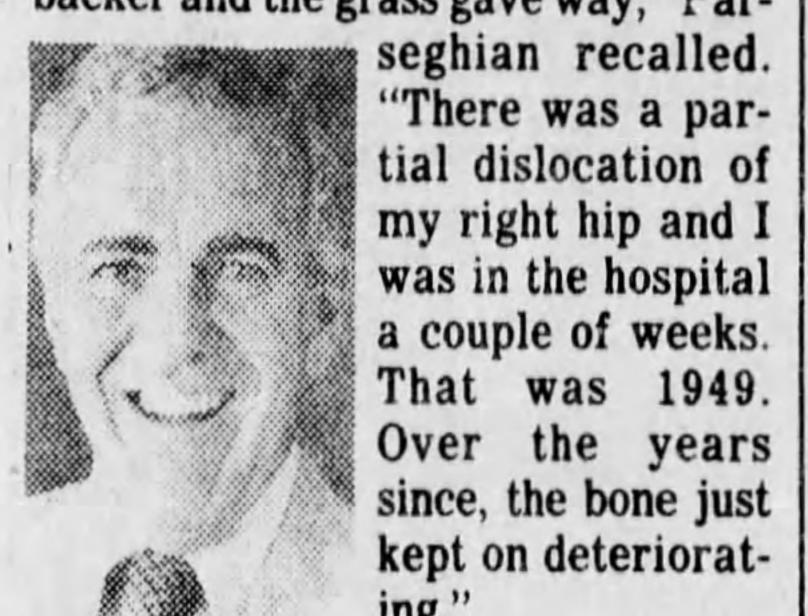
#### MAURY WHITE



COAL VALLEY, ILL. - He limps when he walks and he walks no more than necessary. When Ara Parseghian played here last Wednesday in the Hardee's Golf Classic pro-am, it was out of a cart, meaning they were glad to have the former Notre Dame football coach on any terms.

But, my, the stocky guy can hit that ball! It jets ahead, just as he once did as a running back for Miami of Ohio, then the Cleveland Browns. Matter of fact, the hip problem plaguing him now goes back to those days in the old All-America Football Conference.

"I was carrying the ball up the middle, started to cut away from a linebacker and the grass gave way," Parseghian recalled.



Over the years since, the bone just kept on deteriorat-Three times since retiring as the Irish coach with a 95-17-4 record, Ara has had artificial hip joints installed in

his right side. The third time seems to

have been the charm. "The state of the art wasn't as advanced at first, and there was added damage from the operations that didn't work," Parseghian said. "Now, even though I limp, I'm not in pain anymore and can sleep at night."

He can, that is, when he gives himself a chance. The owner of an insurance agency in South Bend, Ind., employing 15 people, Ara also did 16 telecasts as a commentator for CBS last fall. This year, he's cutting back to about 10.

"I was often only three days in the office and four on the road," he said. "I don't mind the games, but I'm tired of packing and living in hotels. It was becoming a grind. I'm 64, going on 65, and I want to slow down."

And play more golf, now that he's again whacking the ball so heartily. Parseghian and current Notre Dame Coach Lou Holtz shared a cart four times this summer.

MEANWHILE, THE MAN so closely associated with football has discovered, in order, a newly found relative and an interest in the art of

Greco-Roman wrestling. "Most of dad's family was annihilated in 1915, when Turkey invaded Armenia," Parseghian said. "My father, Michael, escaped to Greece, then came to this country. He had a brother, Tigran, who escaped to Soviet Armenia. But the only relative I knew about in this country was an

aunt." Last fall, the aunt called and said a young man in Los Angeles, Gagik Barseghian, was claiming to be a second cousin of the famed football coach. Even though there is a slight spelling difference in last names, Ara had dinner with Gagik when at last fall's Notre Dame-Southern Cal

"He's a real nice young man, and an outstanding athlete," Ara said. "I knew that my father had given his father a watch. When Gagik showed me that watch, I knew we were related. Actually, I could see a family resemblance with my son."

Gagik, 28, is a three-time Soviet junior wrestling champion who came to the United States about a year ago, after marrying an American woman. His ambition is to gain citizenship and make the 1988 Olympic team.

CHANCES ARE SMALL Barseghian will make the 1988 team. Among other things, it would take a waiver from the Soviets and a waiver of the International Olympic Committee's three-year residency rule. However, Ara is willing to help out.

"Gagik has a university degree, but his English is not good," he said. "I told him if he improved that, I'd help him get a job on the college level. And I did get him associated with the Sun City wrestling group in Phoenix, which is helping pay some of his training expenses."

Any regrets for having quit coaching 13 years ago at the relatively young age of 51?

"No, it wasn't a hasty decision," he said. "The fact that I had already been a head coach for 25 years at three institutions ... including eight at Northwestern, where it was really tough ... had started to catch up with me," he said.

"I didn't know what was going to happen. I told my wife I was going to results of a study of high school girls' stay out at least one year. The first | sports participation by Carl Ojala, year was tough, the second a little | professor, Eastern Michigan Univereasier, and so on. I've never felt I sity. Whereas the national average is wanted to go back, although there are one girl in every 4.52 was in orgatimes when I find myself doodling | nized athletics, Iowa led the nation plays. I wouldn't trade any of those | with 3.28 of every 4.52. South Dakota years, for I really enjoyed them. It | was second with 2.09. - Jim Duncan, was a lot of fun. But I'm happy I left | 5129 Grand Ave., Des Moines.

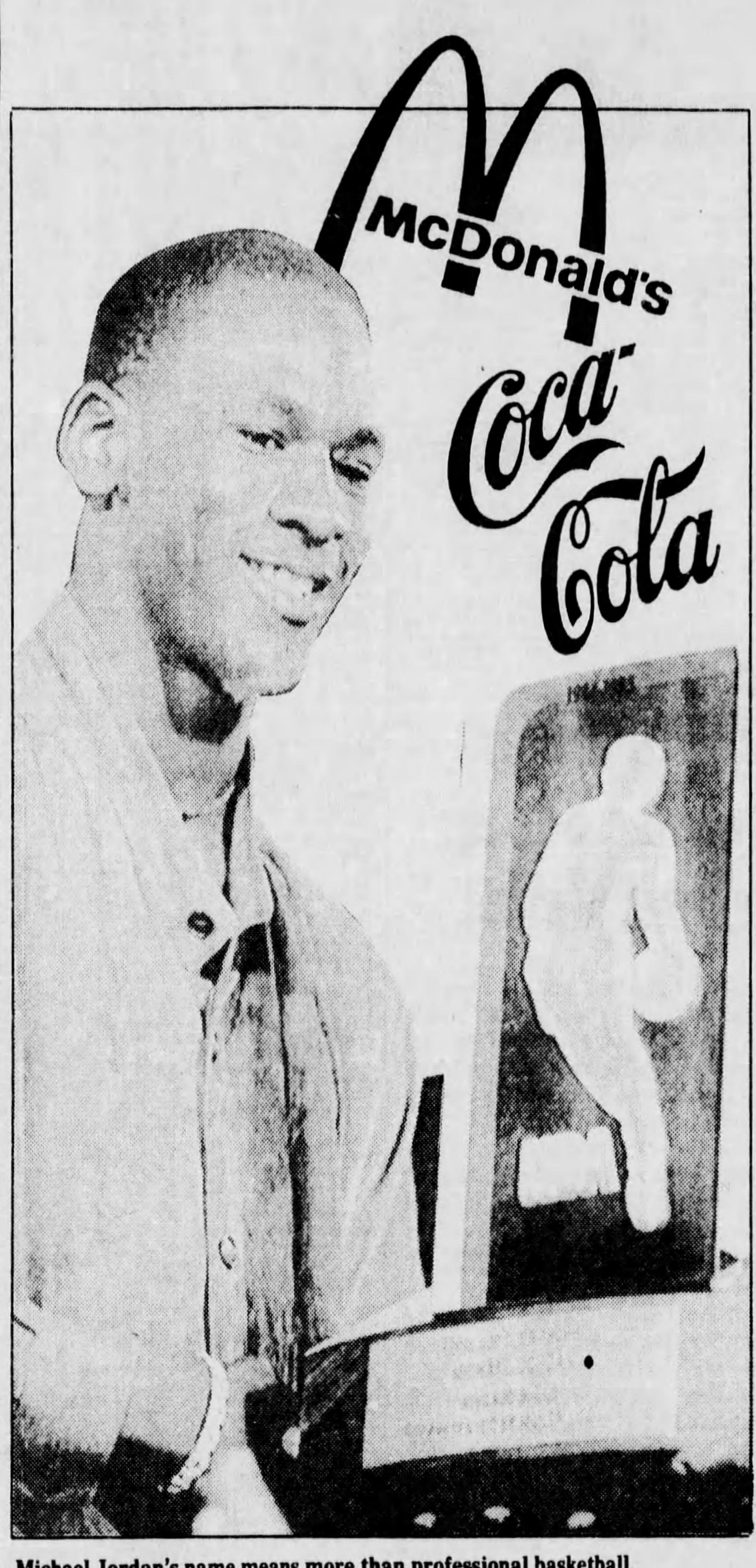
when I did." Because he does do the TV on some Irish games, Ara frequently pops in an out of his old office. His relations with former Irish Coach Gerry Faust were good, but the time came when even a generally uncritical commentator had to get around to talking

about mistakes. "From a credibility standpoint, I couldn't put my head in the sand when I saw repeated errors," Parseghian

said.

# Agent boom resounds through sports world

## Thousands seeking fame, fortune in players market



Michael Jordan's name means more than professional basketball.

## Jordan's a franchise, and not just for Bulls

By JOHN POWERS

© 1987 Boston Globe He has played in the National Basketball Association for merely three years, but he is already a franchise. He is Air Jordan (Nike athletic gear). He is Time Jordan (Guy Laroche watches). He is Jordan Universal Marketing and Promotion (JUMP), a corporation unto himself. On the side, Michael Jordan plays a little basket-

ball for the Chicago Bulls. But with the help of ProServ, the Washington-based firm that also represents Dave Winfield, Pat Ewing and enough tennis players to fill a Grand Prix draw, Jordan no longer needs to play at all. A sophisticated marketing program, overseen by David Falk and Bill Strickland, already has made him several million dollars, and it was put in motion as soon as Jordan turned professional.

"Nobody had ever done it for a rookie," Falk says. "|Chicago General Manager | Rod Thorn called me up and said, 'What the --- are you trying to do, turn the guy into a tennis player?' I said, 'Precisely. That's exactly what we're trying to do." **Endorses Many Products** 

Besides the Nike contract, which pays him an estimated \$2.5 million over five years, Jordan also endorses Wilson balls, McDonald's and Coca-Cola — all solid red-white-and-blue products. "Michael has turned down many lucrative opportunities in the \$200,000 range," Falk says, "because it would ruin the plan."

The Plan was crafted three summers ago, when Jordan was emerging from the Olympics with a gold medal and joining the Bulls. "We felt that coming off the Olympics in America with his image - clean-cut, articulate, charming, devilish in his own

way - Michael represented Americana," Falk says. "So we wanted to put him with two or three companies that represented America."

Wherever possible, ProServ has arranged for cross-promotions, with one endorsement complementing another. Jordan represents Coca-Cola. McDonald's is the largest consumer of Coca-Cola. Jordan also represents McDonald's. In his Nike ads, Jordan palms a Wilson ball. In his Wilson ads, Jordan is wearing Nikes. Soon, Pro-Serv hopes to do a Nike-McDonald's cross-promotion. At the same time, ProServ urges the firms to do community programs (anti-drug, stayin-school), which also feature Jordan.

All this is part of Phase 1; Phase 2 is a few years down the road. "By 31, Michael could represent a brokerage firm," Falk muses. "He couldn't at 21. Who's going to take investment advice from a 21-year-old basketball player? But he's a different guy at

#### Other Options

Meanwhile, there are other options, other decisions. "When do you do a book?" Falk wonders. "A movie? A licensing program? All these things are on the burner. We're just trying to determine the proper time."

With his financial security already assured, Jordan can pick and choose at his leisure. ProServ is already looking a decade down the road, thinking about post-NBA career opportunities with some of the companies Jordan represents now. Not that he'll be strapped for cash in 1995.

"We don't think he'll need to do anything," Falk says. "But Michael's not going to stop living at 32."

By JOHN POWERS

© 1987 Boston Globe

General Manager Stu Inman of the Milwaukee Bucks says that most of the names on the National Basketball Association's list of certified agents are foreign to him. "About three-quarters of them I've never dealt with," he says. "And half I've never even heard of."

New York Giants General Manager George Young says he gets calls from several people all claiming to represent the same football player. "Will the real agent please stand up?" he wonders. "That's why I always make sure I ask the player who I'm supposed to talk to."

There are 1,260 players in the NFL but 1,500 registered agents who want to speak for them. "It's like the Oklahoma land rush," says California attorney Leigh Steinberg. "Thousands of people are coming into the field, and there's virtually no regulation."

Agents negotiate complex contracts, yet no law says they must be attorneys. Many handle millions of dollars for their clients, but nothing requires them to be certified public accountants. They proffer investment advice, but need to take no competency test.

"Anybody Can Be Agent"

"Anybody can be an agent," says Peter Johnson, who runs International Management Group's team sports division. "All you have to have is a client."

To negotiate a contract for that client, all the agent needs to do is register with the appropriate players' association - and they are, in growing numbers every year. Major league baseball has 624 players and easily that many agents; the players association doesn't bother keeping a running tally.

Twenty years ago, you could count America's sports agents on both hands. A Bob Woolf here, a Larry Fleisher there, Mark McCormack packaging golfers in Cleveland.

Agent Boom

Now there are thousands, and they represent not only players and prospects in the four major team sports but also golfers, tennis players, runners, cyclists, sailors, gymnasts, speed skaters and virtually any athlete who does or might make money. One of the reasons the International Olympic Committee has been reluctant to admit professionals to the Olympic Games is a fear of having to deal with agents.

Some — such as Woolf, Fleisher, McCormack and Donald Dell - have been in the business since the '60s. Many more — such as Steinberg, Jerry Kapstein and Howard Slusher — have been representing players for well over a decade. But hundreds are novices - small-town attorneys with one rookie client, big-time dreamers fresh out of law school or smooth-talking hustlers who have a nose for the fast lane and a fast buck.

agents, where you have to go if you want to stay certified," says former New England Patriots receiver Randy Vataha, who now works with Woolf. "There were maybe and agents' cuts. 600 of us there, so they said they wanted to divide the room in half. People who wanted advanced information would go to one side, people who wanted the ABCs to the other. Maybe 15 of us went to the advanced side. The other 585 were staying to find out: 'What do I do first?' That

shocked me." **Fierce Competition** 

With so many would-be representatives chasing so few clients, the competition has become fiercer than ever, with athletes being pursued well before they're ready to turn pro. Many ballplayers in the low minors already have agents, even though most will never play a game in the majors. "They'll sign up as many kids as they can and hope some of them will make it someday," says Boston agent Ed Kleven.

And dozens of college football players — including at least eight of this year's first-round draft choices - are said to have broken NCAA rules by taking payoffs from would-be agents while they were still playing for their collegiate teams. A federal grand jury in Chicago is hearing testimony from more than 60 athletes who allegedly took cash from agents, many of them from New Yorkers Norby Walters and Lloyd Bloom, who are under investigation for reportedly threatening to harm those who broke contracts with them.

"We're even hearing stories of high school athletes getof Northeastern's Center for the Study of Sport in Society. "They give the athletes money and drugs — anything to get them beholden to them."

Controls Sought

As the horror stories spread, there's a growing outcry to have agents controlled by the state. California already requires them to be licensed and bonded, and Michigan and Texas are considering doing the same.

Yet the agents themselves say there's little the government or anyone else can do to ensure that agents are honest and competent. "You can't guarantee competence," says California attorney Dick Moss, who represents more than 50 major-league ballplayers. "My personal view is that 80 percent of all lawyers are incompetent and 90 percent of physicians are."

The fact is that a player can choose whomever he wants to represent him — and that means anybody from IMG to a family friend.

The agents' qualifications, experience and skills are as different as the services they provide. The large firms such as IMG and the Washington-based ProServ and Advantage International, have sizable staffs and numerous overseas offices that negotiate the player's contract, get him endorsements, do his taxes, make his investments, pay his bills, give him a spending allowance and draw up his will. "We do soup-to-nuts," says IMG's Johnson. "And we do all of it in-house."

Most of the established agents offer some or all of those

services, sometimes referring their clients to specialists. If their advice is sound, the athlete can live comfortably for life off what he makes in a 10-year career. When it isn't, the athlete can end up bewildered and bankrupt. Los Angeles Lakers center Kareem Abdul-Jabbar is suing agent Tom Collins, claiming that bad investments cost him \$5 million. San Diego Padres right fielder Tony. Gwynn has filed for bankruptcy after losing hundreds of thousands of dollars on investments made by his agent.

And at least 70 athletes, including golfer Kathy Whitworth, Milwaukee reliever Mark Clear, Angels pitcher Mike Witt and a number of present and former Los Angeles Raiders, lost fortunes with a firm called Technical Equities, which sold tax shelters in high tech, manufactur-

ing and real estate.

More than ever, it seems, the athlete needs to know more about who advises him. "With no standards and no credentials, almost anybody can hang out a shingle and say they're an agent," says Barry Rona, executive director of major league baseball's Player Relations Committee. "There are some people who have so little knowledge about salary structures, about baseball economics and about the Basic Agreement that it's virtually a crime to let them represent an athlete."

#### **Tougher Guidelines**

The Major League Baseball Players Association has drawn up tougher guidelines, making agents disclose fees The NBA has 276 active players but 400 registered agents. and qualifications and submit to annual audits. "By the fall, you'll be able to look at a chart and see that so-and-so's fee is this and this is what he does for it, and this is his education and experience," says Donald Fehr, the association's counsel. "You can see who's been firedby a player, who's had a dispute with a player. All that stuff will be available."

The football, baseball and basketball players' associations all certify agents, but few agents or club officials think it means much. "Until they decertify or refuse to certify people, it's bull," says New York agent Arthur Kaminsky. "It's an exercise in hoop-rolling. It's not even as

rigorous as a driver's license." Beyond asking for information about education, experience, client lists, fees and past disputes, players' associations can do little. Their staffs simply don't have the time

dreds of would-be representatives. When Fleisher began representing basketball players in 1964, he was one of a handful in the business. "There really was no money in those days," he says, "so people saw no

or resources to do FBI-style background checks on hun-

need to get into the field." Wages Soar

Rival leagues — the AFL and WFL in football, the ABA "I was at an NFL Players Association meeting for in basketball, the WHA in hockey — and free agency in baseball had changed all of that by the mid-'70s. As demand for players' services soared, so did their wages -

Now even journeymen make six-figure salaries — the average is \$450,000 in the NBA, \$412,520 in major league baseball and \$203,565 in the NFL — and they're hardly

confidential. "All the salary information is available to everyone now," says the Giants' Young. "All they have to do is get a list and they can play supermarket. You don't even need a

pencil to be an agent anymore." Steinberg, who got into the business as a law student in 1975 when California quarterback Steve Bartkowski asked him to represent him, says he gets 1,500 resumes

annually from hopefuls wanting to work with him. "Sports law is the hot field of the '80s," he says. "I went down to speak at UCLA Law School and the first question I got was, 'I saw you on "Lifestyles of the Rich and Famous," I saw you interviewed in Playboy, I saw you mod-

eling in GQ. How can I do that?' There's been this glamorization of the field. The agents have become stars themselves.

Beating the Bushes

Yet most of the top athletes are represented by a small handful of agents or firms. With virtually every professional already signed up, prospective agents have had to beat the bushes at the minor league and collegiate levels.

"The idea is to tie 'em up in the minors and ride up with 'em," says Houston agent Randy Hendricks, who with his ting sucked in by agents," says Richard Lapchick, director brother Alan represents Roger Clemens and roughly 10 percent of all major leaguers. "That's not a bad strategy, but after five or six years, everyone's signed up."

In baseball, the inducement is usually free services until the player makes it to the majors. In football and basketball, it's cash "loans," drugs, expensive cars and prostitutes. "Sometimes it involves recruiting the mother," says Inman. "A guy leaves \$10,000 with her to help her with some bills. 'Don't worry about paying it back,' he

But the risks for the athlete are steep. University of Pittsburgh football players Charles Gladman and Teryl Austin were dismissed from the team last month for taking cash. Ohio State's Cris Carter was dismissed last week. In Illinois, U.S. Attorney Anton Valukas was considering prosecuting athletes for fraud if they kept playing as amateurs after taking money. And the IRS may go after any athlete who didn't report payoffs as income.

Some colleges, worried about having to forfeit games and bowl revenue if players are found to have signed with agents prematurely, have formed screening committees with the player, his parents and coach and the deans of the law and business schools grilling prospective agents.

For the pro-to-be, selecting an agent is the most important decision he makes. An athlete has only a few years to earn and cannot afford to be handled by amateurs whose dream is to be interviewed by Robin Leach. "An agent has many clients," says Young. "But an ath-

lete has only one career."

### LETTERS

#### Iowa girls lead nation

Iowans can take great pride in the

#### Smiley saga

As Marc Hansen and others have noted, the University of Iowa appears to be in a no-win situation when it comes to the Keaton Smiley case.

If Keaton Smiley agreed to being "red-shirted" potentially almost all parties could be winners. The university would not be placed in the position of determining his innocence or guilt before the judicial system resolved the issue and he could continue his education.

If he is found innocent he will have had an opportunity to study without the pressures of keeping up with school during this difficult period and will be able to resume his athletic and scholastic careers the following year. The university will avoid the adverse nationwide publicity that would occur during every University of Iowa football telecast.

If Keaton Smiley is found guilty, his athletic career is likely to be finished and he will need to rely even more on his education. - Thomas A. Weingeist, 1214 Tyler Court, Iowa

Flag gag?

While attending the Iowa Cubs game last evening I noticed that the official flag of the City of Des Moines

was flying upside down! Is this an honest mistake or is someone at Sec Taylor stadium trying to put one over on central Iowa's baseball fans? -Alan R. Lovelady, 311 E. Pleasantview Drive, Des Moines.

#### Twin Cities taboo

I've lived in Des Moines for four years and I still can't understand why Minneapolis is "taboo" to the local

On the radio during the week, I have to listen to the Twins on a South Dakota station. It fades out at 9 p.m.

secret on the coasts, but they are here

also. The local TV affiliate in Des

Moines had a chance recently to show

Television is even worse. While I get a steady diet of Dodgers, Yankees and Mets, the nearby contender north on I-35 is a virtual unknown. . . . I can understand the Twins being a

Twins (both in first place at the time). They chose instead to run a rain-soaked game involving the struggling Dodgers.... If the Twins get to the playoffs this

a matchup between the Yankees and

year, the media will have a lot of explaining to do. I hope they at least pronounce the players' names right during the games. - Doug Spomer. 506 15th, Dallas Center.

#### No dome, please

Baseball is meant to be played under a sky, not a dome; on grass and dirt, not a carpet. Baseball fans in Minneapolis, Seattle and Houston are the subject of jokes all over America. Please don't let Des Moines fans join them. What baseball needs like a hole in the head is another dome. — Phil

Lowry, 10650 Porto Ct., San Diego,

Recently your paper reported Ken Grandquist's "dream" of putting the I-Cubs in a domed stadium. Baseball played indoors has an atmosphere more reminiscent of a pool hall than that of a meadow or park; domed stadiums forfeit one of the essences of going to a ballgame. Out of respect for baseball, Mr. Grandquist's hopes must go unrealized. - Peter Laskowick, Old Rifle Camp Rd., West Paterson, N.J.

We invite reader opinion. All letters must contain the author's name and address. We reserve the right to shorten letters. The address: Sports Opinion Page, Des Moines Sunday Register, P.O. Box 957, Des Moines, IA 50304.