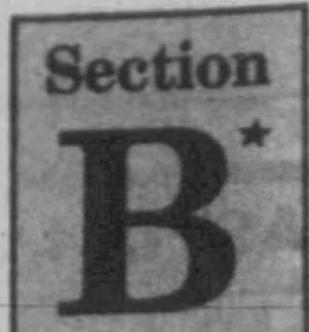
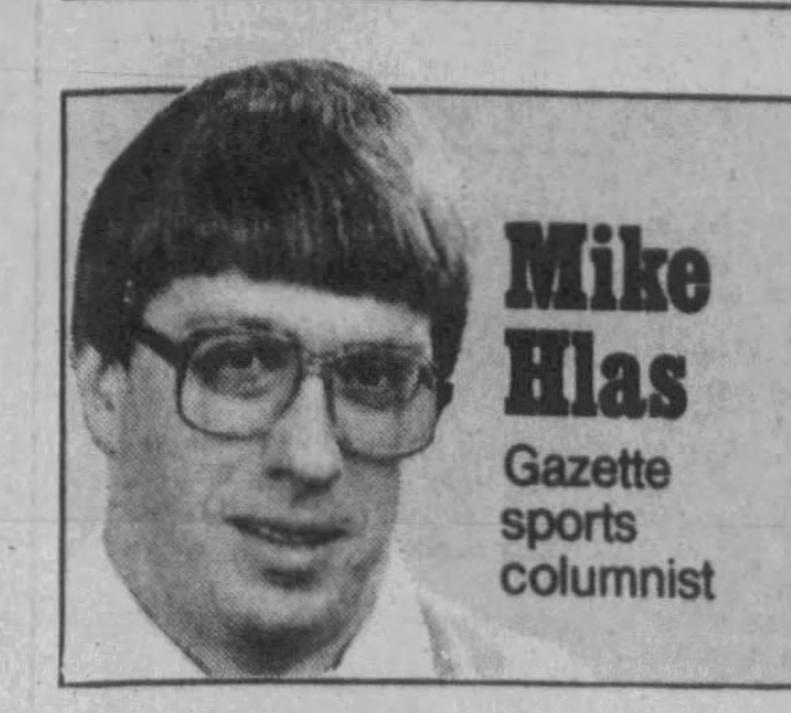
Comics

Weather





Soccer gets foot in door

e were told, 15 years ago or so, that soccer was going to be big in the United States. Very big.

The pro-soccer propaganda was rammed down our throats. Soccer will be the sport with American kids, we were told. Soccer would someday replace football in our hearts and minds. Soccer would be big in the United States. Very big.

As are most of "the next really big" things, soccer was a bust. Except for in pockets of the nation, soccer hardly became one of our national pastimes in the 1970s.

The North American Soccer League was born in the 1960s, but made its bid for attention the next decade when it lured some of the world's top players to our shores. By the 1980s, however, the New York Cosmos, Dallas Tornado, and my personal favorites, the Tampa Bay Rowdies, were gone.

The NASL is no more, and you don't see many people grieving. Not even in Tampa.

A funny thing has happened to soccer, however, on its way to the great American scrap heap. Kids have started playing the sport, this time minus the fanfare.

Now, you don't hear people hailing soccer as football's heir apparent. Even the once-hopeful know football is here to stay. But, soccer may be, too.

SOCCER HAS RECENTLY found its way into Iowa high schools. Although the sport isn't sanctioned by the state's high school athletic association, about 20 Iowa schools have boys' soccer teams, and about 15 have girls' squads.

In the Metro area, Jefferson, Kennedy and Washington have boys' and girls' soccer squads, and Linn-Mar has a boys' team. Ic City High and West have boys' teams, and the two schools have combined for a girls' team.

Suddenly, hundreds of area kids are playing on a prep soccer team. A few years ago, none were.

It's doubtful anyone believes soccer will be a big spectator sport for high schools. It didn't succeed as a pro sport in the U.S. because we don't really enjoy watching the game. It's like golf or bowling. It's more fun to do than view.

Not many observers were at the pitch near Kingston Stadium Thursday to watch Iowa City-West play Jefferson in a girls' contest. But, there were a lot of participants. Both squads had about 30 players.

"We had 15 girls out three years ago," Jefferson Coach Dick Briggs said. "We have about 35 this year. "It's a fun game to participate in,"

Briggs said. "I think everyone enjoys it here. I think that's similar at Washington and Kennedy."

AFTER ITS 6-0 WIN over the J-Hawks Thursday, Iowa City-West closed its season with a 12-0 mark. City and West combine for one girls' squad so there are enough players to field both varsity and junior varsity teams.

Margaret Beals coached City-West to its perfect record. Beals admits she has more experienced players than her Cedar Rapids colleagues.

"Iowa City has a very good youth soccer organization," Beals said. "As a result, I've gotten some very talented girls. I had five freshmen starting for the varsity. It seems like the caliber of players is better each year.

"I've seen a big improvement in the Cedar Rapids teams this year," Beals said, "but it seems like there's a two-year difference between them and us."

"Some of their girls started playing in the third grade," Briggs said. "Some of ours started playing in April.

"My team has just started to become competitive," said Briggs, who is also Jeff's head wrestling coach. "With more experience and our skill level getting better, it's more competitive. But our number one objective is to have fun."

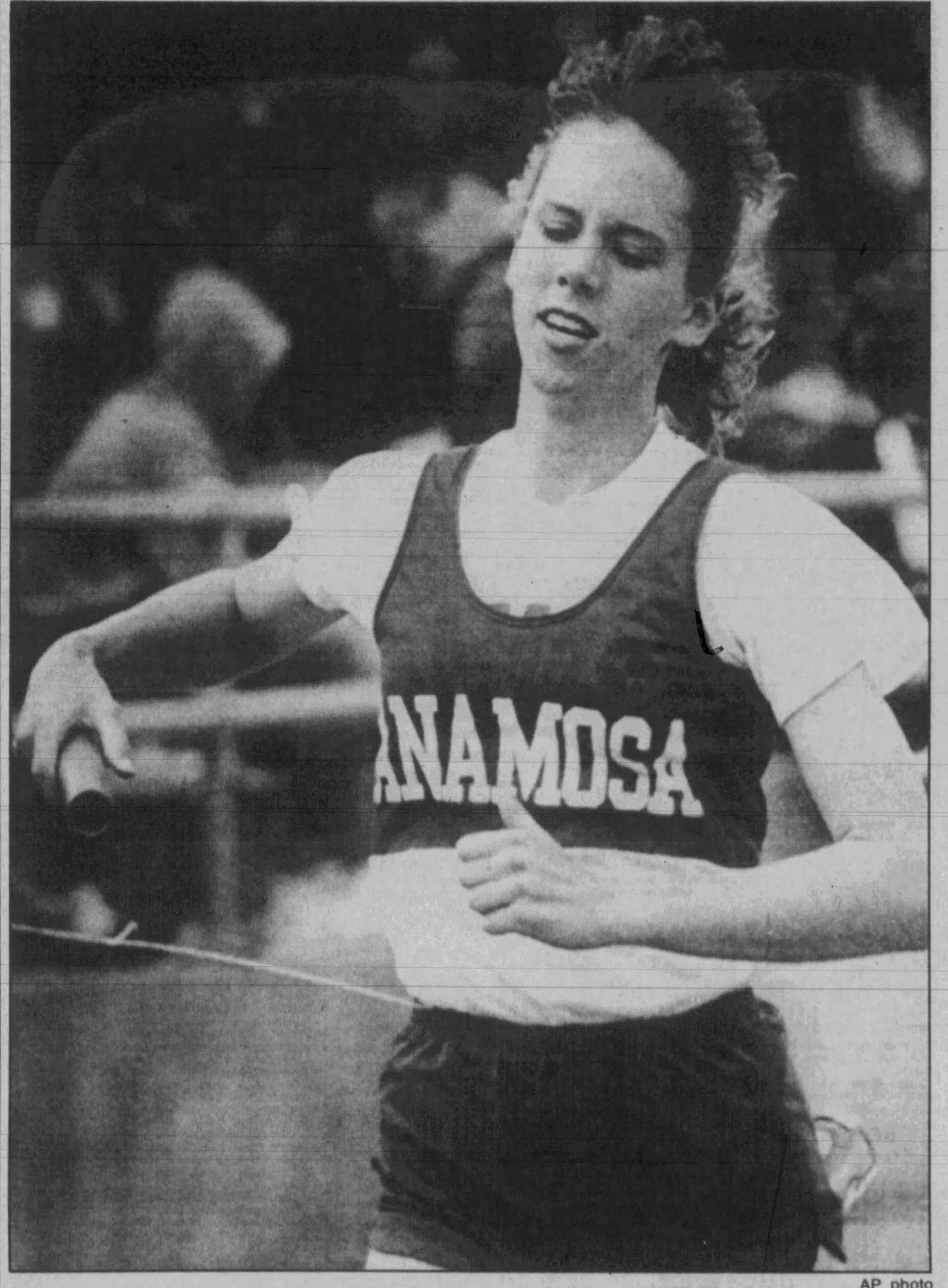
Beals, an amiable sort, seemed able to have fun with her team and maintain control at the same time.

"Play outside," she shouted at one of her players as Thursday's game was about to start.

"I am playing outside," the player retorted. "It's too warm to play inside."

Beals laughed. Soccer still has a long way to go in Iowa before its coaches get mad at kids who think they're funny.

GIRLS' STATE TRACK & FIELD MEET



AP photo

Anamosa's Missy Reuss breaks the tape at the finish of the 800-meter relay Friday, leading the Raiders into today's final in the event with the fastest qualifying time, 1 minute, 45.75 seconds.

Weather's cool, but athletes off to blazing start

4 defending state champs win again on opening day

> By Becky Stover Gazette sportswriter

DES MOINES — Four defending champions repeated as the 26th annual Iowa Girls' State Track and Field Championships got off to a chilly start Friday afternoon at Drake Stadium.

The Anamosa Raiders had a good showing in Class 2A, setting school records in three of the four events they ran. The Raiders had records in the 800-meter and distance medley relays, and June Swisher set another with her third-place finish in the 3,000.

Rachel Lewis of Sioux City North won her third straight discus title, in 3A, as did Shelly Miller of Laurens-Marathon in 1A. Lewis' 149-foot, 7-inch effort ranks fourth best on the all-time list. Miller had a personal-best throw of 139-7.

Sophomore Christa Holms of West Des Moines Valley outdueled last year's runner-up Sara Roberson of Bettendorf to win the Class 3A 3,000-meter race in 9 minutes, 57.30 seconds, five seconds shy of the alltime best she set last year.

Brenda Matheny of Lenox repeated as Class 1A 3,000 champion in 10:56.31.

In the 3A race, Karla Burds of Western Dubuque placed fourth in a season-best 10:31.27 with South Tama's Teresa Newcomb close behind in 10:31.92. Newcomb beat Burds in the Cedar Rapids district

was really happy with the 3,000," said Holms, who before the race thought Roberson would win.

"I was really scared but I just felt really strong."

Holms also anchored Valley's distance medley to the fastest

qualifying time of 4:11.49. St. Ansgar's Jennifer Brower, the 1A state cross country champ, blazed in 10:09.15, 33 seconds ahead of the pack in the 2A 3,000. Swisher, a sophomore, clocked a school-record 10:46.03 for third place. Swisher, also entered in the 1,500, was fifth last year.

Sumner's Krista Knoploh was second in the 2A discus with a 125-11 effort. Lisa Van Steenwyk of West Lyon won with a 127-7.

DEFENDING STATE champion Robin Threatt of Cedar Rapids Jefferson had the second-fastest qualifying time in the 3A 100 meters of 12.42 to Davenport West's Sherry Shedd's 12.38. Shedd was in a different heat.

"I just hope things clear up for tomorrow," said Threatt, the district record holder and Drake Relays

"I've just gotta stay positive," she added. "A nice day would help me

Threatt also competes in the open 200 and 400 relay today.

Anamosa's quartet of Tami Twachtmann, Gerae Hermesch, Kim Folkerts and Missy Ruess led the qualifying in the 800 relay with a season-best 1:45.75. Only Ames' 3A time of 1:45.09 was faster.

"I can't believe it," said Ruess. "We've never run under 1:47."

"The records were kind of a surprise, especially in the 4 by 200," said Anamosa Coach Bill Oliver. "We ran well today," he added. "That's a lot of running in a hurry.

We're just glad to survive." Decorah's Julie Ruen, Bree Laur-• Please turn to 3B: Girls

It has occurred very quietly. Wisconsin set to defend Big Ten track crowns

By J.R. Ogden Gazette sportswriter

Wisconsin's chances of defending its men's and women's Big Ten Conference outdoor track and field titles aren't good, but they aren't that bad either.

The Badger women will be seeking their fifth straight league title and the men their second in a row when the championships begin today at 9 a.m. at the University of owa's Francis X. Cretzmeyer track complex, located on Highway 6 (the Coralville strip) in Iowa City.

The two-day meet opens with the women's heptathlon. At 12:30 p.m. Sunday, the track complex will be officially dedicated to Cretzmeyer, who coached Iowa men's track and

cross country for 30 years before retiring in 1978. Two-day tickets are \$8 for adults, \$5 for students. Today's session will cost \$3 for adults, \$2 for students, and Sunday's

WHILE WISCONSIN is the defending team champ in both the men's and women's fields, most coaches feel Illinois and Indiana are the teams to beat in the men's meet and Indiana and Purdue in the women's.

Twelve defending champs in 14 events highlight the field, including returning double-winners Odessa Smalls of Michigan State in the women's field and Wisconsin's Robert Hackett in the men's field.

Wisconsin's Stephanie Herbst, winner of the 3,000- and 10,000-meter runs last season in record times and 1986 Big Ten Female Athlete of the Year, will miss the meet due to

Smalls is hoping to defend her 100 and 200 dash titles. She currently leads the Big Ten in the 100 with a 11.71-second clocking and his third in the 200 with a 23.8. Hackett also won the 100 and 200 dashes a year ago, and

Woodson ruled ineligible

SCHAUMBURG, III. (AP) - Purdue's Rod Woodson will not be allowed to compete in this year's Big Ten or NCAA track and field championships because he failed to disclose a contract he signed with professional agent Norby Walters, Big Ten officials said Friday.

Woodson, a hurdler and sprinter who was a firstround draft pick of the NFL's Pittsburgh Steelers, also failed to disclose that he received money from Walters, conference Commissioner Wayne Duke said.

Walters is currently the subject of a federal grand jury probe in Chicago.

single-day tickets are \$6 for adults, \$4 for students. • Please turn to 3B: Big Ten

INDY 500

First 45 seconds most important of the race

INDIANAPOLIS (AP) - The Indianapolis 500 lasts about three hours. The first 45 seconds can be the most crucial.

A 45-second lap on the 2½-mile oval translates to 200 mph, about the speed the 33 starters in Sunday's race will reach on the first lap - if nothing goes wrong.

Those first 45 seconds provide the most dangerous moments and create enormous tension. This year, with 23 crashes during practice and qualifications, the anxiety level will be even higher.

"What has happened during the month really doesn't mean anything in the race," defending champion Bobby Rahal said. "On race day, the track is different, you're not trying for all-out speed like in qualifying and, hopefully, everybody is mentally ready. But it's important to keep the start in some kind of perspec-

"When you come off the fourth turn and head toward the startfinish line, the adrenaline is pumping like crazy, you're feeling all the electricity from that big crowd and places at the start. It won't make all the anticipation. If you don't any difference at 400 miles. keep your head and stay cool, you

"The problem is that some guys act like the first turn is the end of the race," said Michael Andretti, who will be in the third row starting his fourth Indy 500. "The way to go into it is that you don't even start that overwhelm you."

racing until you get through the first two turns and onto the backstretch. By then, the cars are strung out and you can race."

Over the years, the start has triggered some of the worst acci-

In 1982, Kevin Cogan, starting in the middle of the front row, went out of control as the field moved toward the starting line. His car veered right, hit the car driven by A.J. Foyt, then slid sharply across the track, nailing Mario Andretti's second-row racer to the pit wall.

The dust and debris from the accident clouded everyone's vision, scattering cars wildly, and two cars in the rear of the field collided.

There were no injuries, but the incident eliminated four cars from the race, including those of Cogan and Andretti. And that was before the green flag had fallen.

Roberto Guerrero of Colombia, who will be in the middle of the second row, said, "I just try to stay out of trouble. I've learned that in a 500-mile race, it doesn't make much difference even if I lose a couple of

"You may take a few more can get in big trouble in a hurry." .. chances on the start at a place like Phoenix, where the race is a lot

"Another thing is that here there's a lot of adrenaline and excitement. It's important not to let



IN A CLOUD OF DUST: Chicago's Keith Moreland is forced out at second base but is able to break up the double play with his slide into Atlanta second baseman Ken Oberkfell during secondinning play Friday at Wrigley Field. The Braves battered the Cubs for a 9-5 victory. Baseball roundup, page 2B.

2 losses eliminate Mustangs

By Bob Hilton Gazette sportswriter

KEARNEY, Neb. - Mount Mercy's finest softball season ended in teary anticlimax.

Victims of their own lapses in a 2-1 NAIA championship quarterfinal loss to second-seeded West Florida Friday morning, the Mustangs gave up four first-inning runs to 16thseeded Saginaw Valley (Mich.) State 90 minutes later, mustered just one hit themselves, and bowed out of the tourney, 5-0.

The first Mount Mercy team and only the third from lowa to earn an NAIA championship tournament berth, the Mustangs finished 43-8.

West Florida advanced with a 52-14 record, Saginaw Valley with a deceivingly unimpressive 21-14 mark. The win was the Lady Cardinals' 15th in Saginaw Valley's last 18 games.

"They're the best team we faced." said Mustangs Coach Bob Timmons. "They're a good, aggressive ballclub, and their pitcher (senior Cindy Wegener) did a good job. She kept us popping up. Everything we hit hard was foul.

"The loss to West Florida was crucial. It really zapped the kids. We firmly believe we were the better team.

"But we had only ourselves to blame. We left nine runners on base. We left runners in scoring position in five innings. And West · Please turn to 3B: Mustangs