himself! That wasn't Welles' style though. He cared about people and always wanted to help. That's his legacy."

Minutes after the plane struck the South Tower, Welles called his mother and left a brief message saying he was okay. After hanging up the phone, he went about his business of saving lives.

AN ODE TO ASHE

Arthur Ashe was one of the greatest tennis players America has ever produced, but Tennis Channel CEO **Ken Solomon** says that is only part of the sports pioneer's story. That is why his network will broadcast the first television biography authorized by Ashe's widow, **Jeanne Moutoussamy-Ashe**, tonight at 11 p.m., following the network's U.S. Open coverage.

Ashe may be the only African-American man to have won the U.S. Open, Wimbledon and the Australian Open, but as "Signature Series: Arthur Ashe" demonstrates, his greatest legacy is not the Queens tennis stadium that bears his name, but work he did as a human rights activist. Ashe, like **Muhammad Ali** and **Jackie Robinson**, was one of those exceptionally rare athletes who transcended sports,

politics and international borders.

"This may be the most important piece we have ever produced," Solomon tells *The Score*. "He is our **Gandhi**, our **Mother Teresa**."

Ashe grew up in Richmond — the former capital of the Confederate States of America — and was unable to play in junior tournaments or even appear on the same court as a white opponent because of Virginia's Jim Crow laws. But he was able to rise above racial segregation to attend UCLA, where he won the NCAA singles title and led the Bruins to the collegiate tennis championship. In 1963, Ashe became the first black man to play for the U.S. Davis Cup team.

Ashe was one of tennis' most dominant figures throughout the 1960s and 1970s, but the documentary's high points come when it explores his political activism. He deeply believed children of all races and economic backgrounds deserved access to good schools, and he was a founding member of National Junior Tennis and Learning, a non-profit dedicated to helping underprivileged kids through tennis.

Ashe was also an outspoken critic of South Africa's Apartheid who was willing to risk his celebrity status — and his freedom — to protest that nation's institutionalized racism: He was arrested in 1985 during a protest outside Pretoria's Washington embassy. He was also arrested outside the White House in 1992 while protesting a Bush administration crackdown on Haitian refugees in the United States.

"When (future South African president) **Nelson Mandela** was freed from prison, one of the first things he did was visit Arthur Ashe in New York City," Solomon says.

Ashe showed compassion and grace even as he was dying. In 1992, he announced that he had gotten AIDS through a blood transfusion during heart surgery. He helped raise money for AIDS awareness and research with his Arthur Ashe Foundation for the Defeat of AIDS. He died in 1993 after suffering from AIDS-related pneumonia.

Solomon says he's not sure what Ashe would think about America in 2014, a nation that elected a black man to the White House twice but continues to suffer from racial wounds.

But he would have tried to bring healing to places like Ferguson, Mo., even if that meant putting himself in harm's way.

"The magic of Arthur Ashe is that he would have a way of dealing with this that we would not think of. He was not an agent for his race, he was an agent for humanity, and he would have sought to do the right thing and seek the truth."

POLLARD'S COUNTER PLAY

Titans safety **Bernard Pollard** is known as the destroyer of Patriots. When Pollard was with the Chiefs in 2007, **Tom Brady** suffered a season-ending torn ACL in the season opener on a hit by Pollard. When he was with the Texans in 2009, **Wes Welker** suffered a torn ACL making a cut before he was tackled by Pollard in the final game of the season. Welker then missed the playoffs. And when Pollard was with the Ravens in 2011, **Rob Gronkowski** suffered an ankle injury in the AFC title game on a hit by Pollard that limited him in the Super Bowl two weeks later against the Giants.

Pollard is a tough guy on the field, and he's also a smart guy off the field. He's an entrepreneur setting himself up for his life after football. He has a company "Style Pro 31," and Pollard came up with "Smart Tray," a portable and lightweight folding tray that fits over most sinks to create more counter space for toiletries.

"As you play this game, we as players understand that the windows close at some point. We can't play forever," Pollard said. "For me, I always have projects that I want to do. After I did a survey and after a lot of people are saying definitely (Smart Tray) will help, I'm the type of person where I want to create something that is going to create jobs across America and is going to benefit other people as far as solving a problem."

Maybe he should send a whole bunch of them to Brady and the Patriots.



Gratuitous photo of the week

What better way to celebrate **Mario Balotelli's** return to English Premier League (his transfer to Liverpool became official last week) than to give readers of *The Score* a view of his fiancée, 24-year-old model **Fanny Nguessa**. That will turn some heads at Anfield!
WireImage

