**

Mackovic has no complaints - even now

ANSAS CITY — It's staggering sometimes to recall the big ones Arizona State has let get away.

You can, take your choice, rue ASU's near misses or rejoice that ASU was good enough to interest. these bigwigs.

The subject surfaced while eyeballing some visitors at the NCAA Football Preview — a fancy title for an annual bull session held here to allow

about 50 sportswriters to rub elbows with top college football coaches and administrators.

Everywhere you look, there are reminders of ASU's near misses, starting with Dick Schultz, who is making a favorable impression in his first year as the NCAA's executive direc-

When ASU hired Dick Tamburo as athletic director in 1981, the runner-up was Schultz. And when Tamburo was replaced by Charles Harris, the runner-up was Sam Jankov-

Sam talked glowingly here of ASU's potential, but it is doubtful he could have been as successful in Tempe as he has been over the past six years at the University of Miami.

Prosperity and a semblance of sanity off the field have come to Miami under Sam's reign, which includes three national football titles and national championships in four other sports.

He's hardly unknown now

Republic

Columnist

All of which is a preface to introducing today's topic: John Mackovic, who has performed minor miracles at Illinois the past two seasons.

Mackovic, who had been head coach at Wake Forest and with the Kansas City Chiefs, lusted for the ASU coaching job in 1988 when Larry Marmie was elevated.

I talked to him three or four times during the period. I also remember taking to Harris about him. "Who is John Mackovic?" Harris asked.

Mackovic assures me that Harris was pulling my leg. I'm not so sure.

Still, a trace of bitterness lingers within Mackovic, as well as in two other token candidates - Oregon Coach Rich Brooks, and Bob Stull, now at Missouri but then at Texas-El Paso. Mackovic shrugs, then smiles and says, "It

worked out pretty well for me, anyway."

Indeed. Soon after being bypassed by ASU, he took over a probation-riddled program that produced seven victories in two years. Mackovic's teams were 15-7-1 the past two seasons, and the Illini defeated Virginia in the Citrus Bowl on New Year's Day.

On top of that, Mackovic moved into a fancier swivel chair in December 1988, as a combination athletic director/football coach. The chair now is too hot for comfort.

Six months after Mackovic took the AD post, Illinois' basketball program was hit with allegations of serious NCAA violations. As a two-time offender, Illinois faces a possible death penalty.

"At least, I've got another chapter for my book," Mackovic said.

Michigan's Bo Schembechler has suggested a name for the chapter, to wit: "Dumbest thing I ever did." Why, pray tell, would a bright, young football

coach take over an AD's headaches?

"It seemed like a good idea at the time," said Mackovic, 46.

He won't comment about the Illinois basketball situation, and claims he will remain mum until the school's ongoing investigation is complete. Then, he'll talk only to the NCAA.

There's always golf

The AD job hasn't hurt his golf. He had his first 69 this year. And does it hurt his coaching?

"Well, we only won 10 games," Mackovic said. Illinois, ranked 10th nationally, could be better next season if junior quarterback Jeff George opts to stick around, rather than join the NFL. Mackovic

says he has no clue about George's plans. In 1976, Mackovic was considered for the head-coaching job at Arizona, where he was an assistant and where Illinois opens on Sept. 8. The other top candidate was current UA Coach Dick Tomey.

Tony Mason got the job but Tomey and Mackovic, who were ducking one another in the UA halls, became close friends. Two other times, they were top candidates for the same posts.

"I really look forward to playing against friends," Mackovic said. "You feel great if you win and, if you lose, you feel terrible but at least you appreciate how much your friend put into his business."

INSIDE

TV HIGHLIGHTS

NBA: Celtics at Suns, ASPN, 7:30 p.m.; Lakers at Spurs, TNT, 6 p.m. College

basketball: Louisville at Memphis State, ESPN, 5:30 p.m. Complete listings, C2

Briefs

Baschall





the ball in my

hands at the end

of a game than

anyone else."

Redefined roles helping to replace memories of last season By Lee Shappell Larry Bird / " guarantee you I'd

mascot.

The Arizona Republic That cocky smirk has been restored to the Boston Celtics' leprechaun still rather have

> Does he look down at the world of hoops with arrogance or what? Last season, the Celtics had the smirk wiped off their faces.

> Their shillelagh was knocked out from under them, in large part because All-Star forward Larry Bird's feet were knocked out from under him (surgery on both heels).

The air of confidence normally associated with Boston Celtics basketball was missing. The NBA seized a moment of weakness in the Celtics' history, collectively rose and seemed to say: "Red Auerbach, take your cigar and shove it."

Years of frustration in the face of a perceived arrogance were atoned for.

Among the teams that cashed in on the Celtics' 42-40 season were the Suns, who swept the season series, including a 106-104 decision at Boston Garden. The last time that had happened, not one member of the Suns roster was in professional basketball (1978-79).

Similar examples followed the Celtics everywhere they went.

This season, they lost Brian Shaw to the Italian League, but they've regained Bird and their winning touch.

They've made believers of just about everyone except the Boston media, many of whom suggested that the Celtics (30-20 overall, 12-12 road) would come home from an eight-game

trip with an 0-8 record.

Center Robert Parish guaranteed the Celts return home no worse than

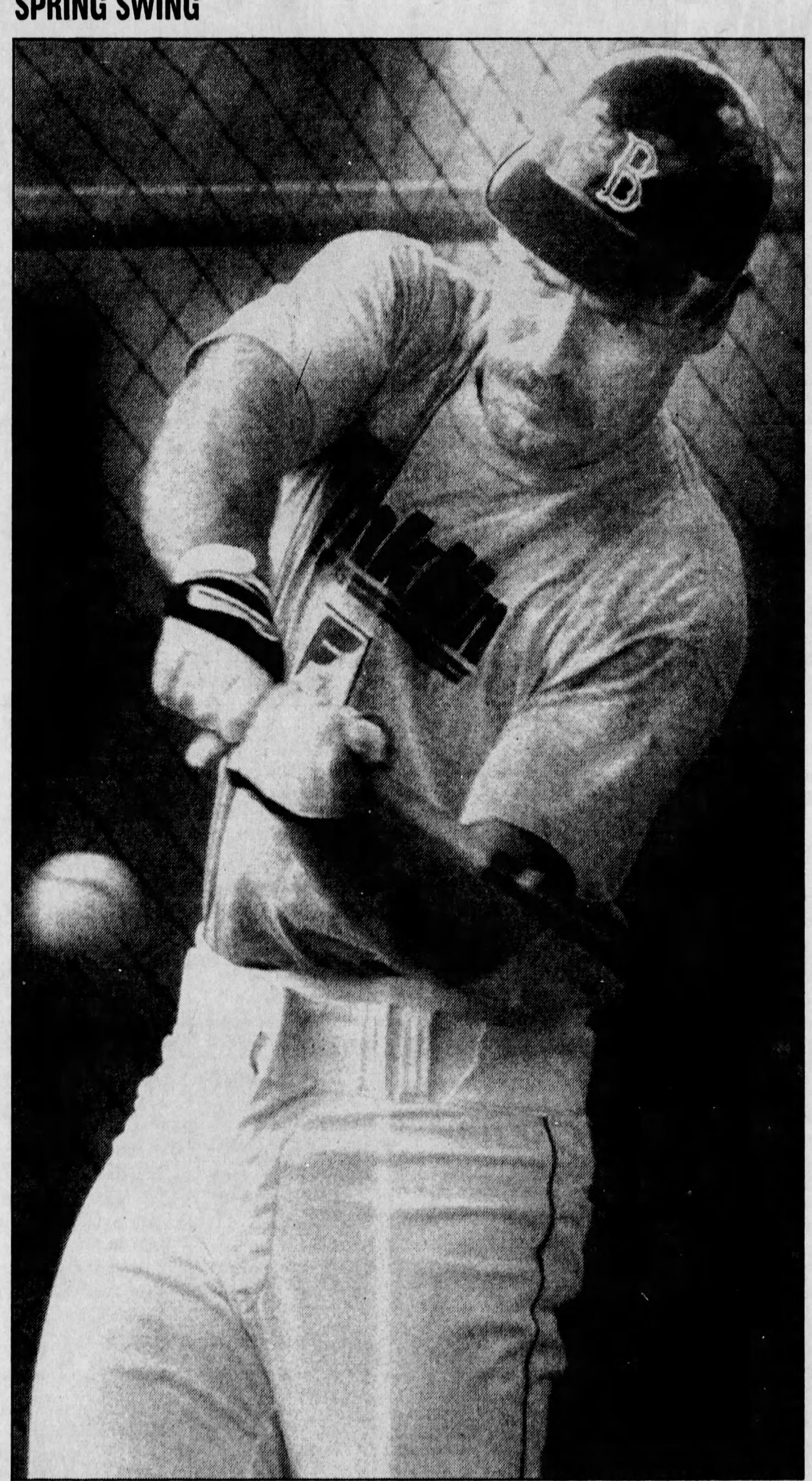
So far, they're 2-2. They get their shot at the Suns (32-17) at 7:40 tonight at Veterans Memorial Coli-

It hasn't been smooth for the Celtics, who are said to have had more than their share of infighting, or

for Bird, whose role has changed. Bird told The Boston Globe last

- See CELTICS, page C2.

SPRING SWING



Peter Southwick/The Associated Press The spring training lockout hasn't keep Boston Red Sox third baseman Wade Boggs from getting in his licks in the

cage. The five-time American League batting champion works out at a college field in Tampa, Fla., on Monday.

Arbitration eligibility snags talks

Exhibition season in jeopardy

By Murray Chass The New York Times

NEW YORK — Salary arbitration, the system that has resulted in an aggregate 98 percent raise for about one-quarter of all major league players, continued to keep baseball's club owners and players sufficiently apart Monday to jeopardize the start of the exhibition schedule.

The chief negotiators for both sides reported after a two-hour session that they are still mired in a deadlock over arbitration. The talks had resumed, after a two-day recess, on the fifth day of the owners' spring training lockout.

The talks resumed at the commissioner's office in Manhattan. Negotiators will meet again today.

"It's going to take a lot of flexibility on both sides," Charles O'Connor, the owners' labor spokesman, said after the fruitless meeting, discussing the arbitration issue.

Acknowledging the problem, Donald Fehr, his counterpart for the players, said: "If we are not at the point where we are implicating the first regularly scheduled spring training games, we are very close to that. It takes more than just a day or two or three of tossing on the side for a pitcher to throw in any kind of a game situation. The first games are clearly in jeopardy."

The exhibition schedule is supposed to begin March 1, and Fehr said a settlement would have to be reached this week for the initial games to be played.

No settlement, however, is in sight. Other issues remain to be resolved, particularly the owners' contribution to the players' pension and benefit plans. But, for the moment, salary arbitration is the seemingly insurmountable

- See ARBITRATION, page C5

Harmon, Hampton among free agents to visit Cardinals

By Lloyd Herberg The Arizona Republic

After a season in which they did not have anyone rush for 100 yards in a game for the first time since 1974, the Cardinals continue to take a close look at some of the more attractive Plan B running backs. Two former first-round draft picks - running backs

Ronnie Harmon and Lorenzo Hampton — are among 20 unconditional free agents scheduled to arrive today and undergo tryouts and physicals on Wednesday. The Cardinals, who will use a one-back offense under Coach Joe Bugel and offensive coordinator Jerry Rhome,

previously brought in Washington's Jamie Morris and Cincinnati's Stanford Jennings. In addition to Harmon and Hampton, two of the better

known players getting a look this week are safety Terry Kinard and tight end Zeke Mowatt, both lest unprotected by the New York Giants.

Harmon, not protected by Buffalo, probably is the best athlete among the 53 running backs who are unconditional

- See 20, page C3

ASU loses again Southern Cal reliever Jeff Cirillo

allows only one hit over six innings as the Trojans beat Arizona State, 5-3.C3 Molitor makes deal

Paul Molitor agrees to a three year, \$9.1 million contract with the Milwaukee Brewers.

NDEX: Basketball

Scoreboard

Dave Caulkin/The Associated Press Tim Mayotte joins Andre Agassi and Aaron Krickstein as headliners for the Eagle Classic of Scottsdale.

Ranked No. 8, has been in finals twice this year

By Mitch Rustad Arizona Republic Correspondent

Tim Mayotte, ranked No. 8 in the world, has entered the Eagle Classic of Scottsdale, filling out the eightman field for the Feb. 27-March 4 tennis tournament at the Princess Resort.

Mayotte joins No. 6 Andre Aaron Krickstein, Agassi, No. 7 No. 10 Jay Berger, No. 17 Emilio Sanchez, No. 21 Jim Courier, No. 29 Jim Grabb, and No. 32 Pete Sam-

With four top-10 players, the most ever assembled for the tournament, "this is far and away a better field than last year," tournament director

EAGLE CLASSIC LINEUP Ranking Player

Mayotte fills out Eagle Classic field

Andre Agassi **Aaron Krickstein** Tim Mayotte Jay Berger **Emilio Sanchez** Jim Courier Jim Grabb **Pete Samprass**

Mike Lawrence said. "I think the Valley's in for a treat."

Mayotte, who has a strong serve-

and-volley game, reached the finals of ATP events in Toronto and Milan, Italy, earlier this year.

He vaulted into the top 10 of the world rankings for the first time in 1987, winning singles titles at Philadelphia, Chicago, Paris, and Frankfurt, West Germany.

Mayotte won four tournaments in 1988, and captured a silver medal at the Seoul Olympics. He reached the quarterfinals at Wimbledon and the U.S. Open quarterfinals last year, and has earned \$2,434,930. "The man plays his heart out,"

Lawrence said. "He's a fiery competitor, in addition to being one of the classicst players on the tour."

Mayotte's aggressive game should provide for interesting match-ups with baseliners Agassi, Krickstein and Berger.

"I think the contrast in styles will be very exciting," Lawrence said.

Three singles matches will be scheduled each evening of the tournament, starting on Feb. 28, with four matches set for Sunday, March 4. An eight-player Grand Masters doubles field, featuring Rod Laver and Ken Rosewall, opens play Feb. 27 and continues all week.

No. 1 Southern Cal bedevils ASU again as bats stay silent

By Bob Eger The Arizona Republic

LOS ANGELES — The weather warmed up a little Monday, but Arizona State's bats didn't.

Southern Cal reliever Jeff Cirillo allowed only one hit over six innings as the Trojans beat the Sun Devils, 5-3, at Dedeaux Field.

Cirillo, also USC's designated hitter, won his own game with a two-run adouble in the seventh inning.

The victory gave the top-ranked Trojans (9-2, 2-0 Pac-10 Southern Division) a sweep of the series, which was shortened to two games because of rain. The third game will be played April 23 in Los Angeles.

Sixth-ranked ASU (10-6, 0-2) has lost four straight. The Sun Devils this and get healthy at Texas or have a team batting average of .183 during that stretch and have struck out 41 times.

ASU Coach Jim Brock said he doesn't plan any drastic measures to shake up his team, which plays Lubbock Christian at 2:30 p.m. today at Packard Stadium. "We need a little confidence now,"

Brock said. "I don't think they need me beating them up. This is going to happen to a club somewhere along the way, and generally, it's about this time of year.

"We're searching for an identity, searching for a competitive nature.

It's tough to be into something like

Brock changed his lineup just before the game, benching freshman right fielder Todd Steverson. Brock's only explanation was that, "He wasn't where he was supposed to be when he was supposed to be there."

ASU grabbed a 2-0 lead in the first inning on an infield hit by Fernando Vina, a double by Jim Austin and sacrifice flies by Mike Kelly and Anthony Manahan.

The only other hits by ASU were infield singles by Manahan in the third and eighth innings.

"We've got a lot of guys struggling

right now," said Manahan, who improved his team-leading average from .431 to .443. "We're seeing a lot of off-speed pitches, and we're not adjusting."

ASU starter Sean Rees didn't survive the third, when USC scored twice to tie the score.

After USC starter John Cummings walked Eric Helfand to start the fourth, he was replaced by Cirillo.

Cirillo ended up walking Austin with the bases loaded to give ASU a 3-2 lead, but the Sun Devils weren't heard from again.

Cirillo (3-0) allowed only Manahan's infield hit in the eighth, walked three and struck out nine.

ASU reliever Kip Yaughn didn't allow a hit his first three innings, but Danny Gil touched him for a solo homer with two out in the sixth.

**

"I had a good fastball and a good change-up, but I had trouble with my curve," Yaughn said. "Gil hit a curve."

A single by Mike Robertson and a double by John Jackson put USC runners at second and third with no outs in the seventh. Yaughn got Mark Smith to fly out to shallow left field, with the runners holding.

With first base open and old Devil-killer Bret Boone on deck, the Devils elected to pitch to Cirillo, who doubled over Kelly's head in center.

Brock said he had no second thoughts about pitching to Cirillo.

"Cirillo is an outstanding hitter," Brock said, "but Boone is as good a clutch hitter as there is in college

baseball." The teams ragged each other incessantly in the early innings, but

were warned by the umpires to stop, Numerous glares were exchanged, but no punches were thrown after Boone ran into Helfand while scoting in the third on Brett Jenkins' sacrifice fly. Helfand was blocking the place without the ball.

"I don't feel USC was to blame in any way for that incident," Brock

Rangers win in OT, gain share of 1st in Patrick

The Associated Press

minis NEW YORK — Brian Mullen's goal with 13 seconds left in overtime Monday gave the New York Rangers a 4-3 victory over the New Jersey Devils and a share of first place in the Patrick Division.

New Jersey had apparently scored midway through the extra period, but the goal was disallowed. John MacLean's shot hit the post and went underneath the Crossbar. But goal judge Chuck O'Donnell didn't turn on the red light and referee Dan Marouelli ruled the puck did not go into the net — a view contradicted by solow-motion television replays.

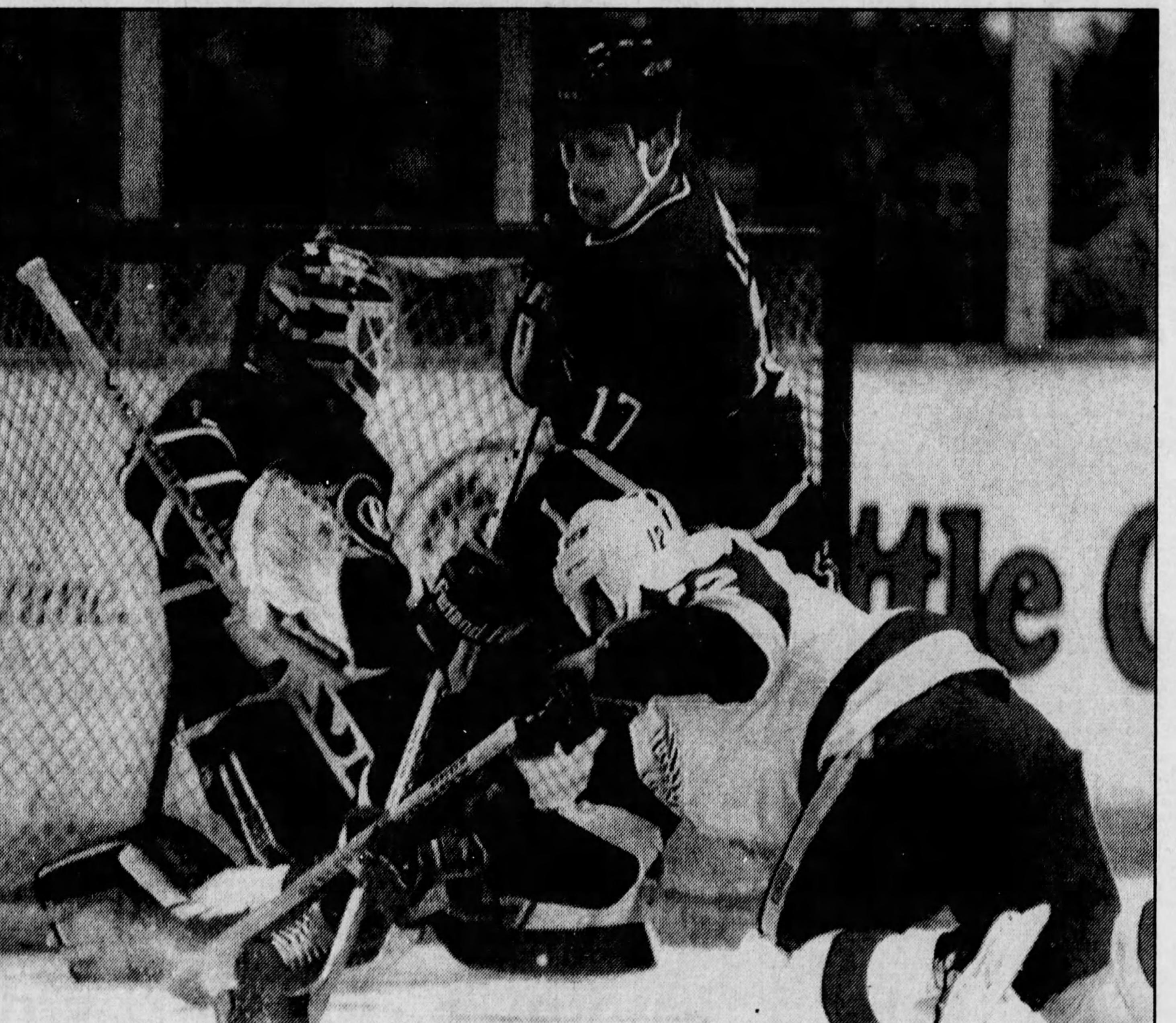
bib "I thought it was in," the Rangers' "Bernie Nicholls said of MacLean's shot. "It odidn't make the sound of a puck hitting the grossbar. It was totally different."

The Devils tied the score on Kirk Muller's goal from the slot with seven seconds left in regulation. With Bernie Nicholls in the penalty box and goalie Sean Burke on the bench in favor of an extra attacker, Muller scored his 25th goal off a scramble.

Mullen's goal came after he stole the puck from defenseman Bruce Drive and beat Burke with a slap shot between the pads from the right face-off circle.

The victory gives the Rangers 62 points in 61 games, tying them with the New York Islanders. The Rangers are 10-4-3 in their past 17 games.

Kelly Kisio gave the Rangers a 3-2 lead at 2:48 of the third period. The Devils are 0-4-1 in their past five games.



Michael E. Samojeden/The Associated Press Montreal's Craig Ludwig stops Detroit's Sheldon Kennedy but not the puck as it slides past goalie Brian Hayward in the first period.

> bounded from a three-goal deficit. Courtnall, awarded the penalty shot when defenseman Steve Chiasson covered the puck in the goal crease, skated within 10 feet of rookie goalie Tim Cheveldae

The goal capped a rally in which the Canadiens scored three times in 57

Douglas dispute threatens throne of WBC president

Sulaiman denies he will quit

The Associated Press

NEW YORK — Jose Sulaiman's 14-year reign as president of the World Boxing Council could end involuntarily at an emergency session of the group's Executive Committee on Wednesday.

Sulaiman, in a telephone interview from his Mexico City home, denied on Monday various published reports that he will resign and be replaced by former WBC treasurer Steve Crosson of Dallas. The change at the top, the reports said, will be made because of the controversy over Sulaiman's handling of James "Buster" Douglas' upset of Mike Tyson for the heavyweight championship on Feb. 11 in Tokyo,

"I'm a fighter, I was born to fight," Sulaiman said shortly after returning from the hospital, where he had been treated for what he called "a very serious" pancreas

"I will ask the nine continental federations to review my position as president of the WBC. I haven't done anything wrong. I feel I did something incorrectly. I realized my mistake quickly and I corrected it quickly." Sulaiman has been criticized since he suspended the

result of Douglas' 10th-round knockout of Tyson pending an emergency meeting of the Executive Committee because replays showed Douglas was down for 13 seconds in the eighth round.

Douglas did, however, beat the referee's count, which is the one that matters, and Sulaiman recognized him as champion two days later, and said he was embarrassed by the delay.

Crosson, who resigned as treasurer Wednesday in protest of Sulaiman's action, on Thursday released a letter he received from Sulaiman, which stated:

"If my best friend is leaving the ship, it means that I should also for my wrongdoing," Sulaiman wrote to Crosson. "I will be presenting my irrevocable resignation to my position as president of the coming emergency meeting of February 21."

"Did he release that?" Sulaiman asked. "A gentleman, which I thought he was, would not break the rules of friendship. I feel very disappointed."

Crosson said he would consider running for president if Sulaiman resigns.

20 free agents hoping to impress Cardinals

- 20, from page C1

free agents. in 1986 out of Iowa, failed to live up to expectations in four seasons with the Bills, and Buffalo attempted to trade him the past two seasons. His situation deteriorated to the point that Harmon told management he did not want to play in Buffalo anymore.

Harmon was relegated to spot duty in the 1989 season, essentially used only in third-down situations. A cutback runner, he is especially effective as a receiver coming out of the backfield.

In his four seasons with the Bills, Harmon caught 144 passes for 1,452 yards and 10 touchdowns. Last season, he was third on the team with 29 catches for 363 yards and four touchdowns. He rushed only 17 times for 99 yards.

3Yet, it was a dropped pass with 14 seconds remaining in the AFC Champronship game against Cleveland that Harmon likely will be remembered for most. Harmon dropped a perfect pass in the end zone that would have given Buffalo a 36-34 lead. Bills quarterback 'IJim Kelly was intercepted on the next play, and Cleveland won.

Harmon earned \$275,000 in the last year of his contract.

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Hampton, 27, a first-round pick in 1985 out of Florida, was a part-time player last season with the Dolphins, But Harmon, 25, a first-round pick who included him among 19 players left unprotected. Hampton spent six weeks on injured reserve after undergoing arthroscopic surgery on an ankle. He finished with only 47 yards rushing on 17 carries. He caught eight passes for 25 yards. That's in stark contrast to the 1986

Kings 3, Capitals 2

INGLEWOOD, Calif. - Wayne

Neither team scored in the final 25

Gretzky scored three seconds after a Los

Angeles power play ended to snap a 2-2 tie.

minutes as goalie Ron Scott registered his

first victory since December 1987, when he

was playing for the New York Rangers. He

and 1988 seasons, when he scored a combined 24 touchdowns and led the team in rushing both seasons. He played in all 12 non-strike games in and one touchdown.

ankle injury slowed him down. Mowatt's contract included an agreement that the Giants would trade him, not protect him, or pay him a bonus reportedly worth at least \$50,000.

15-foot rebound shot from the right side with 5:06 left in the second period.

Gretzky's goal, his 34th, came on a

Canadiens 5, Red Wings 5 DETROIT — Russ Courtnall scored his

third goal of the game on a penalty shot

with 4:29 remaining as Montreal re-

before beating him with a rising wrist shot.

Phoenix '93 Super Bowl group to present case

By Steve Schoenfeld The Arizona Republic

stopped 17 shots.

Members of the group trying to bring the 1993 Super Bowl to Phoenix will know a lot more about their chances after today's meeting with the Super Bowl Site Selection Committee in New York.

Representing the Phoenix '93 Super Bowl Committee will be Chairman Bill Shover; executive committee members David Rad- manager of the Cincinnati Bengals.

cliffe, Jack Henry, Ron Spellecy and C.A. Howlett; and Brent Brown, vice president/community relations at Arizona State University.

They will meet with Jim Steeg, NFL director of special events, and members of the Site Selection Committee: Norman Braman, owner of the Philadelphia Eagles; Ralph Wilson, owner of the Buffalo Bills; and Mike Brown, assistant general

Each of the four cities competing few probing questions and gives. Los Angeles, San Diego and San Henry said. Francisco.

During that meeting, the cities will discuss the preliminary written proposals they submitted to the league office last week.

"This gives us a chance to ask a

for the '93 Super Bowl bid will meet them (the Site Selection Committee) with the Site Selection Committee an opportunity to tell us where were for 90 minutes. Other finalists are might have missed the mark,"

After today's meeting, the Phoenix '93 Committee has until March 5 to revise its written proposal. The cities then will bid for the game at the league's annual meeting March 11-15 in Orlando, Fla.





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