

Sports editor:  
William K. Brophy, 252-6170

# SPORTS

■ Nicklaus wins Senior debut/2D  
■ Musburger to leave CBS/4D  
■ CLASSIFIED ADS/5D

1D

Wisconsin State Journal  
Monday, April 2, 1990

## realizes title dream

By Andy Baggot  
Sports reporter

DETROIT — They sat in their cramped, but dressing room at Joe Louis Arena Sunday afternoon with lumps in their throats, tears in their eyes and a sense of determination so profound that their innermost feelings simply could not be disguised.

"I just walked around the locker room and looked in everyone's eyes," said Tom Sauer, the outgoing senior wing on the University of Wisconsin hockey team. "I saw a lot of pride, saw a lot of dignity, a lot of pride. I saw guys who wanted to win."

One man's vision has never been more keen.

Spurred on by the combination of talent, a strong spirit of friendship and the firm belief that they would not be denied after two near misses, the Badgers whipped Colgate, 7-3, to win the National Collegiate Athletic Association title. A season that began on Labor Day and ended on April Fool's Day produced a 36-9-1 record and the fifth national championship in school history. It was the second title under Coach Jeff Sauer and first since 1983.

John Byce scored three goals, the once-comatose playoff power play clicked four times and an overall constitution that was both

tougher, quicker and more experienced than the opponent were the primary reasons why many pitchers, stuns and toasts were exchanged along State Street Sunday night.

Chris Tancill, the tournament's most valuable player, Gary Shuchuk, Dennis Snodden and Rob Anderson accounted for the other goals for Wisconsin, which surged to a 4-1 lead after one period and kept its distance.

The championship culminated a season that started with seven seniors — Sagner, Byce, Tancill, Shuchuk, Rob Mendel, Mark Oisecki and Steve Rohlik — designating Sunday as their target date. Along the way they won the Western Collegiate Hockey Association regular season and playoff titles, responded to the pressure by winning 18 of their last 20 games (18-1-1) and buried the memories of punching out in the NCAA quarterfinals in 1988 and '89.

Before Friday's 2-1 semifinal victory over Boston College, Tancill, from nearby Livonia, offered a stirring speech.

"We love you guys, so let's do it together like we've been doing it all year," Rohlik said.

"Some guys gave sentimental speeches and I can't take that stuff very well," said Derksen, who said he tried to hide the tears by burying his head in a towel. "I think everyone on our team could make an emotional speech and everyone would cry."

"We knew we had one more goal to finish, and if we didn't do it, it was over." — Chris Tancill, Wisconsin's most valuable player.

### Now, UW torch is Sauer's

DETROIT — The sports history books say the coaching change was made in 1982, but the real transfer of power in the University of Wisconsin hockey program may well have occurred late Sunday afternoon when Bob Johnson, television interviewer, congratulated Jeff Sauer, the UW coach, on winning the national championship.

Up until Sunday when the Badgers — a team assembled by Sauer and his coaching staff — beat Colgate, 7-3, to win their fifth National Collegiate Athletic Association hockey title, the perception nationally and in some local quarters was it remained in the shadow of Badger Bob's program.

No more.

"It feels like a ton is off my shoulders," Sauer said. "In terms of what has gone on over the course of time and how this developed, I have really felt a lot of pressure. I felt all year we had a chance to do win this and I really tried to keep my own personal feelings away from the team because that's not the way you want to be."

"But I think this accomplishment shows that we have finally arrived as a staff and as a team."

Sauer has a ring on his finger that says he coached the 1983 national champions, but he'll be the first to admit he didn't feel a part of that team, a collection of skilled athletes who were recruited by Johnson.

This year, he'll cherish the ring and the memories.

"I have a lot of respect for the guys in that room," Sauer said outside an emotional UW locker room at Joe Louis Arena. "They have a lot of class and character and they'll be that way when they return 20 years from now for a reunion."

Down the hall, Johnson congratulated his son Peter, Sauer's assistant coach, and spoke of the job his successor did.

"An outstanding job," Johnson said. "You can tell the players enjoy each other. I like the chemistry. A lot of times you have 20 good players and you don't win because of the chemistry. They have more than 20 good players and deserved to win."

Johnson said he told his former assistant coach it wouldn't be as easy coaching at Wisconsin as people thought.

"We talked when he took the job and I told him we'd always be compared," Johnson said. "I'm glad Jeff won because this is his team and his coaching staff."

"I think his toughest decision was when he let my assistant coach, Grant Standsbrook, go. He was a good recruiter and a good hockey person. But I think a coach should have his own staff and his own players, but those decisions are tough."

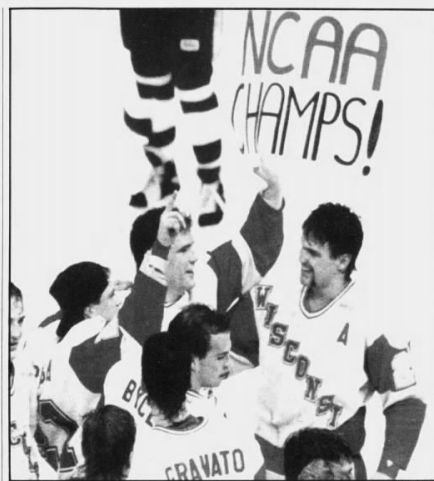
Sauer admitted letting Standsbrook go three years ago was the toughest decision of his eight-year tenure, "because there were a lot of friendships affected by that move." But philosophically, Sauer needed a staff to recruit the type of players that formed the chemistry of the 1989 champions. He feels comfortable with Mike Kemp, Peter Johnson, Bill Howard and Ian Perrin.

"I never felt this staff got the respect that it deserved," Sauer said. "I just can't tell you how pleased this makes me."

In exorcising the demons that said UW hockey had gone sour, the Badgers left no doubt they were the best in the country. They went 18-1 down the stretch. They beat the best teams in their league (North Dakota and Minnesota) in the last two weeks of the regular season to win the WCHA title. They beat Minnesota to win the WCHA playoff title and they beat the three best teams in the East — Maine, Boston College and Colgate — to win their fifth national championship.

"They're an awful good team," said Johnson whose 1977 team is the only UW squad to win more than the 36 victories these Badgers collected.

And they are Sauer's team. A national championship team.



Sophomore defenseman Sean Hill holds the sign that says it all as he and his Badgers teammates celebrate.

### WISCONSIN COMPLETES DRIVE FOR FIVE

■ 1972 — A goal by Dean Tofolous with 5 seconds left sends the semifinal game into overtime and Tofolous adds the game-winner to beat Cornell, 6-5, in Boston Garden, rendering the 4-2 victory over Denver in the National Collegiate Athletic Association title game almost anticlimactic.

■ 1977 — Mike Egan's overtime goal beats New Hampshire, 4-3, in Detroit's Olympia and puts Wisconsin into the game, where Steve Sauer's overtime goal defeats Michigan, 4-5, and gives the Badgers the school's best record ever of 27-7-1.

■ 1981 — The "back-door" badgers get past Eastern Collegiate Athletic Conference champion Clarkson in a quarterfinal series. Central Collegiate Hockey Association champion Northern Michigan in a semifinal game and Western Collegiate Hockey Association champion Minnesota, 6-2, in the match in Duluth, Minn., to win their third championship under Coach Bob Johnson.

■ 1983 — Goaltender Marc Behrend is the tournament's most valuable player as the Badgers beat Providence, 2-0, and Harvard, 6-2, in Grand Forks, N.D., to win the championship in Jeff Sauer's first year as coach.

■ 1990 — Chris Tancill, one of seven sterling UW seniors and the tournament MVP, scores two goals to lead Wisconsin to its first national title. Tancill and John Byce, another senior, registers a hat trick as the Badgers top Colgate, 7-3, in the final at Joe Louis Arena in Detroit.



UW's Mark Oisecki, left, fights with Colgate's Bob Haddock for puck, in front of Don Granato and goaltender Duane Derksen.

## Defense will determine who's Final One

DENVER (AP) — When the nets are cut down following tonight's National Collegiate Athletic Association championship game, a few things will be certain.

Either Nevada-Las Vegas or Duke will have won its first national title, a lot of points will have been scored, and some of the best man-to-man defense in the game will have been played (Ch. 3 will carry the CBS broadcast at 8, tipoff is 8:14 p.m.).

Both teams will play great defense but I don't think it will be a low-scoring game.

UNLV Coach Jerry Tarkanian said Sunday, the eve of his first title game in three trips to the Final Four.

How similar are the on-court styles of Duke (29-8) and UNLV (34-5)? About as different as the off-court images of the two schools.

For the past eight years, tent to UNLV, Duke has been my favorite team," Tarkanian said. "Their defense is very similar to ours and we're probably the only two teams I can think of still playing the type of defense we do. We pressure the ball all over-

ing 89.5 per game and UNLV at 93.2, but defense is what got these teams here.

Second-ranked UNLV, the only top-seeded team to reach the Final Four, waited until the second half against Georgia Tech on Saturday before giving a defensive clinic in its 90-81 semifinal victory.

The Rumin' Rebels smothered Kenny Anderson and bothered Dennis Scott enough to overcome a seven-point deficit.

Fifteenth-ranked Duke wore down Arkansas, outscoring the Razorbacks, 24-9, over the last 7 minutes in the 97-83 semifinal victory.

Both teams had foul trouble on Saturday and neither can afford it tonight with the mile-high altitude of Denver being such a factor in the players' stamina.

"Our balanced scoring attack is definitely a strength of ours," Duke's Phil Henderson said.

Most of the Duke opportunities are created by freshman point guard Bobby Harley, who was forced to leave the Arkansas game because of stomach troubles.

"Bobby's in bed trying to get well," Kryzewski said. "He'll be fine by game time. I think it was a change in the environment and the fact that he's 18 years old and playing in some big games. We gave him some chicken soup and a humidifier and told him to stay in bed."

UNLV's Anderson Hunt will have something for Harley tonight — some of the toughest defense he's ever faced.

Hunt was the man who shut down Anderson and he plays the same style for Harley.

"I'll keep him in front of me like I did Kenny Anderson last night and let him make his own mistakes," Hunt said.

The most exciting NCAA tournament — 23 games decided by three points or less — is going to come down to defense.

"There's no secret the way the game is going to go," UNLV center Larry Johnson said. "The only secret is who's going to win and we'll find out tonight."

■ Inside game photo/4D