Sports

NCAA softens hard line on Proposition 42

By Ed Sherman Chicago Tribune

DALLAS—After the NCAA plowed through its work Monday, King basketball star Jamie Brandon's position apparently remains the same.

Brandon, who is committed to attend Illinois next fall, will be eligible immediately if he meets others like him, if they are classiminimum high school grade and fied as partial qualifiers. King entrance exam requirements. If he coach Landon "Sonny" Cox said fails in one of those areas, he still the senior has come close, but

Women's group protests Reagan NCAA award. Page 3.

probably will be able to enroll at Illinois as a so-called partial qualifier.

Monday's legislation left the door open for Brandon and

has yet to pass his entrance exams.

Under Proposition 26, which passed Monday, partial qualifiers still aren't eligible for a scholarship from the athletic department, but they can receive needbased financial aid from the institution. That altered Proposition 42, which prohibited a partial qualifier from receiving monetary assistance. The rule would have forced Brandon, who comes from a low-income family, to pay his

own way to Illinois.

Now if Brandon, one of the nation's top high school prospects, is a partial qualifier, he'll have to apply for financial aid through the university. Cox doesn't foresee any problems with Illinois.

"They're not going to turn him down," Cox said. "If you think the University of Illinois is going to lose Jamie Brandon, I'd like to sell you a piece of the Brooklyn

Northwestern Athletic Director

Bruce Corrie agreed. Talking generally, and not about Brandon, Corrie believes the willing universities always will find money for the star athletes.

"You're not going to find a top star at the lower end of the award system," said Corrie, who is a proponent of Proposition 42. "If an athlete needs \$10,000 [to attend a school], he's going to get it. It's naive to think a school would deny it to an outstanding See NCAA, pg. 3



threat for the Bears at fullback. Bear great

The former Chicago Bear and University of Minnesota great died Sunday night of apparently natural causes at age 81 at Falls Memorial Hospital

A small-town boy to the end, Mr. Nagurski was born in nearby Rainy River, Canada, and seldom strayed far from his roots. His home was on Rainy Lake in Ranier, Minn., on the Minnesota-Canadian border.

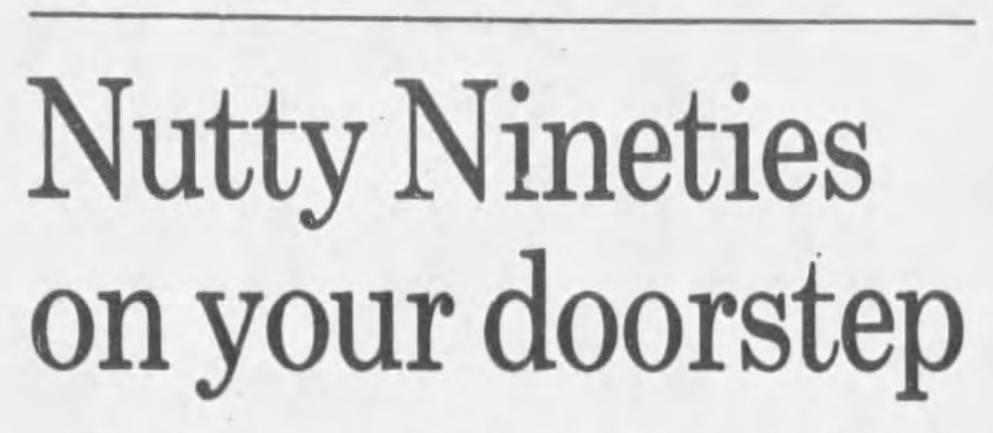
Bronko was an ideal name for what

"My greatest thrill in football was the day Bronko Nagurski announced his retirement," former Green Bay Packer fullback-linebacker and Hallof-Famer Clarke Hinkle once said. "There's no question he was the most bruising fullback football has ever seen. I know because I've still got the

When Bronko Nagurski ran one way, bodies flew another. Head down, his legs churning, he would high-step it through the line before greeting would-be tacklers with one final mes-

"If a tackler came at me, I'd drop my shoulder into him. I'd hit him before he'd hit me," the reclusive Mr. Nagurski said in one of his last interviews. "Sometimes, I'd hit two or three guys that way and make extra yards. I'd knock them on their rear end with my shoulder instead of them knocking me on my rear end. So I developed that, but geez, I can feel it

An Indiana shocker



In the wake

of the news

Stories you will be reading during the new decade . . .

Replacement players lift Sox

CHICAGO, April 2, 1990—Despite a lockout imposed by major-league owners, the White Sox opened their season with a lineup composed of minor-league players who thrashed the Milwaukee Brewers 16-1 at Comiskey Park before 36,763 fans, most of whom couldn't tell the difference.

However, General Manager Larry Himes of the White Sox was not amused.

"We're in a rebuilding plan here, and I don't want to rush our stars of the future," he said. "Besides, this whole thing is ruining our payroll, because our minor-leaguers make more than our major-leaguers."

Minnie Minoso, on loan from Vancouver, led the Sox attack with three singles and two RBIs.

Ben Johnson vanishes over Spain

BARCELONA, July 28, 1992—Canadian sprinter Ben Johnson, reinstated after his steroid scandal in Seoul four years ago, carried the torch at the opening ceremonies of the 1992 Summer Olympics, but then disappeared.

According to eyewitnesses, Johnson jogged to the top of the stadium, but after lighting the Olympic flame, he began to smoke the torch and then continued to attempt climbing stairs even after he had reached the top row.

"Like all of us, Ben Johnson gets high on the Olympics every four years," said chairman Juan Antonio Samaranch. "We will attempt to locate him on radar, but the

Games must go on." America's synchronized swimmers volunteered to douse the flame with their hair at the conclusion of the competition if Johnson still is missing.

Cubs fine tardy Strawberry

CHICAGO, May 7, 1994—Newly acquired Cubs outfielder Darryl Strawberry was fined an undisclosed sum for reporting to Wrigley Field at 3:50 p.m., during the seventh inning of a game against the Pittsburgh Pirates. Strawberry, who earns \$5 million a season and is batting .173, says he slept through his alarm clock but responded to pounding on the door by his

"I thought we had a night game," said Strawberry. "Why do you have lights here if you don't play at night? I think I might ask for a trade."

Cub teammates angrily disclosed Strawberry has been late on several occasions. "How many times?" said pitcher Les

Lancaster. "I don't know. I've lost count." Manager Don Zimmer, who is down to a waist size of 26, was too weak to answer

reporters' questions. Hawks home games on free TV

MEDICINE HAT, Alberta, July 5, 1995—On the eve of his team's opener in the Stanley Cup finals, President Dollar Bill Wirtz announced all of his Blackhawks See Verdi, pg. 4

College scores Kansas 98, Nebraska 93

Georgetown 87, Pitt 71 LSU 111, Tennessee 94 New Mexico St. 83, UNLV 82 Xavier 89, Loyola 73 Bradley 77, Drake 68 Masters 84, Northeastern 67

Indiana's Eric Anderson (right) and Calbert Cheaney guard Michigan's Loy Vaught.

Va. Tech 71, Va. Commonwealth 68 Toledo 84, Cincinnati 72 North Park 106, Rust 93 Richmond 70, James Madison 59

Michigan loses poise, then game

By Neil Milbert Chicago Tribune

BLOOMINGTON, Ind.—You better believe Indiana isn't going to surrender the Big 10 title it won last year without putting up a tremendous fight.

The Hoosiers made believers of defending NCAA champion Michigan in the Wolverines' Big 10 opener Monday night.

After being down by 20 points in the first half, the Hoosiers fed on the electricity generated by the 17,243 fanatics in Assembly Hall, hit Michigan with a jolt down the stretch and scored a shocking 69-67 victory.

When crunch time came, it was the young Hoosiers who made things happen.

And it was the Wolverines, who had flaunted their experience and height advantage constantly to score fast-break baskets in the first half, who fell apart.

Indiana scored 17 of the game's

final 20 points.

"We lost our poise, composure and the game in that order," said coach Steve Fisher of Michigan, which had a 10-1 non-conference record. "It was a game we had for the taking. We couldn't, wouldn't, didn't take it.

"If you're in our locker room, you're depressed and disgusted. want them to start pointing fingers at themselves. I'm going to do it to myself. I should have found a way to bring us back."

"In the first half, we had the fast-break going, but I don't think we played as well defensively in the second half," said Sean Higgins, who missed the 3-point shot that could have enabled the Wol-See Indiana, pg. 3

4 playoff teams out, not down

The picture of Don Beebe standing on his neck will symbolize the four losers of the weekend's divisional playoff games. The rookie Buffalo Bills receiver from Kaneland High School near Aurora landed helmet-first on the frozen Cleveland turf on a controversial play in the first half of the Bills' 34-30 loss.

"I bounced like a pogo stick," Beebe said Monday. "It looked pretty nasty, but it wasn't really that bad."

Beebe said he was "laughing and joking" moments after the scary fall while trainers made him squeeze their hands. That symbolizes the resilience of all four

On Pro Football

Don Pierson

playoff losers after a quarterfinal weekend that lived up to its exciting tradition.

The Pittsburgh Steelers went home winners in defeat. Nobody expected them to be anywhere this time of year. The New York Giants were already home, the only home team to lose, and they have all five boroughs and New Jersey blaming an official. The Bills and Minnesota Vikings went home losers, but no longer burdened by predictions. It wasn't really that bad for anybody.

A Bills-Vikings Super Bowl was a more prominent prognostication this season than any combination of the Final Four. Unfulfilled potential can be worse than no potential at all.

The Bills got closest of all the losers, dramatically failing to beat a Browns team determined to perpetuate its history of falling short. This time, it was Scott Norwood slipping on the frozen field to miss the extra point and set up the 34-30 final. Mainly, it was Ronnie Harmon

See Pierson, pg. 8

Bronko Nagurski was a bruising

Nagurski dies at 81

By Gary Reinmuth

Maybe more than anyone else, Bronko Nagurski exemplified what the National Football League was all about in the 1930s. He was tough, bruising, seemingly indestructible.

A 6-foot-2-inch, 230-pound bull of a man, he used the NFL as his personal china shop. Now death has stopped what a multitude of opponents could not.

in International Falls, Minn.

When he did leave home, first as an All-America fullback and tackle at the University of Minnesota from 1927 to 1929, then as a three-time All-Pro in a nine-year career with the Bears and finally as a professional wrestler, Mr. Nagurski's name became synonymous with two words: brute force.

he was—the ultimate hard-running, head-knocking, get-outta-my-way

bruises."

See Nagurski, pg. 8

INSIDE

High school report Elmwood Park's Kelly Kostuch drives past

tory. Highlights, Page 4. **Bulls-Pistons showdown** The Bulls take on the Pistons in Detroit

Tuesday night in what could be an Eastern

Shannon Denman in Westmont's 52-48 vic-

Hawks impress new wing

Conference finals preview. Page 5.

Ex-Canadien Jocelyn Lemieux finds more teamwork on the Blackhawks. Page 5.

NBA

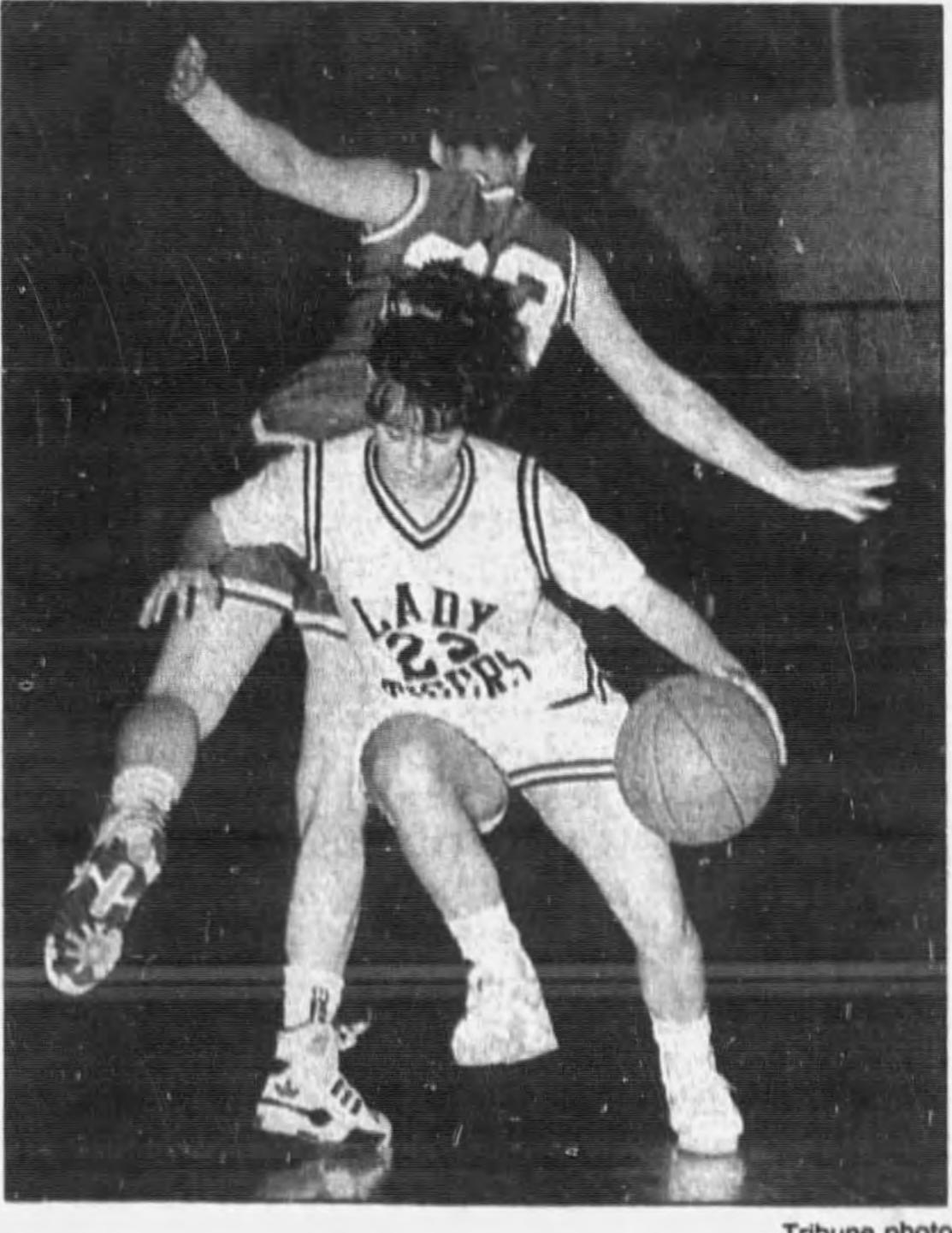
76ers 120, Pacers 116 Magic 111, Spurs 102 Bucks 126, Hornets 113

Mays 110, Sonics 96 W'rriors 139, N'ggets 122 Blazers 108, Kings 96 Roundup, Page 5

NHL Leafs 8, Capitals 6

Penguins 7, Rangers 5

Jets 4, Devils 3 Roundup, Page 5



Tribune photo

\$3 million men aren't this guy's fault

The major-league club owners were honoring John Gaherin at a farewell banquet, a traditional gold-watch ceremony. This was in 1978, at the winter baseball meetings in Orlando. One mogul after another extolled Gaherin for his dedication, etc.: "A man who had labored long and hard in the vineyard and had come forth with wonderful ideas and suggestions."

Finally, it was Gaherin's turn to

"Gentlemen," Gaherin began, "this night recalls for me an Irish wake that was held in South Boston for a politician whom no person in his constituency had a good word for in life. And as the praises droned on, his widow said to her oldest son, 'For the love of God, Dinny, look in the casket and be sure it's your father they're talking about."

The witty Gaherin was the owners' first labor negotiator, from 1967 until July, 1978, when he was dismissed.

"I was hung, drawn and quartered," Gaherin recalled Monday in a telephone



Jerome Holtzman On baseball

interview from his home in Bradenton, Fla. "I was bitter when it happened, but time has taken its toll. I was the sacrificial lamb. You can't work for a multiemployer bargaining group without

winding up standing on the trapdoor. "Half the 26 owners didn't believe the other half, and we had a commissioner riding a golden chariot above the clouds. Gussie Busch and Charley Finley were always ranting and raving. And poor John McHale. He was a nice guy, but he never understood labor relations. The few owners who had common sense couldn't be heard."

Had they listened to Gaherin, it's doubtful there would be any \$3 million

players today. Salaries, of course, would have risen, but the spiral would have been slowed. Contrary to popular belief, it was free agency, not salary arbitration, that initially fueled the economic revolution. Salary arbitration came first, in 1974.

Marvin Miller, then the executive direc-

tor of the players' union, insisted a player had no recourse when bargaining for a new contract. If the player wanted X and the owner refused to go beyond Q, the player signed for Q or sat out the To give the players relief, the owners agreed that such impasses could be broken by an impartial arbitrator. Ed

Brewers and chairman of the owners' Player Relations Committee, and Gaherin were in complete accord: Arbitration provided an equitable solution. Said Gaherin Monday: "If I wasn't the father of arbitration, I was one of

Fitzgerald, then with the Milwaukee

the guys in the back seat when it hap-

See Holtzman, pg. 2

Pierson

Continued from page 1

dropping the winning pass in the end zone, the same Ronnie Harmon who fumbled four times in the 1986 Rose Bowl, the same Ronnie Harmon who was being paid by outlaw agent Norby Wal ters while he was at Iowa, the same Ronnie Harmon who was drafted by the Bills with a pick obtained from the Browns in the deal that landed Bernie Kosar.

Harmon and Kosar combined to beat the Bills. After dropping the pass, Harmon told teammate Thurman Thomas that quarterback Jim Kelly should have thrown it sooner. Harmon refused to speak for himself, and so did Kelly. When it comes to intramural bickering, the Bills can outbicker the Vikings.

"The ball was thrown square in his hands, and he was inbounds by two yards," Buffalo General Manager Bill Polian said. "The ball was thrown so well, it came in nose down into his hands. He took his eye off the ball to see where he was. The good Lord only gives you so many opportunities to win a game."

Twice on the final drive, Kelly converted fourth-down passes, one to Beebe, who had returned not only to the game but to the middle of the field, almost the very spot where he had escaped a stretcher ride.

"Jim called the last drive almost completely," coach Marv Levy said. "Sixteen plays in 2 minutes 33 seconds, and we still couldn't win it."

Polian thinks the finish will serve as a springboard.

"This whole season helped us. For a young team to play in the crucible, to take the beating we took in our local media, and then come back and play like we played in our last three games, I believe we matured and turned the corner. remember the same thing happened to the 49ers two years ago when they lost to the Vikings in

The pass Don Beebe caught or

Felix Wright intercepted or nobody

caught in the first half of Buffalo's

34-30 loss to Cleveland Saturday

was still somewhat up in the air

Monday, serving as another example

of the shortcomings of instant replay

Buffalo's Beebe was upended but

"One ref said it was a catch, and

another told me it wasn't because I

had to have both feet on the

Manager Bill Polian said. "When

you're hit while in the air, you're

down by contact. The only question

then is whether it's complete or in-

complete. The official told me he

couldn't tell on replay whether the

laces were moving so he couldn't

"That's not right," Buffalo General

ground," Beebe said Monday.

appeared to have possession when

and NFL officiating.

he landed on his helmet.

Upon further review, confusion

the first round. The San Francisco papers wanted to bring on Steve Young. Now, they're unbeatable."

The Vikings agree. They were the only team blown out, 41-13, but the 49ers might have done them a favor by destroying misconceptions about how good the Vikings were.

"There's 27 of us and the 49ers," Vikings General Manager Mike Lynn said. "A great football

"There were too many high hopes for this team. Going into the '90s, that won't be the case. We'll be in a dogfight in the Central Division with the improvement of Detroit and Green Bay and even Tampa, and certainly Chicago will rebound."

Giants cornerback Mark Collins symbolized class in defeat by standing up and facing music he didn't deserve to hear. It was Collins who was beaten by the Los Angeles Rams' Flipper Anderson on Jim Everett's 30-yard touchdown pass in overtime.

A close pass interference call against Sheldon White had set up the play, and Collins was caught between a rock and a hard place, a familiar setting for any corner. The season had just sailed over his head when someone suggested: "You know some people will be calling you the goat."

"If they can play cornerback, tell them to come on out," Collins said. "It's a shame it had to come down to this. We had opportunities to jump on them early offensively. To let things come down to pass interference and an all-out blitz, it kind of hurts."

If all else fails, the losers can blame the grass factor. The 49ers, Browns, Rams and Denver Broncos all play on grass fields and beat the Vikings, Bills, Giants and Steelers, who all toil on artificial turf.

That means that next Sunday's championship games, Cleveland at Denver and Los Angeles at San Francisco, will be played on splendid grass before the postseason gets artificial again for the Super Bowl in New Orleans.

ground, it had to be an interception.

But officials said the whistle blew be-

tween the time Beebe's head hit the

ground and Wright caught the ball,

Beebe said Bills films showed the

tip of the ball barely hitting the

ground before it bounced up, but

not until he had established posses-

sion. This would have nullified an

ball never hit the ground and Beebe

had cradled it long enough to estab-

Bills coach Mary Levy said no, the

nullifying anything afterwards.

rule possession."

interception.

lish possession.



Denver quarterback John Elway slides to the turf with David Little in pursuit Sunday in the Broncos' 24-23 win over Pittsburgh.

AP Laserphoto

Broncos, Browns to meet in AFC sequel

By Fred Mitchell Chicago Tribune

DENVER—Every compelling show deserves a sequel, and next Officials on the field decided in-Sunday's American Football Concomplete, but the ball bounced from ference championship rematch be-Beebe to Cleveland safety Wright. If tween the Denver Broncos and it wasn't complete and didn't hit the Cleveland Browns has a history of great theater.

> "It's like Ali-Frazier," said Broncos wide receiver Mark Jackson. "And we're going to kill those suckers."

The Browns and Broncos have met for the AFC championship three of the last four years. Cleveland has been turned away from the altar to the Super Bowl in capital letters.

First came The Drive four years ago, when quarterback John Elway guided the Broncos 981/2 yards for a tying touchdown to send the game into overtime before Denver

Then came The Fumble, when yard scoring drive, capped off by ran through it Sunday. Steelers back Browns back Earnest Byner fumbled inside the 10-yard line in the closing minutes, and Denver held on to win 38-33 in 1987 at Mile High Stadi-

"Those were devastating losses for us," said Browns owner Art Modell. "But they're in the past and we're looking ahead. We're going back to

The Browns-Broncos winner will meet the winner of Sunday's National Football Conference championship game between the Rams and 49ers in the Jan. 28 Super Bowl in New Orleans.

The Broncos "killed" the Pittsburgh Steelers softly in Sunday's divisional playoff, relying on another patented fourth-quarter drive to eke out a 24-23 victory.

The Steelers, 10½-point underdogs, won six of seven games to advance to Sunday's showdown with

Denver coach Dan Reeves has le-

Merril Hoge [120 yards] became the first opponent to gain 100 yards against Denver all season.

Hoge also caught eight passes for

60 yards and rookie running back playoff triumph over Buffalo last Tim Worley rushed for 50 yards. For the 16th time in his National "I think us playing the Browns for the third time in four years for

Football League career, Elway brought his team from behind for a victory in the final minutes.

"I think it's just desire. The bottom line is we never give up," Elway said. "It's been a trademark of this team all year. It's a reason why we're where we're at. It's a quality you have to have to win big sive crowd noise from the "Dawg

Even though Steelers quarterback Bubby Brister performed extraordinarily, completing 19 of 29 passes for 229 yards, it was Elway who came through when it counted

"It's going to come down to you or Bubby," Reeves told Elway be-

"Anyway, that play didn't cost us the game," Levy said. prevailed 23-20 on a Rich Karlis gitimate concerns about his highly Don Pierson field goal at Cleveland. Elway directed a dramatic 71- regarded defense after the Steelers fore the game. heck out of his way." Nagurski's career

Nagurski: A true legend

The stories of Bronko Nagurski needed no embellishment, teammate Sid Luckman said Monday. "He was a legend in our time," Luckman said. 'First time I met him, I was in awe. I had never seen

anyone that massive in my life." Luckman called Nagurski's death Monday "terrible. It's a tragic thing to see him go. He's an immortal guy. He was an exceptional person, not only one of the greatest athletes ever, but humble."

Bears President Michael McCaskey called him "a player of mythical performances. He was so far above everyone that you measured all players

"I remember him very fondly," said Virginia McCaskey, daughter of Bears founder George Halas. "Such a powerful runner and such a quiet person. The two aspects never seemed to go to-

Ed McCaskey, Bears chairman of the board, recalled that Halas had "great affection" for Nagurski and that Nagurski once took a note from Halas after a season when Halas had no money.

"One of the things nobody seems to remember is Beattie Feathers was the first running back to gain over 1,000 yards [in 13 games in 1934] and Bronko was the one who did the blocking," Virginia McCaskey said. "Then he came back during the war when the Bears were desperate for players and played tackle."

That was in 1943. Nagurski had retired in 1937, but came back to help the Bears go 8-1-1 and beat the Washington Redskins in the 1943 title game with Luckman at quarterback. By then, Luckman said Nagurski also was playing fullback.

"Every time I'd get in trouble, I'd call on the Bronk and he'd make it whether there was a hole or not," Luckman said. "George Musso and Joe Stydahar [Hall of Fame blockers] would say, 'Hey, let's get the

Once, after knocking over and bouncing off several players, he ran into a goal post. Upon returning to the huddle, Nagurski is said to have remarked: "The first ones weren't bad, but that last son-of-a-gun sure

Melvin Braxton's tying 1-yard

plunge and David Treadwell's win-

Sunday to live for another weekend.

the right to go to the Super Bowl is

a heck of a matchup," said Broncos

"It's destiny," said Denver strong

The Browns edged the Broncos

16-13 in overtime Oct. 1 in a con-

troversial game in Cleveland. Exces-

Pound" section of one end zone

caused the referees to switch the

Broncos' end of the field. With the

wind now in the Browns' favor,

Cleveland won on a Matt Bahr field

owner Pat Bowlen.

safety Dennis Smith.

The Browns escaped with a 34-30

ning extra point with 2:27 left.

was tough." "I think that's true," Luckman said. "I know Cal Hubbard of the Packers once wanted to get a shot at him on a punt and Bronk hit him and knocked him out of the ballpark."

"He played in the same backfield with Red Grange. Grange once said Nagurski was the best player he had ever seen. He said Nagurski had the power of [Larry] Csonka but was faster, and he was as great or better than [Dick] Butkus on defense."

Nagurski also was a professional wrestler. "That's where they get some of those glamor pictures," Virginia McCaskey said. "That's not anything like my memories."

Don Pierson

Bronko Nagurski's career highlights during his nine seasons with the Bears (1930-37,

Inducted into Pro Football Hall of Fame in

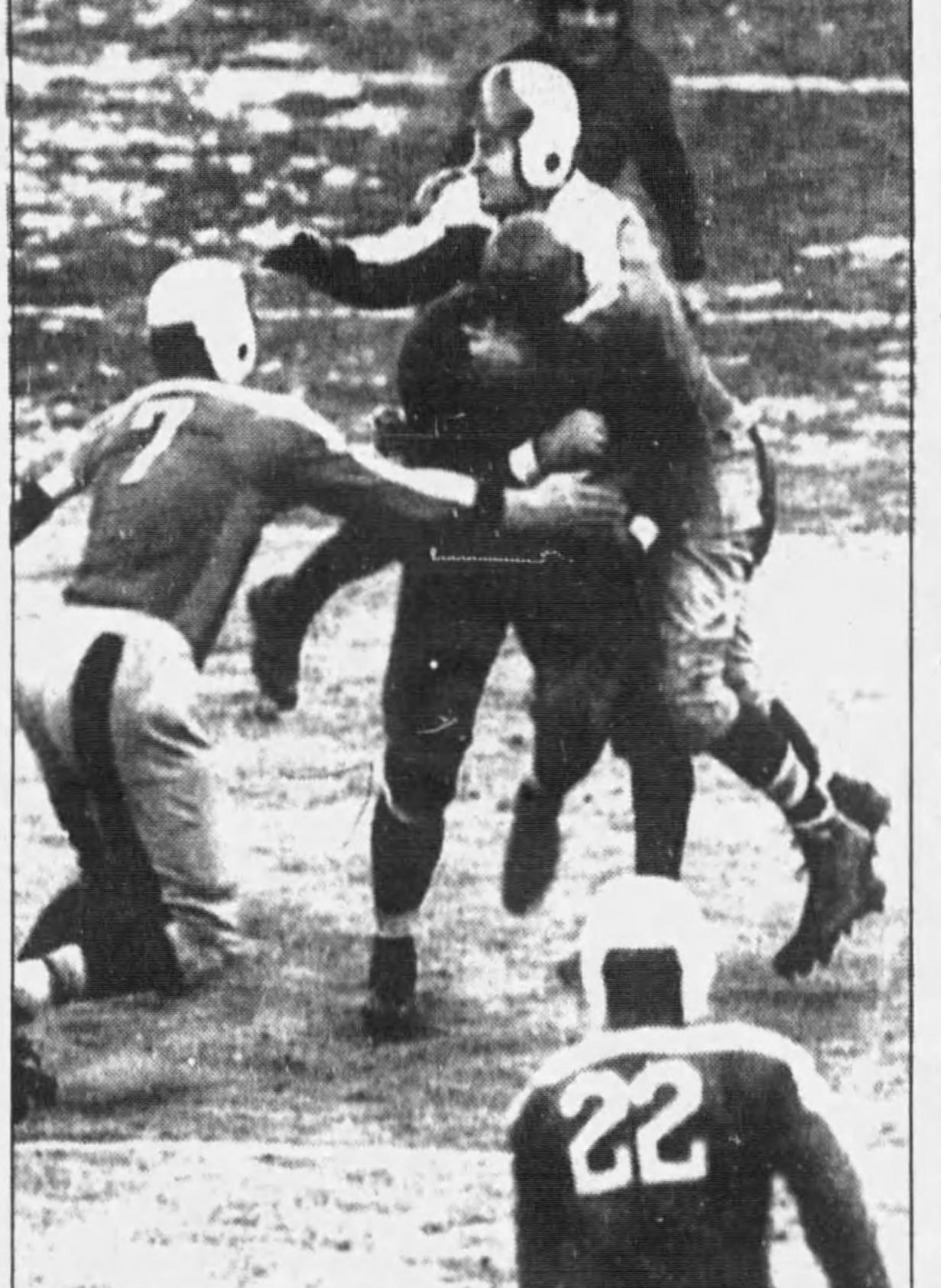
All-Pro three times

8th on Bears all-time career rushing list: 633 attempts, 2,778 yards, 4.4-yard average,

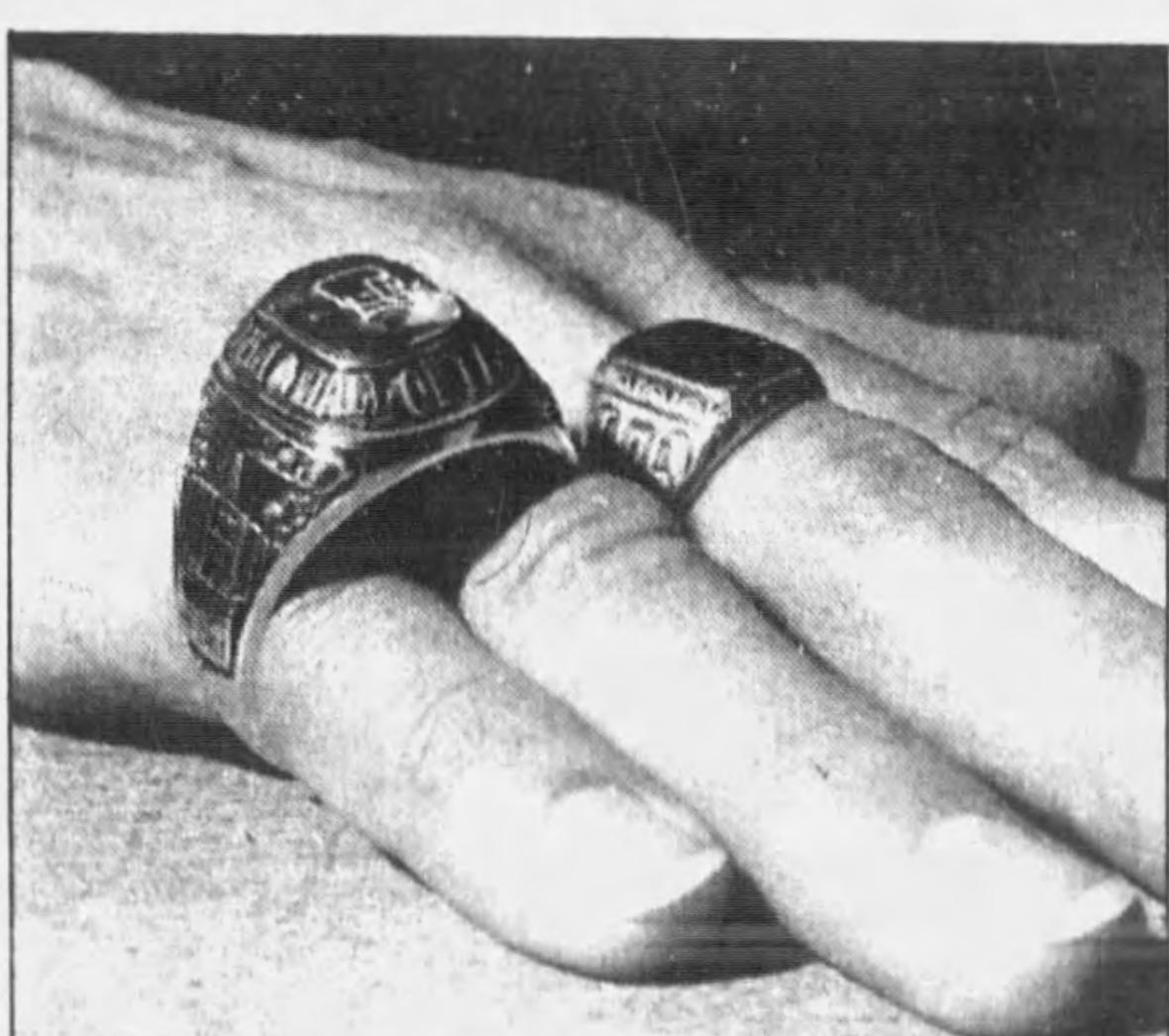
100-yard rushing game, 11/26/33: 18

carries, 124 yards

Year	m in rushing: Yards	Carries	TD
1936	529	122	3
1933	533	128	1



The Giants attempt to wrestle Bronko Nagurski to the ground during a 1934 football game at the Polo Grounds in New York.



Tribune photo by Quentin C. Dodt Bronko Nagurski's size-191/2 Hall of Fame ring fit around two fingers of an average-sized hand.

Continued from page 1 now in my shoulders."

On Jan. 29, 1963, he was inducted into

the Pro Football Hall of Fame in Canton, Ohio, as a charter member. A man of Mr. Nagurski's size and enormous strength was bound to inspire plenty of stories—folk and otherwise. This one is

true: At the time of his induction into the Hall of Fame, his ring was the largest (size 191/2) ever made by the L.G. Balfour Company. Minnesota coach Clarence Spears reportedly recruited him after driving by the

Nagurski farm one day and seeing the young Bronko plowing a field-without a

But the classic Nagurski tale was told by Bears founder George Halas: In a game against the Washington

Redskins at Wrigley Field, Mr. Nagurski is consin, Mr. Nagurski recovered a fumble said to have crashed over center, knocked two linebackers in opposite directions and then leveled the defensive halfback and safety before caroming off the goalposts and into the brick wall. "That last guy hit me awful hard," said Mr. Nagurski when he was through.

Such was the state of NFL recordkeeping in the early days that his statistics remain unofficial. But it is known that he carried the ball more than 600 times for the Bears and gained almost 3,000 yards. He led the Bears in rushing in 1933 and 1936 and ranks eighth on the Bears' alltime list.

He was born Bronislaw Nagurski on Nov. 3, 1908. When he was 2, his family moved to International Falls, Minn., where he at-

tended grammar school and high school.

and from school, playing basketball and taking part in track.

But his talent for football remained largely a secret until he reached college. Mr. Nagurski's high school team was so dreadful, regularly losing by scores of 52-0, 42-0 and 33-0, that when he finally decided to attend Minnesota hardly anybody

Later, he would say the only reason he was even able to go to college was because he found a job, paying \$50 a month, as a

night watchman. Mr. Nagurski's college career was one highlight film after another. His best year was his senior season of 1929, when he became the first player ever named to two positions (tackle and fullback) on an All-

America team. But it was during his junior year that his place in collegiate football history was as-

Late in a scoreless game against Wisat the Badgers' 17. Mr. Nagurski was suffering from a sore back and wearing a brace that day, but Spears, desperate for running backs, ordered him moved from defensive tackle to fullback, whereupon Mr. Nagurski carried the ball seven straight times up the middle—at nearly 3 yards a crack—to give Minnesota a 6-0 victory that ruined the Badgers' Big 10 title hopes.

Mr. Nagurski joined the Bears in 1930 after signing a contract for the thenhealthy sum of \$5,000. From then until 1937, his style of play epitomized the rough, tough Bear teams of the '30s. Mr. Nagurski earned All-Pro honors in 1932, '33 and '34 and helped the Bears win championships in '32, '33 and '43.

The 1933 rule change that allowed passing from anywhere behind the line of

Mr. Nagurski and made him a threat to throw and run. "I'd fake into the line, then raise up and throw to one of our ends, Bill Karr or Bill Hewitt," he explained. "They'd either cut across the middle or cut into the flat."

Great as he was—and even considering that his best years came during the Depression-Mr. Nagurski never made more in a year than the \$5,000 he received for his first season with the Bears. The more he played, in fact, the less he got.

Mr. Nagurski made \$4,500 in his second year with the Bears and \$3,700 the third. He asked for \$6,000 in 1938 and was turned down by Halas, who said \$6,000 was too much. At one point, Bronko Nagurski, maybe the greatest fullback ever, was playing for \$225 a game. He supplemented that by earning a whopping \$50 for endorsing Wheaties and another \$50 for endorsing cigarettes.

Mr. Nagurski said goodbye to football in style. In 1943, after being out of the game for five years and with the Bears' roster depleted by World War II, he came out of retirement to play tackle. But in his final appearance, he played fullback as the Bears defeated the Redskins 41-21 for the NFL title in front of 34,320 fans. Nagurski scored the last touchdown of his career that day on, typically, a 3-yard run. The Bears eventually retired his No. 3 jersey.

He remained a Bears fan till the end. In 1985, as the team was closing in on its Super Bowl championship, The Tribune's Cooper Rollow coaxed him to the telephone for a response.

"They look like the Bears of old," he said. "I don't think I would have have had any trouble making this team. I don't know whether I'd be playing fullback or defense, but I'd be playing someplace."

His playing days over, Mr. Nagurski be-

He built up his powerful legs running to scrimmage opened up the jump pass for came the backfield coach at UCLA. But his dislike for traveling and public speaking caused him to retire to the family farm after just one season. Beginning in 1945, he returned to a part-time career as a pro-

fessional wrestler. Mr. Nagurski had first taken up the sport in 1933. Along the way, he beat Lou Thesz for the National Wrestling Alliance championship in 1939 only to lose it a year later to Ray Steele. Among his many

opponents was Gorgeous George. After retiring from the ring in 1960, he came a professional wrestling referee before finally settling down to run a gas station in International Falls for eight years until his retirement in 1968.

When he left his gas station he became even more of a recluse, for many years venturing into International Falls only to pick up his mail.

The International Falls Chamber of Commerce once tried to hold a day in his honor, but he told them no.

Part of the reason may have been that as he grew older painful arthritis in his knees, ankles and shoulders limited his mobility. The once battering Bronk was forced to lean on canes just to get around.

"Our [Hall of Fame] class in Canton is diminished now," Nagurski said in 1985. "Not many of us are left. I've got a lot of physical problems now. I wouldn't go very far on the goal line anymore. It doesn't take very long till that old rocking chair feels pretty good."

He had been in a nursing home for a

year, the hospital for a week. Mr. Nagurski is survived by 4 sons, 2 daughters, 15 grandchildren and 1 greatgrand child. His wife Eileen died in 1987.

Services will be 10 a.m. Saturday at St. Thomas Aquinas Church in International Falls. Burial will be at St. Thomas Cemetery in International Falls.