

U.S. OLYMPIC FESTIVAL

COLLEGES

Pros

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Olympics, the American public may demand our best players."

Using amateurs, the U.S. has won all but one of the 10 Olympic basketball tournaments in which it has competed. The quality of basketball elsewhere in the world has improved to the point that John Thompson, coach of the 1988 U.S. men's Olympic team, would be happy to have pros on his side.

"If you were coaching, would you want Larry Bird?" Thompson asked.

Thompson and Wall were at the Dean Smith Student Activities Center in Chapel Hill for Wednesday night's basketball finals in the U.S. Olympic Festival. Thompson as a talent scout, Wall as an administrator.

Wall left Thursday for the World Junior Championships in Italy, where he would continue to push the status quo to anyone who asked.

Much of the maneuvering has been deliberately kept secret from ABA/USA. Wall learned of a February meeting of five European basketball leaders, including Stankovic, when he saw a picture of the principals in a German newspaper.

"When I had someone translate the story that went with the picture, I found out they had worked out a compromise that would make eligible those professionals who had played on a national team before," Wall said. "That would mean we could get back our entire 1984 Olympic team."

"I wouldn't mind going to war with those kids. The question is whether the American public would support the U.S. Olympic Committee fundraising if highly paid professionals took over."

Like most current questions in Olympic sports, this one involves money, potential legal problems and power.

In the three years since the IOC decided to leave eligibility rules to the individual federations, the trend has been consistently toward admitting professionals. Tennis is the latest sport to make pros eligible for

the Olympics.

FIBA sees a potential financial windfall from TV rights to its World Championships if professionals are included. Both FIBA and Samaranch also would like to avoid potential lawsuits by athletes asking the courts to decide how professionals can be eligible in some sports and not others.

"FIBA got \$600,000 from the IOC from the Olympic TV money," Wall said. "They see an NBA [expansion] franchise going for \$32 million."

"They know there is a lot of money out there, and they think a lot of it will stick to FIBA."

International competition fits NBA marketing strategy, which includes TV contracts with 40 countries and licensing agreements in Europe, South America and the Far East.

The European and South American members of FIBA think the World Championships, barely noticed in the U.S., could quickly become a media event if NBA players were to compete.

The Europeans also are concerned about the growing number of their top players being drafted by the NBA. Athletes who have played in the NBA, U.S. Basketball League, Continental Basketball Association and Philippine pro league are excluded from international competition.

They can now regain "amateur" status by such means as joining one of the European club teams that pay their players but are not considered professional.

These matters are never simple.

The issue will come up again at a FIBA eligibility meeting in September. The decision to call a special

congress in 1989 will be made at the central board meeting next February.

By a five-vote margin, the 1986 FIBA World Congress decided to keep the old eligibility rules.

The question of competitiveness will be addressed, in a fashion, this October in Milwaukee. The Soviet national team and the European club champion, Tracer of Milan, Italy, are coming to play an exhibition series with the Milwaukee Bucks.

The exhibitions are under the jurisdiction of FIBA, ABA/USA and the NBA. The players association has yet to approve them.

"We are still in collective bargaining negotiations [for a new basic agreement between the players and the league], and part of the agreement will involve the whole concept of exhibition games," Grantham said. "We want some control over any form of international competition involving NBA players."

So does the league.

"This is very important to us," Bettman said. "We think we have the foremost basketball players in the world. To turn over control of them is not something we're interested in."

Even if NBA players become eligible, it is not certain how many would decide to play. Professional hockey players are now eligible for the Olympics, but few NHL teams are going to release their players in the middle of a season.

"That is something the teams would have to face," Bettman said. "They will have to consider the risk of injuries."

Without NBA players in the Olympics, the only thing at risk of injury is American pride.

Brother 'trapped' Carter, lawyer says

From Chicago Tribune wires

Cris Carter, the all-America wide receiver from Ohio State who last week was ruled ineligible for next season because he signed with an agent, may have been lured into the arrangement by his brother, according to the New York Times.

The paper quoted Robert Berry, Cris Carter's lawyer, as saying the brother, George Carter, secretly received thousands of dollars from the agent, and may have been on the agent's payroll.

Berry told the Times that Cris Carter received about \$7,000 from the agent, Norby Walters. George Carter, Cris's brother, received about \$6,000, Berry said.

Walters and his partner, Lloyd Bloom, who operate World Sports and Entertainment, a New York talent agency, are the focus of a federal inquiry in Chicago. A grand jury is also looking at allegations that some players were threatened with violence after severing their ties with Bloom and Walters. The agents acknowledge signing the players, but say the practice is common. They deny making any threats.

Berry told the Times that Cris Carter got an interest-free \$5,000 loan the day he signed a contract and a monthly stipend for 10 months. But Berry said that George Carter "trapped" his younger brother into signing after Walters and Bloom entertained George in New York. The money that George received was kept secret from Cris, Berry said.

"We have some evidence that George had been employed by Walters for a long time," said Berry, a Boston lawyer and professor of law at Boston College.

He said that Cris, who testified before the grand jury last week, learned there that records subpoenaed from Walters and Bloom showed that \$13,000 was to be billed to him—the \$7,000 he received and the \$6,000 George received. Berry told the paper that Cris, like other players called before the panel, had not received immunity for his testimony and might be indicted.

The Times reported that the Carters' relationship with Walters and Bloom apparently began in April, 1986, when George was visiting Cris at Ohio State.

When Cris came home one day carrying a stack of mail, George went through it, Berry said, and pulled out an advertising brochure from World Sports and Entertainment. He asked his brother if he could call them, and Cris approved, the paper said.

Berry said George made a call to Walters and Bloom that ended with his being invited, all expenses paid, to New York. Before returning home, he called Cris, saying how impressed he was.

A few days later, Bloom flew to Columbus, where the Carters met him at the airport. After driving around for some time and discussing matters, Berry said, Cris agreed to sign a promissory note, dated May 1, 1986, and a representation

agreement, dated Jan. 2, 1988, the first day Cris could properly retain an agent under NCAA rules. Bloom handed him \$5,000 in cash, Berry said. Cris soon began receiving monthly stipends via Western Union, which sometimes reached \$300, Berry said. The stipends continued until Walters and Bloom came under scrutiny earlier this year.

George Carter is maintaining his silence about his role in the affair. "He's taking the brunt in this whole Cris Carter mess," his attorney, Paris Ellis, said. "I'm a little uncomfortable with him saying anything right now. I've told him not to speak."

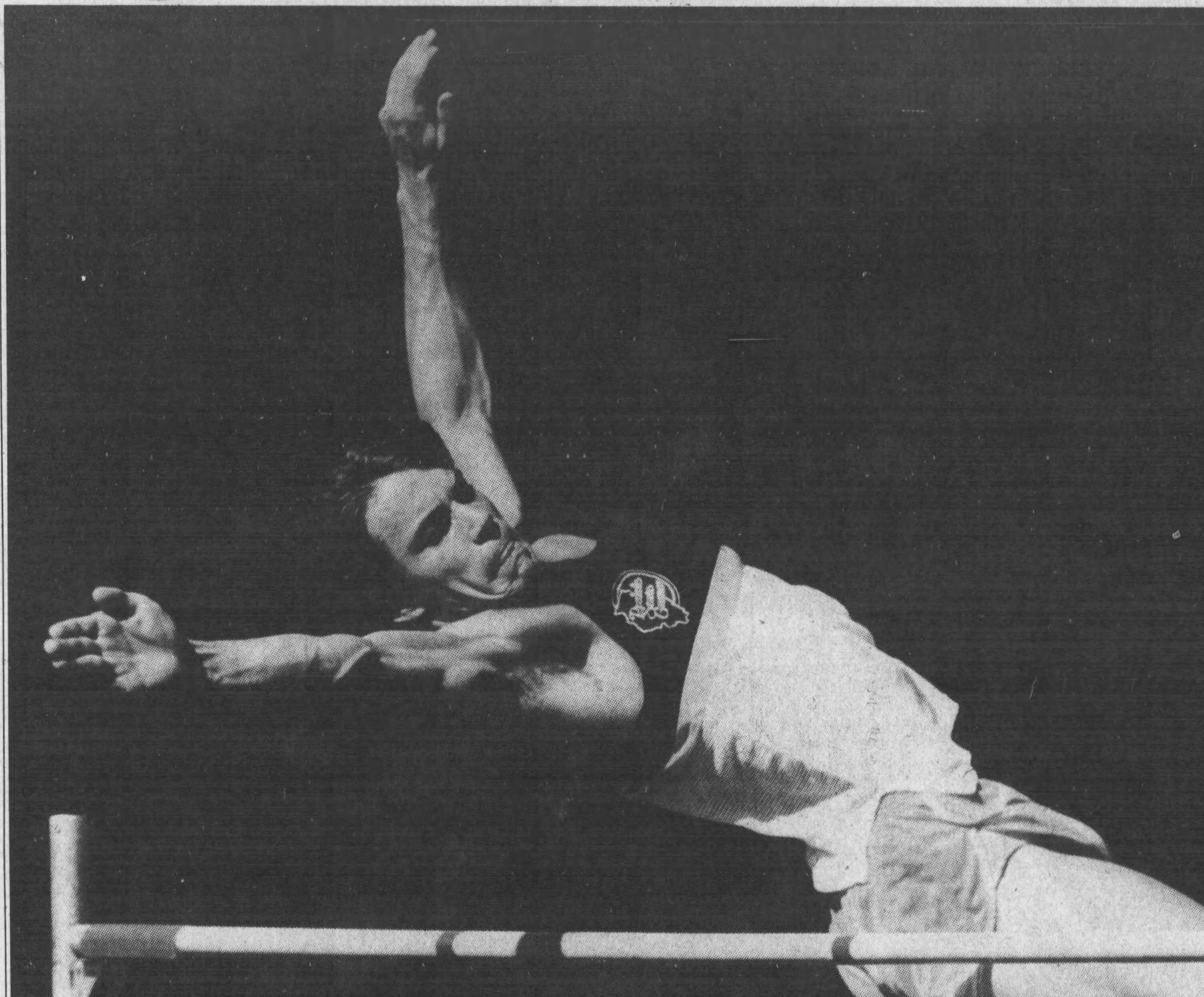
The Walters controversy has prompted several states to consider legislation aimed at agents. The latest was Ohio, where a bill to regulate agents was introduced in the General Assembly Thursday.

Among the violations listed in the bill is "inducing a student athlete to enter into an agent contract or professional sport service contract before the student athlete's eligibility for collegiate athletics has expired."

Thus far, only two states have enacted bills attempting to arrest the early signing syndrome. Oklahoma and California require registration of agents who plan to contact student-athletes. But neither provides criminal penalties.

Louisiana and Michigan lawmakers are considering measures that would assess prison terms for agents proven to have enticed athletes into early signings.

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Prairie State Games, July 25 at 1p.m. and July 26 at 12:30p.m., WGN Ch. 9.

NOTES

Chicago Tribune

DURHAM, N.C.—John Thompson's fears about NCAA eligibility problems for some of next year's Olympic basketball players apparently are groundless.

Thompson, the U.S. men's coach, wondered what would happen to those few undergraduate players who are forced to sit out the first semester of school because the Games are later than usual, running Sept. 17-Oct. 2.

According to Bill Wall, executive director of the Amateur Basketball Association of the United States, the NCAA has had legislation in place since 1968 that would allow Olympians to play the whole season.

The 1968 Mexico City Olympics also took place in September.

There has not been an official announcement, but the 1988 U.S. Olympic men's basketball trials will take place May 15-20 at UCLA's Pauley Pavilion. The women's trials are to be at Colorado Springs in mid-April.

Thursday was a rough day for hockey goalie Gary Kruzich of Oak Lawn, and just the opposite for goalie Brad Ryan of the University of Illinois-Chicago. They were on opposite ends of an 8-0 score in U.S. Olympic Festival hockey. Kruzich gave up three goals in 54 seconds of the first period as his West team wound up the loser to Ryan's North. Those were the fastest three goals in the eight-year Festival history, breaking a mark of three in 1:11 set in 1973. Ryan stopped 29 shots, Kruzich just 16.

The outcome didn't help Kruzich's chances of surviving the cut for the U.S. Olympic team that will be made after Sunday's final. No more than half the eight goalies at the Festival will be brought to the training camp in August.

The '87 Olympic Festival broke the festival record for ticket sales in dollars with four days to go. Through Wednesday, \$2.6 million in tickets had been sold, compared to \$2.4 million in Houston last year. The attendance record set in Houston, 347,000, also should fall.

Evelyn Ashford, world record-holder in the 100 meters, has pulled out of the festival track with a sore leg. NCAA 1,500-meter champion Suzy Favor of Wisconsin has also withdrawn because she is worn out by a long season.

Chicagoan Diane Williams is not encouraged by the way the U.S. women's 400-meter relay is training for the upcoming World Championships in Rome. Williams, 100-meter champion at the USA/Mobil national championships in June, said, "We have no communication." Alice Brown, Williams, Florence Griffith and Pam Marshall will make up the relay. Griffith, who ran only the 200 meters at the nationals, was selected ahead of Gail Devers, the No. 4 finisher in the 100.

At 30, Harvey Glance is one of the world's oldest sprinters, yet he keeps running in an effort to fulfill certain goals. "I have had goals each year since I have been competing," said Glance, who burst into world prominence in 1976, his freshman year at Auburn. "I want to make my fourth Olympic team," he said. "No other sprinter has made four. I was the second to make three." The first was Frank Wykeoff, who ran during the 1930s.

Neil Palmer of the University of Nebraska scored a 9.75 on the high bar, his final event, to overtake UCLA's David St. Pierre for the gold medal in all-around competition in men's gymnastics. St. Pierre's North team, with second, third and fourth place in all-around competition, easily won the team gold over Palmer's South squad. Palmer, a member of the U.S. national gymnastics team, won the all-around gold medal with a six-event total of 56.80. St. Pierre, a member of UCLA's 1987 NCAA title team, finished at 56.70 for the silver. Stanford's Lance Ringheld came in at 56.30 for the bronze medal.

Phil Hersh