Harmon talks but Iowa fans can't forget

ears later, a dozen to be precise, Ronnie Harmon's fumbling and bumbling performance in the Rose Bowl lingers on the minds of any lowa football fan worth his

Harmon signed a contract with the Chicago Bears a few days ago and the Chicago Tribune, in a story written by former Iowa City reporter Melissa Isaacson, wedged

the first words in a long time out of Harmon regarding the Hawkeyes' New Year's Day 1986 loss to UCLA in the Rose Bowl.

Mark

Dukes

Gazette

sports editor

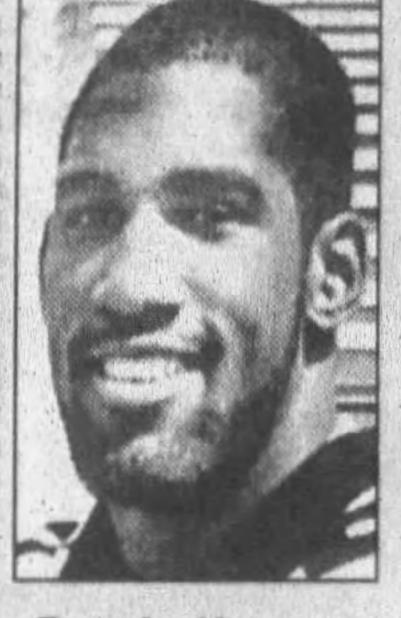
Most Iowa fans don't need reminding that Harmon fumbled four times in the first half and dropped a potential touchdown pass in the end zone against the underdog Bruins, who won the game, 45-28. He became the focus of speculation — in fact, investigation as to how this could happen to a player who rarely fumbled during his college career.

Many wondered: Did Harmon throw the game? You still go places 12 years later and people are commenting about it.

If Harmon had bungled things similarly against, say, Wisconsin during the regular season, it would have been long forgotten. But in the bright light of the Rose Bowl, and in a season that the Hawkeyes had a genuine shot to win the national championship, the mistakes were magnified.

Harmon, as fine a player as Hayden Fry has coached at Iowa, did catch 11 passes for 102 yards and rushed for 55 yards against UCLA. But those statistics were hugely over-

shadowed by his turnovers. Watching Harmon's mistakes unfold that



Ronnie Harmon 1985 photo

Tapes of the game revealed UCLA put some excellent, well-placed hits on Harmon, but four fumbles in a half? West Coast scribes the next morning had a field day, one saying Harmon's were the biggest goofs since Roy Riegels ran the wrong way for a touchdown.

day was almost folly.

In the Iowa interview room following the game, decked in his trademark

I recall Harm wrap-around sunglasses and gold chains, answering questions about his drops. But not · very specifically. Recollection is that Harmon mainly shrugged off his performance as one of those strange things that happens in * sports.

ASKED SPECIFICALLY WHY he fumbled so many times. Harmon said then, "That's a good question. UCLA is awful - quick, they hit hard and they stripped the ball once from me. They're the quickest defense I've seen."

Many since have attempted to probe the Harmon story further, and all have failed. Before breaking his silence with the Tribune's Isaacson, Harmon had not spoken with media in eight years. That only height-

ened suspicions among lowa faithful.

"I guess I should have defended myself," Harmon told the Tribune. "Maybe by not talking for so long, that made it worse. I just honestly didn't think it was that big of a deal. People who knew me at lowa, my teammates . . . (they) knew that wasn't me and that was enough."

Well, it was — and is — a big deal to many lowa fans who can't seem to get the game, and his performance, out of their mind.

Some will be forever convinced that Harmon threw the game, especially since he was later implicated in shady dealings with Chicago sports agents Norby Walters and

Not that throwing a game is out of the realm, but I don't believe it. Harmon had four awful possessions at the most awful time for lowa football. Had he hung on to the ball, the Hawkeyes still may not have beaten the Bruins.

Harmon's legacy for many lowa fans is his 1986 Rose Bowl performance. That's unfortunate, but so were the fumbles.

It's probably time to just get over it.

Another rated foe awaits Hawks

By Laura Palmer Gazette sportswriter

The Iowa women's basketball team will celebrate the conclusion of its preseason schedule with sun, sandy beaches and sightseeing.

And, of course, another tough opponent.

Formidable competition was not lacking for the Hawkeyes in November and December.

lowa battled ranked opponents

WOMEN'S HOOPS

No. 3 Connecticut, No. 4 Louisiana Tech, No. 14 Washington and No. 24 Arkansas. The Hawks had some shining moments, took their lumps and struggled with injuries. But Coach Angie Lee hopes the high level of competition has prepared the Hawkeyes well for the Big Ten cam-

The Hawkeyes' final test before opening league action Dec. 28 at home against Minnesota is eighthranked Vanderbilt tonight at 6:30 (lowa time). The game is the nightcap of the Elite Four Tournament at Jenkins Arena in Lakeland, Fla., and can be seen on ESPN2. Third-ranked Connecticut (9-0) plays No. 12 Stan-

ford (2-3) at 3:30 on ESPN.

Even though Iowa's record is 3-5, Lee believes her team should be in a Pos. tournament of this caliber. Vanderbilt, which is coming off a 78-47 win over Mississippi State, is 6-1.

"We're going down there and give the best that we possibly can," Lee said. "It's our time and our opportunity to go against a good Vanderbilt team. If we play good basketball and not hurt ourselves ..."

Vanderbilt leads the series against Iowa, 3-0. The last time the teams met was in the 1996 NCAA Midwest Regional in Chicago. Vanderbilt won, 76-63.

The Commodores continue to rely on depth, which concerns Lee. They are also "very versatile," she said. Vanderbilt utilizes a zone defense,

which the Hawkeyes struggled with

in a 74-57 loss at Iowa State last Senior 6-2 forwards Na'Sheema Hillmon and Lisa Ostrom are playing very well for Vanderbilt, averaging 12.9 and 11.3 points a game,

dorf comes off the bench to average 11.9 points. "Our team is getting better and

better each game," said Vanderbilt

respectively. Sophomore Beth Osten-

lowa (3-5) Tangela Smith

Vanderbilt (6-1) Na'Sheema Hillmon Lisa Ostrom Katie Janky Nettie Respondek

SERIES STANDING: Vanderbilt leads series, 3-0. LAST MEETING: Vanderbilt won, 76-63, March 23, 1996 during the NCAA Midwest Regional in Chicago, I

GAME TIME: 6 p.m. (lowa time), Jenkins Arena, Lakeland, Fla. TELEVISION: ESPN2 (Channel 4 for all TCI custmoters in low

RADIO: KCXIC, WMT, WHO

assistant coach Julie Plank. "The strength of our team is we have a lot of dimension. We don't rely on one player. We try to wear teams down with our depth, no matter who they

"(Iowa's) record doesn't reflect their strengths ... No matter who's on the court, they'll play hard. We look forward to the challenge."

Part of that challenge will come from senior forward Malikah Willis, who has started in the last three games and impressed Lee with her

contributions. Willis returned to the lineup this fall after red-shirting last season with a knee injury. She made her first collegiate start against Louisiana Tech and grabbed a team-high six rebounds. The following night against Richmond she collected nine boards and six assists.

Nadine Domond has been a stalwart for the Hawkeyes during their roller-coaster ride. She has been shuffled between point guard and shooting guard, but remains poised.

"She's basically a rock. She's always there. She's always positive," Lee said. "She's been great."

Tangela Smith has been forced to move to the perimeter from her post position. She is averaging 17.8 points, including a high of 37 points against Richmond.

The injury situation is improving. Senior Tiffany Gooden played 22 minutes against Iowa State in her first action of the season. Lee is looking forward to the return of Angela Hamblin and point guard Cara Consuegra in the near future. It could be awhile, however, before point guard Kadaiya Johns returns to the lineup. She has a torn muscle on the bottom of her foot.

lowa's Nadine Domond flips the ball away from Washington's Amber Hall then pursues it during the Prairie Lights Classic last month in Iowa City. Domond is in her final season with the Hawkeyes after arriving with the highly-touted recruiting class of

Domond: Dealing with change

Gazette file photo by Miranda Meyer

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learned that basketball was also about change.

Now a senior for the Hawkeyes, Domond has dealt with change since she arrived in the 1994 recruiting class, dubbed the "Magnificent Seven" and considered by most the best in the nation.

Coach Vivian Stringer left for Rutgers after Domond's freshman season, and the team adjusted to Angie Lee's taking over. Domond enjoyed success two years ago. then endured the bumpy ride of an upand-down season as a junior.

Last year, she was shuffled from her natural position of shooting guard to point guard.

"It was very hard," Domond said of playing the new position. "Every shot looked good to me, because I came off shooting. This year I've (figured out) when to shoot and when not to shoot." She returned to shooting guard this

season when point guards freshman Cara Consuegra and junior college transfer Kadaiya Johns joined the Hawks. But when both were injured a few weeks ago, Domond was back directing the offense.

Injuries have taken their toll on the Hawkeyes, who at 3-5 are off to their worst start since opening 2-6 during the 1981-82 season.

"Coming here I have learned to deal with change," Domond said. "Change is key. We go through changes day in and day out. Sometimes you feel like a revolving door. People come in and come out and every time they leave they take a piece of you.

"Am I frustrated? No, because I'll live to see another day. I know the sun will rise. Right now it's real dark and gloomy because of so many injuries. I'm just doing whatever it takes for us to win."

Domond has been doing quite a bit for the Hawkeyes. She is averaging 15.5 points, 6.4 rebounds and 3.6 assists a game. She scored 27 points against defensive-minded Louisiana Tech.

But Domond also does a lot behind the scenes that goes unnoticed by lowa followers. She puts in extra time perfecting her shot, and during practice encourages her teammates.

"Nadine is constant talk, and the funniest thing I find about Nadine is we'll be doing a shoot-around and Nadine is al-

We go through changes day in and day out. Sometimes you feel like a revolving door. People come in and come out and every time they leave they take a piece of you. Am I frustrated? No, because I'll live to see another day."

Nadine Domond

ways yelling at a post player at the other end," Lee said. "'Randi Peterson this is your day,' or 'Yeah, Tan (Tangela Smith) I see ya, This is your day, girl.' She's always working to make sure everyone feels good."

But Lee wants Domond to "think about Nadine, too."

"Sometimes she doesn't think about herself enough," Lee said. "I don't mean that in regard to shooting the ball. But getting into her own rhythm and the feel of her own self. She worries so much about everybody else that she sometimes forgets that Nadine needs to be talked to,

While many onlookers focus on the lack of NCAA tournament success in assessing that 1994 recruiting class whose finest achievement is a Sweet 16 appearance in 1995 — Domond's expectations are a bit more basic.

"To play good women's basketball. We never had consistency," Domond said. "We've been up and down. To define lowa women's basketball is to never give up, keep fighting.

"Our freshmen class, we've been through everything. People came in our lives and left and took pieces of us. But we still stood strong and we still continue to hold our own ..."

Through the change and the struggles, Domond continues to have passion for the sport that has guided her growth.

"I still have a love and passion for it, because if you don't, you get caught up in a vicious cycle," she said.

From page 1B

Hawks: Play today in Puerto Rico

15th-ranked Iowa (7-1) is heavily favored to capture this event. There are no other Top 25 schools in the eight-team field and no apparent threats, although you never know.

Iowa opens today at 4:30 p.m. (Iowa time) against Puerto Rico-Mayaguez, a Division II team that's compiled a 1-8 record. The Bulldogs played three Division I opponents in late November and got pounded by West Virginia (111-63), Evansville (80-46) and Washington State (85-51).

The other teams in the Shootout are Southern Mississippi (6-1) from Conference USA, Loyola of Chicago (4-5) from the Midwestern Collegiate, Oral Roberts (5-4) from the Mid-Continent, Tennessee Tech (3-5) from the Ohio Valley, St. Bonaventure (6-2) from the Atlantic-10 and Furman (1-7) from the Southern Conference.

IOWA WILL PLAY Southern Mississippi or Loyola in the second round Monday. The tournament ends Tuesday. It Iowa keeps winning, it will play at 4:30 p.m. each day.

None of Iowa's games in the San Juan Christmas Shootout will be televised. All three games will be broadcast on the Hawkeye Radio Network on the normal stations.

Coach Davis confirmed Saturday that Darryl Moore will replace slumping Kent McCausland in the starting lineup today. That will give the Hawkeyes an all-freshman backcourt of Dean Oliver and Ricky Davis. Seniors Moore and Ryan Bowen will be the forwards, with sophomore Guy Rucker at center.

McCausland, who led the nation in 3-point accuracy last season, shot poorly in Iowa's last two games against UNI and Iowa State, missing 10 of 11 shots overall and going only 1-for-7 on 3-pointers. He had started 19 games in a row, including all eight this year, before the change.

"I'm not really worried about it," McCausland said after practice Saturday. "I just want to be a spark, hopefully, off the bench. That's what you look for, a guy to come off the bench and give you something, so hopefully can do that."

MCCAUSLAND HAS HIT 40 percent of his 3-pointers this season, compared to 52.2 percent last year.

"He's trying real hard to become a better, more wellrounded player," Davis said. "Coming off the bench will take

P.R.-Mayaguez (1-8) Armando Rodriguez

Gilfred Velez Isreal Figueroa lowa (7-1) No. Name Darryl Moore Ryan Bowen Guy Rucker

23 Ricky Davis COACHES: Johnny Flores, Mayaguez, 15 year, 127-50 overall; Tom Davis, Iowa, 12th year, 236-120 overall (career SERIES STANDING: First meeting. GAME TIME: 4:30 p.m. (lowa time), Antilles High School,

Fort Buchanan, Guaynabo, Puerto Rico. TELEVISION: None. RADIO: Hawkeye Radio Network (WMT, KXIC, WHO).

some pressure off of you. People don't focus on you quite as much. You have a little more time to relax before coming in. If you're in a little slump or if you're not playing real well, sometimes going to the bench can help you get loose."

Moore started the first three games of the season at small forward before being replaced by Ricky Davis, who now moves from small forward to off-guard in place of McCausland. Davis has been playing both positions anyway during games, and the Hawkeyes have played some of their best basketball with Davis and Moore on the floor together.

Coach Davis considers this a minor adjustment to the lineup. He plans to keep his normal rotations in place. "They might come out and shake hands differently or something like that," he joked. "No, that's really a small change within the framework of our team."

THE SAN JUAN Christmas Shootout will be played at Antilles High School on the grounds of Fort Buchanan, a U.S. army base on the outskirts of San Juan. The small gym seats only 600 people for basketball and is not well lit.

"I walked in and I thought it was pretty dark," McCausland

"It's all right. I played in worse places in high school and stuff like that. It's not bad."

The day-time temperatures have been in the lows 80's here this week. There are some openair gyms in Puerto Rico, but the Antilles High School gym is enclosed by walls, making for a hot, humid environment for basketball.

Visit The Gazette's Web site for coverage of Iowa's game this afternoon. It's at www.GazetteOnline.com

Robinson guides Eagles by Iowa Central, 82-58

Pops in 18 points for Kirkwood men

Andrew Robinson scored 18 points as Kirkwood Community College defeated Iowa Central, 82-58, Saturday in a men's junior college basketball game at Johnson Hall.

The Divsion II 12th-ranked Eagles improved to 12-2 overall, 5-0 in the conference.

Ericson Beck and Brandon Welsh each scored 15 points for the Eagles. Jeremy Wilson added 11.

The Eagles led. 43-35 at halftime.

COLLEGE HOOPS

NELL 71 - Trent Hoover scored a game-high 33 points in a losing effort for Cornell at Aurora, Ill.

Hoover was 4 of 8 from 3-point range and Kyle Hageness hit three treys and scored 11 points.

The Rams (1-6) trailed, 49-34, at intermission and avoided a blowout by outscoring Aurora (7-3), 37-32, in the second half.

Bryan Schwerdtmann scored 31 points and was among four Aurora players AURORA 81, COR- in double-figures.

Title for McGinness at UIU

FAYETTE - Iowa's Jeff McGinness and Gabe McMahon WRESTLING won titles Saturday at the Upper Iowa Open.

McGinness pinned Augustana's Nate Cross in 1:47 for the 142-pound title. McMahon decisioned Augustana's Darren Linton, 8-5, in the 158-pound final. Both Hawkeyes were wrestling unattached.

Luther 167-pounder Jeff Friedhoff decisioned Northern Iowa's Rob Armey, 3-2. Luther also

crowned heavyweight Brett Stender, who pinned Augustana's Joe Tolani in 5:29.

Luther's Joe Grider beat UNI's Jason Haag in overtime, 2-0.

The host Peacocks crowned one champion — 167-pound Ryan Birt, who posted a 19-2 victory over Iowa's Paul Jenn.



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