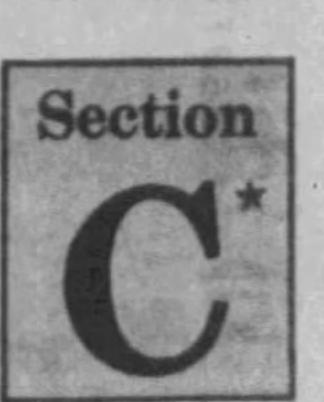
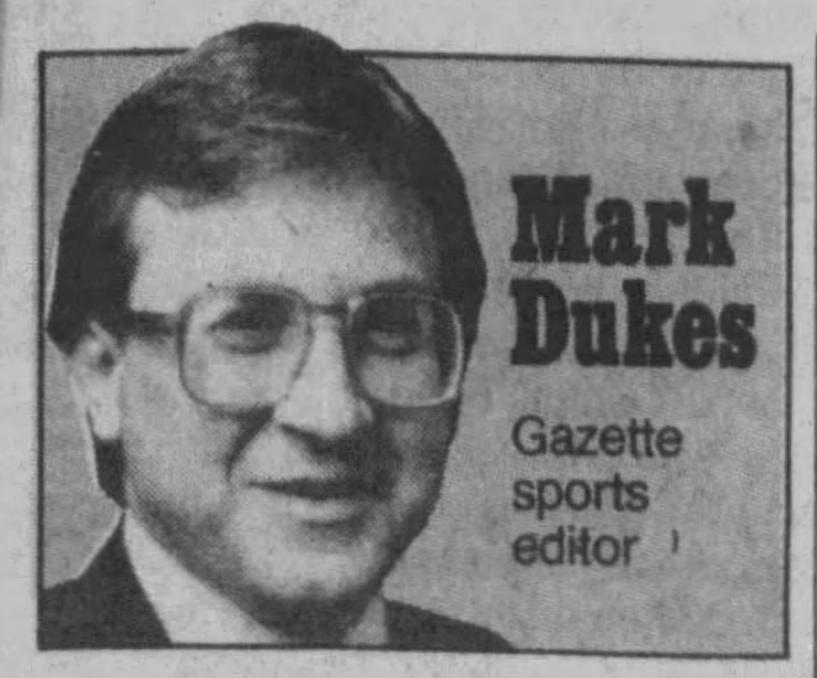
Financial





#### Cowboy rides a big streak

obin Ventura is college baseball's Joe DiMaggio, but he'd just as soon live the life of Joe Schmoe.

That's not possible, though. National record holders don't have the luxury of living in anonymity.

You know DiMaggio as the man who hit safely in 56 straight games for the Yankees in 1941. It is a record some regard as unbreakable.

50 consecutive games for Oklahoma State. Although he may never reach baseball's Hall of Fame or appear in coffee commercials, his accomplishment is no less significant.

Ventura extended the streak to half a hundred Sunday night in most dramatic fashion.

OSU was playing Oklahoma for the championship in the Big 8 tournament at Oklahoma City. After nine innings, the score was tied and Ventura's streak was in jeopardy. In five plate appearances, he had two ground outs, two fly outs and an intentional walk.

But in the 11th inning, OSU and Ventura came through. The Cowboys scored four runs - including a run-scoring single by Ventura and defeated OU, 9-6, to win their seventh straight league title.

In his final at-bat, Ventura met a 3-2 pitch and smacked it into right field. Even the enemy OU fans cheered for the modest, left-handed hitting third baseman.

"I would've rather not have gotten a hit and the team won in nine innings," Ventura said Monday by telephone. "A hitting streak takes a lot of luck, a lot of variables."

Indeed. Whether it's Little League or the major leagues, hitting streaks like Ventura's are unthinkable. Even after he broke the NCAA consecutive-game hitting streak of 47

games, the pressure and attention didn't subside. "Everybody keeps talking about it so it's hard not to think about," said Ventura, a sophomore. "Hitting streaks draw people to the park. The attention comes with the

territory." Ventura, like former OSU star Pete Incaviglia of the Texas Rangers, is a Californian who didn't impress the masses in high school. Incaviglia was a 10th-round pick of San Francisco after his senior season of high school; Ventura was

not drafted. In fact, few schools besides OSU and Cal-Santa Barbara wanted Ventura after his prep career in Santa

Maria. "He had a reputation of being a fine hitting prospect," Oklahoma State Coach Gary Ward said Monday. "The rap on him was that he was a non-runner. He didn't have the speed. But we were high on the kid's makeup and it wasn't a difficult decision to offer him a scholarship."

Ventura was voted college baseball's Freshman of the Year last season. He batted .469 and led the nation in RBI (96) and runs (107). During one stretch, he hit safely in 24 straight games.

This year, he has had hits in 58 of 61 games. In one of those three hitless games, he was intentionally walked in a pinch-hitting appearance. With a .431 batting average and 101 RBI, he is a strong candidate for Player of the Year.

Oklahoma State is a college to drive home that point.

"The expectations of people and of ourselves are so high that there's not much room for individual goals," Ward said. "We're not a number-oriented program. Our ultimate goal is to win the national championship and if we don't, we

have no business celebrating. "Robin has kept everything in perspective. I think his teammates worry more about the streak than he does. There are six television stations and three newspapers in this market and they cover us like a pro franchise. The streak has

changed things the last two weeks." Ward has a successful videotape on the market titled "The Hitting Machine." He deals more with levers, gears, acceleration and pressure points than keeping eyes on

the ball and shifting weight. Ward's instruction has helped many, including Ventura, who previously had difficulty hitting a ball

to right field. Now, with the ability to hit to any part of a park, Ventura has become one fine hitting machine.

# Culver to decide Harmon case

By David Lynch Gazette Washington reporter

WASHINGTON - Former Iowa Sen. John Culver will decide whether former University of Iowa running back Ronnie Harmon violated a contract with an agent who says he paid Harmon more than \$54,000 while the athlete was in college.

Culver, an attorney with the Washington law firm of Arent Fox, serves as an arbitrator for the National Football League Players Association (NFLPA).

A Culver aide said Monday the breach of contract grievance filed by agent Norby Walters against Harmon, now a member of the National Football League's Buffalo Bills, will be heard within the next few weeks. Culver's decision, according to NFLPA bylaws, will be final.

The NCAA is investigating the alleged pay-

ments to several college players, including those I in 1984. In addition, a federal grand jury in Chicago is looking into Walters' dealings.

The U of I released a report earlier this month acknowledging the payments but insisting no one on the staff knew of the payments and the school does not expect sanctions from either the Big Ten or NCAA.

THE SPECIAL THREE-MEMBER committee that prepared the report also recommended the U of I consider legal action against Walters for placing the school in jeopardy with the NCAA and the Big Ten.

Walters denies intimidating college athletes to sign with his organization, but he does not deny making payments to football and basketball players before their college eligibility expired.

"Part of being a businessman is making to Harmon that date to his junior year at the U of investments," he told an Atlanta newpaper in March. "If I were going to invest \$500,000 in a McDonald's franchise in downtown Atlanta, would anybody question my investment?"

> College athletes are permitted by the NCAA to consult with agents but they are forbidden from entering an agreement or accepting cash or discussing financial arrangements before their eligibility has expired.

> Culver, who was defeated by Republican Charles Grassley in the 1980 GOP landslide, was appointed an arbitrator by the NFLPA at the end of 1985. He has heard some 16 cases and handed down eight or nine decisions so far, an aide said.

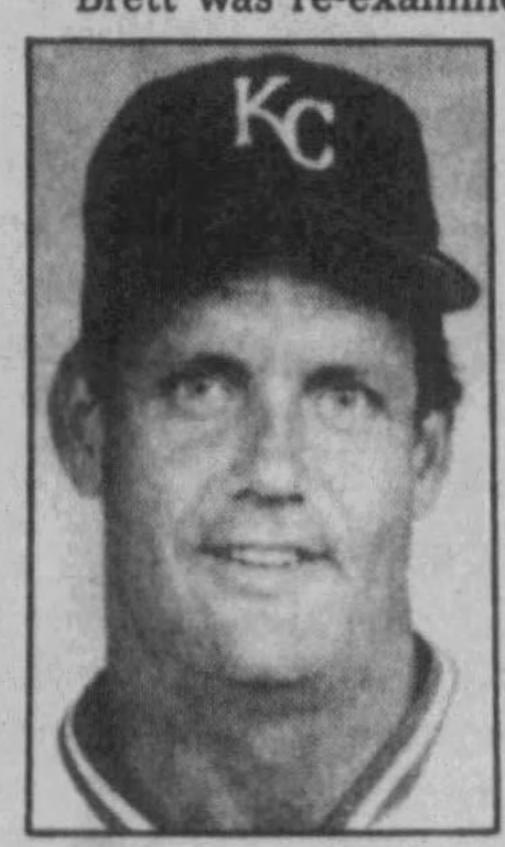
The hearing on Walters' breach of contract grievance will be private, but Culver's aide at Arent Fox said Culver's decision will be made



John Culver

### Royals say Brett Ventura has hit safely in a mere occurrence of Consecutive games for Oklahoma out for 4 weeks

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (AP) - Kansas City All-Star third baseman George Brett is expected to miss four weeks of the season because of his injured right knee but will not need surgery, the Royals said Monday. Brett was re-examined Monday by Dr. Steve Joyce,



George Brett

one of the Royals' team physicians, who confirmed that Brett had suffered a partial tear of the medial collateral ligament, club spokesman Dean Vogelaar said.

However, Joyce did not believe the injury was as serious as a similar injury to Brett's left knee at the start of the 1984 season that required arthroscopic surgery and forced him to be sidelined for

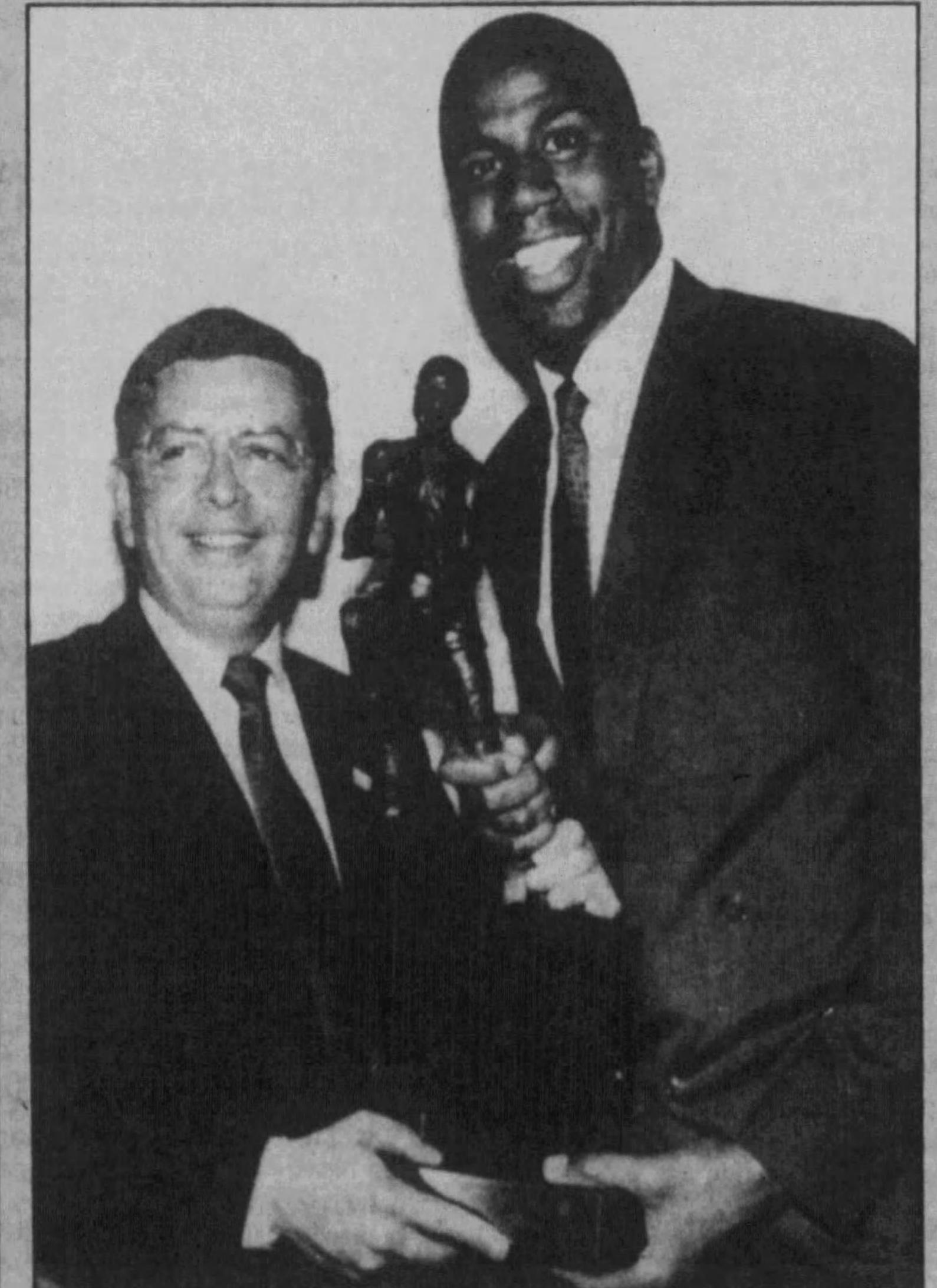
Brett's knee will be placed in a splint for two weeks, and he will begin rehabilitation exercises right away, Vogelaar said.

Brett injured the knee while making a throw to home plate in the ninth inning of Friday's game against Milwaukee and went on the disabled list Saturday for the second time this season.

He had been reactivated last Wednesday after missing 20 games with a rib injury suffered April 19 while swinging his bat in a game in New York.

The latest injury is the 15th the 11-time All-Star has suffered since 1977 that will cause him to miss eight or more games. Without him in those previous instances, the Royals, who currently are in first place in the AL West, are 118-129.

"He's not a clubhouse leader like Hal (McRae) seeking guys out," reliever Dan Quisenberry said of Brett. "He's more part of the chatter, but his real presence is in the lineup and on the field. As a player he's got big shoulders, and we all like to jump on his shoulders. We all like to lean on him.



Los Angeles Lakers guard Earvin "Magic" Johnson (right) breaks out in a grin Monday after being presented the league's Most Valuable Player award by NBA Commissioner David Stern.

# 'Magical' pick

NGLEWOOD, Calif. (AP) — Earvin "Magic" Johnson, asked by his coach to contribute more on offense before the season began, responded with his best-ever year and as a result was named Monday the NBA's Most Valuable Player.

Johnson, who averaged a career-high 23.9 points a game and led the league in assists for the fourth time in the last five years with a 12.2 average, received 65 first-place votes and a total of 733 points from the panel of media members.

Michael Jordan of Chicago, the NBA's leading scorer, had 10 first-place votes and 449 points to finish second. Larry Bird of Boston, the MVP the last three years, had one first-place vote and 271 points to place third.

The only other first-place votes went to Charles Barkley of Philadelphia, who finished sixth in the voting and Akeem Olajuwon of Houston, who was seventh.

The 6-foot-9 Johnson is the first guard to win the award in 23 years and only the third since the award was first made in 1956. The others were Boston's Bob Cousy in 1957 and Cincinnati's Oscar Robertson in 1964.

"This award I dedicate . . . it belongs to my father," Johnson said at a news conference at the Forum, where the Lakers will face Seattle in the second game of the Western Conference finals tonight. "I'm living for him, in a sense, playing in the NBA. I'm going to give this to him. I hope he'll be proud. I know he will.

"It's really nice. I don't know how to express my feelings . . . I feel really good. '

Johnson was the catalyst, with his points and assists combining for 48 points a game as the Lakers posted a 65-17 record, best in the NBA.



Sportscaster Harry Caray lets out a laugh as he reads a giant card signed by wellwishers and presented to him by an unidentified fan at a press conference Monday in Chicago. Caray returns to the microphone today after rehabilitation following a stroke.

### Holy cow! Harry's back Caray returns to booth after stroke

CHICAGO (AP) - Three months after a stroke robbed Harry Caray of the dulcet tones that provide his living, the voice of the Chicago Cubs is ready to climb back into the broadcast booth.

"To me, it's just going to be another day of going out to the ballpark," said Caray, whose return today coincides with the start of the Cubs' three-game series against the Cincinnati

"I haven't rehearsed a thing," he said during an hour-long news conference Monday, "except to remember to say, 'This is the Gene Michael Show,' when we do 'The Gene

Michael Show' before the game." If only everything were that simple.

Before the stroke left him bedridden in a Palm Springs, Calif., hospital, unable to control his right side and unable to speak, Caray never had missed an inning through a major league broadcasting career dating back more than 40 years.

He survived two divorces, one serious auto accident, and by his own admission, countless hangovers to keep that string intact. While the stroke snapped the consecutive-game mark, Caray said he wasn't about to let it drive him from the game.

Caray is between 67 and 72, and he shrugs off questions trying to refine the numbers further by saying, "I always answer that by saying how good I feel today." "I feel 35 today," he said.

HE HAS BEEN SOUGHT by presidents and Elvis Presley, worshipped by fans, and lionized by revelers for his legendary partying powers. The task of finding a replacement for Caray, while he underwent rehabilitation in Palm Springs, fell to WGN-TV sports editor Jack Rosenberg.

Given the width and breadth of Caray's mutual-admiration society, Rosenberg said finding celebrities to fill in on a game-bygame basis wasn't difficult.

The pinch-hitters ranged from the slick and professional CBS broadcaster Brent Musburger, who began his career in Chicago, to the wacky and wildly partisan comedian Bill Murray, a native of the area whose Cubs' roots are so deep he named his first-born son

• Please turn to page 2C: Caray

### Lowly Padres win are frowned upon. Ward does a lot to drive home that point.

NEW YORK (AP) - The San Diego Padres still have the poorest record in the major leagues but they made the New York Mets look like the worst team in baseball Monday

Dave Dravecky pitched three-hit ball for six innings and the Padres parlayed five stolen bases and four New York errors into a 7-5 victory over the world champion Mets.

"I hope the next 10 are easier than the first 10," rookie Manager Larry Bowa said with a grin after the Padres won their 10th game of the season against 30 losses. San Diego has a two-game winning streak for juts the third time all season.

The Mets, meanwhile, lost for the 18th time in 28 games and slipped within one game of last place in the National League East at 16-20. They are six games from the top.

"We were sloppy," Mets Manager Davey Johnson said. "Our defense is hurting, but we are not pitching up to capabilites. That's our biggest problem."

STANLEY JEFFERSON, acquired from the Mets for Kevin McReynolds in a seven-player trade during the winter, sparked the Padres with three hits, three stolen bases and two runs scored. Kevin Mitchell, also obtained in the deal, had two hits, drove home a run and scored another.

Despite the Mets' bad effort, they had a chance to win in the ninth inning when they scored two runs on a two-out error by third baseman Mitchell and then put runners at first and third with two out. That brought up McReynolds, but he popped to short on a 3-0 pitch from Lance McCullers, ending the game.

"I'd do it again," Johnson said of giving McReynolds the green light on 3-0 with Darryl Strawberry, who homered earlier, on deck. "But he wasn't very selective. He went after a bad pitch. I thought he'd know

## Benkusky sets Marion record

By Mike Koolbeck Gazette sportswriter

here is a world of difference between the words fore and four, but both are significant to Marion golfer Nancy Benkusky. Fore is a word of warning on a golf course. It is a

word other golfers may choose to use when Benkusky is around, although not for the inaccu-

Benkusky, a senior, was medalist at four golf meets last week. She shot an 86 last Monday at Twin Pines to win the Wamac Conference title and a 43 at Squaw Creek to claim Thursday's Metro Meet crown.

racy of her shots.

Benkusky also carded a school-record 39 Tuesday at Twin Pines and a 46 Friday at Jones.

West Liberty.

Nancy Benkusky The Indians finished

fourth at the Wamac meet and second in the Metro. "I didn't really believe it. That was probably the best I've played all year," said Benkusky, who finished a disappointing fifth for the second consecutive season at Monday's sectional meet at



The finish prevented her from advancing to regional and state competition. Only the top two finishers qualified.

BENKUSKY STARTED PLAYING golf at the age of seven with a set of clubs her father, Bruce, made

She didn't get serious about golf until about four years ago, when she finished third in a state junior

"I had a good time, but I choked as usual," said the self-effacing Benkusky. "The old mind got in the

Golf, as much as any sport, is a mentally grueling game. How does Benkusky cope?

"I try not to think about it," she said. "I try to relax and just play hole-by-hole."

Benkusky has averaged 43 strokes per nine holes

this spring. Her low round was 39, high 46. She has

been very consistent. · Please turn to page 2C; Prep