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SPORTS

■ Heat gets past Bucks/2D
■ UW cross country teams win meet/12D
■ ESCAPE/11D

1D
• • Wisconsin State Journal
Sunday, November 17, 1991

Victory a breath of fresh air

MINNEAPOLIS — After it finally happened, after the University of Wisconsin won its first Big Ten Conference football game in 20 tries, and after the Badgers collected their first victory on the road in five years, Eddie Fletcher wanted some tangible proof.

Seconds after UW's nail-biting 19-16 victory over Minnesota had been finalized, Fletcher, a senior cornerback who had gone through all the tough times, sprinted across the Metrodome surface to claim the reward, Paul Bunyan's Ax.

COMMENTARY



BILL BROPHY

When Fletcher lifted the Ax and started his teammates on a victory lap around the dome, the movement must have felt like a weight sliding off of the Badgers' backs.

"It eliminates a psychological barrier for us," UW Athletic Director Pat Richter said. "Everyone knows we were close against Iowa, but we didn't win. Then last week everyone was down after the loss to Michigan State. This just turns those feelings around. The kids found a way to win"

To be sure, there were doubters in the red-splattered crowd of 36,133. They had seen the scenario before — where UW took a 16-0 lead only to see the Gophers wear down its defense in the second half. With 16 seconds left to play and the Badgers clinging to a three-point lead, Minnesota's John Gutekunst, in maybe his final big decision as coach, bravely played to win and not tie.

UW's Melvin Tucker used the decision to make the type of play that has been missing for years. His hit caused Gophers tight end Pat Evans to drop the potential winning touchdown pass in the end zone.

Seconds later, Fletcher sprinted to the Ax and UW Coach Barry Alvarez took a deep breath. Alvarez was more relieved than happy to get his first conference victory and rid himself of the many streaks that had been attached to the Badgers.

"It wasn't fun to pick up the paper and read every day that we've got a string of road losses and how many games in a row I haven't won in the Big Ten," he said. "I got tired of reading that. It was embarrassing. But now we've rid ourselves of that. That's the biggest thing to me."

The smile on Alvarez's face said this event was special, even though he tried to convince onlookers it wasn't.

"I've been in bigger games than this, but it's more of a relief than a big win," said Alvarez, a former assistant at Notre Dame. "I feel good for our coaches, our younger players and especially our older kids. They needed it so badly to leave some kind of positive legacy here."

But even before the Badgers won the Ax and raised their record to 4-6, Richter said he planned to ask the Athletic Board soon to extend Alvarez's contract, which still has two years to run.

"I hadn't thought about it because I have no doubt about it," said Richter about asking for an extension.

It won't be as tough a sell after Saturday, since the Badgers victory total in 1991 now equals the number achieved in the previous three years. A victory next week against Northwestern would give UW a 5-6 record and a running start into the recruiting season.

But Richter didn't need to be sold. "What I've seen and what I hear about who we've recruited and (are) redshirting, they have brought the program along further than I realistically could have hoped," said Richter, who hired Alvarez in January 1990.

Those words sounded better after the Badgers assured themselves they can do no worse than tie for the Big Ten cellar.

"It's like they say in baseball: it may have been a blooper, but it will look like a line drive in the box score. When people look at the standings Sunday, they will just see that Wisconsin won a game. That's all they'll care," Richter said.

Kiss that skid goodbye

UW deals big blow to Gophers

By Vic Feuerherd
Assistant sports editor

MINNEAPOLIS — University of Wisconsin safety Melvin Tucker was the only Badgers player Saturday who stood between the ecstasy of an infrequent last-second victory and the agony of another last-second loss.

Tucker delivered a shot of ecstasy in big-time fashion, providing the hit that saved the Badgers' 19-16 victory over Minnesota in a Big Ten Conference game before 36,133 fans at the Metrodome.

Tucker collided violently with Gophers tight end Patt Evans and knocked the ball loose in the end zone with 10 seconds left to bring to a conclusion Coach Barry Alvarez's first-ever conference victory in his 15th try over two seasons.

"Anyway to win," Alvarez proclaimed. "We just had to win the

Please turn to 4D, Col. 5

	Badgers	Gophers
First downs	16	20
Rushes-yards	35-113	31-210
Passing	93	310
Return yards	33a	42
Passing (Comp.-Att.-Int.)	10-18-1	17-27-2
Punts	5-37	4-41
Fumbles-lost	1-0	2-2
Penalties-yards	3-33	5-34
Time of possession	23:04	34:54
Wisconsin	3	0 3 3 — 19
Minnesota	0	0 7 2 — 16

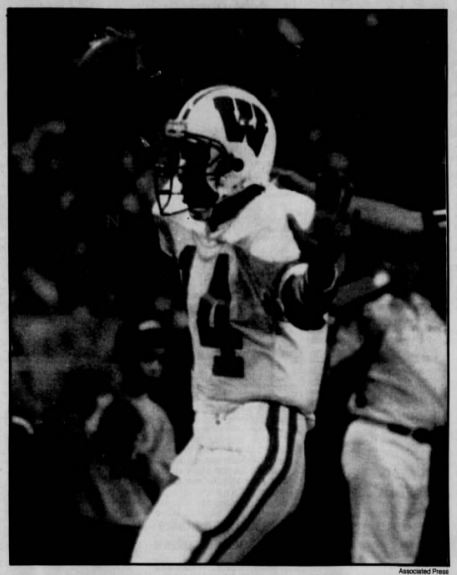
Wisconsin — A. Brown, 1A, pass from Lowery (kick failed)
Wisconsin — FG, Thompson, 37
Wisconsin — Lowery, 5, run (Thompson, kick)
Minnesota — Hopewell, 35, pass from Fleetwood (run failed)
Minnesota — Hopewell, 18, pass from Fleetwood (Cheberg, kick)
Wisconsin — FG, Chalberg, 22
Wisconsin — FG, Thompson, 42
A — 36,133.

INDIVIDUAL STATISTICS

Rushing: Wisconsin — Lowery 10-23, Montgomery 8-29, T. Fletcher 11-22, Lowery 11-16, Burns 2-8, Shelton 1-1; Alaccio 1-0. Minnesota — Carter 31-136, Fleetwood 12-43, King 3-14, Richards 2-10, MacClintock 1-4, R. Smith 1-1, Schaffner 1-0.

Passing: Wisconsin — Lowery 10-15-0-93, Alaccio 0-1-0-1. Minnesota — Fleetwood 17-27-2-310.

Receiving: Wisconsin — A. Brown 4-61, Shelton 2-14, Burns 2-5, Bourne 1-21, Rosin 1-7. Minnesota — Hopewell 4-79, Carter 3-26, King 2-28, Evans 2-26, Joiner 2-24, White 1-21, MacClintock 1-6.



Associated Press

UW QB Tony Lowery holds the ball aloft after scoring a second-quarter touchdown Saturday against Minnesota.

Finally, it's a happy ride home

By Vic Feuerherd
Assistant sports editor

MINNEAPOLIS — The University of Wisconsin left the Metrodome Saturday with a 19-16 victory over Minnesota and a truly unique feeling.

"It really hasn't sunk in yet," said quarterback Tony Lowery, one of the six fifth-year seniors on the Badgers roster. "I do know I haven't won a road game since I've been here.

"I don't know what it feels like to fly the plane home with everybody having their heads up."

The need for the victory was apparent. The method in which it came made it all the more special.

The Badgers entered the game with the Gophers with a lock on losing streaks of all sorts.

UW had lost six straight this season after opening the season with three victories. It had lost 19 straight Big Ten Conference games, 14 of which came in the last two seasons with Coach Barry Alvarez at the helm.

The Badgers also had lost 23 straight road games, 20 of them within the conference.

"This team needed this," Alvarez said. "The young players needed it extremely badly so they can carry on. The older guys needed it because they want to leave a legacy.

"It's awful nice that for once we're going home and we're going to be able to enjoy the trip home."

It was free safety Melvin

Please turn to 4D, Col. 3

■ Macias takes a seat/4D

Monroe crushes Seymour

By Pat Stiegman
Sports reporter

Ahhhhhh . . . Decisions, decisions.

When Pat Martin strolled through the new-car showroom known as Camp Randall Stadium Saturday night just hours before what would be his third and most devastating state-championship drive, the 14th-year Monroe coach faced some irresistable sales pitches.

There was the high-mileage Porsche (fullback Matt Henke). And the road-hugging Mercedes (fullback Adam Grossen). And, hey, what about the little-used Jaguar (quarterback Bryan Davis)?

But when the trip was over and the Cheesemakers had plastered Seymour, 30-0, in the Wisconsin

Please turn to 6D, Col. 3

Seymour	0	0	0	0	— 0
Monroe	0	16	7	7	— 30

Monroe — Conway, 16, interception return (S. Davis, kick)
Monroe — FG, S. Davis, 39
Monroe — Henke, 29, run (S. Davis, kick)
Monroe — Henke, 15, run (kick failed)
Monroe — Henke, 16, run (S. Davis, kick)

First downs — S 16, M 16. Rushes (att.-yds.) — S 36-37, M 44-282. Passing yards — S 193, M 54. Passes (Comp.-Att.-Int.) — S 4-11-1, M 3-4-0. Punts-ave. — S 8-40, M 1-1. Penalties-yards — S 5-37, M 7-64.

■ Stories and playoff notes/6D



State Journal photo/SCOTT SEID

The agony of defeat

Highland's Dale Caygill (74), Gary Richgels (42), and Joel Oleson, on crutches, console each other after their loss.

WIAA STATE FOOTBALL FINALS

Friday's results

Division 5
Darlington 22, Edgar 14

Division 3
Jefferson 20, Spooner 16

Division 1
Kenosha Tremper 17, Appleton West 14

Saturday's results

Division 6
Shell Lake 7, Highland 0

Division 4
Stanley-Boyd 21, Mayville 14 (OT)

Division 2
Monroe 30, Seymour 0

Badgers skaters falter

By Andy Baggot
Sports reporter

BLOOMINGTON, Minn. — Not even the alleged psychological advantage of changing venues was enough to save the University of Wisconsin hockey team Saturday.

Going into their Western Collegiate Hockey Association series finale with Minnesota, the Badgers had a winning percentage of .833 (5-1) in meetings with the Gophers on neutral ice.

But with a record-setting audience looking on at the Met Center, Minnesota claimed a 4-1 triumph

Please turn to 7D, Col. 5

Wisconsin	1	0	0	— 1
Minnesota	0	1	0	— 1

First period
Minnesota — Nelson 2 (Hendrickson, Johnson), 5:34. Minnesota — Brill 2 (Nelson, Johnson), 11:39. Wisconsin — Kurth, W (Double minor), 13:38.
Penalties: Kurth, W (double minor), 7:43; Hagopian, W (double minor), 7:43; Derksen, W (served by Zent), 7:54; Richards, M, 8:20; Dokidis, M, 13:36; Zmolek, M, 13:52; McAlpine, M, 17:26.

Second period
Minnesota — Kolff 5 (Dokidis, McAlpine), 12:48.
Penalties: Kurth, W, 1:11; McAlpine, M, 19:20; Olimb, W, 12:18; Kurth, W (double minor), 13:18; Hartwell, W, 13:18; Ma. Brickel, W (double minor), 13:18; C. Johnson, W, 14:20; Dokidis, M, 18:24; Brickel, W (served by Westlund), 19:58.
Third period
Minnesota — Richards 4 (Olimb, C. Johnson), 0:05.
Penalties: Derksen, W (served by Spencer), 1:43; Minnesota bench (unsportsmanlike conduct, served by Westlund), 4:08; Spencer, W, 6:38; Bolkovac, W, 8:01; Kurth, W, 9:21; Ma. Brickel, W, 9:21; Olimb, W, 12:13; Kurth, W, 16:02; McHugh, M (double minor), 19:08; Nelson, M (double minor), 19:38; Hendrickson, M, 19:11; Kurth, W, 19:11; Richter, W, 19:55.

Derksen (W)	0	11	1	— 24
Shots (M)	4	11	9	— 24

Power play: Wisconsin 1-for-7; Minnesota 1-for-4.
A — 18,718.

UW women's soccer wins

By Rob Hernandez
Sports reporter

An ivory smile emerged from the filthy face of muddy Margaret Kopmeyer as the University of Wisconsin women's soccer player savored all that was warm about a Saturday sunshine and the indescribable feeling of atonement.

A year ago, the Badgers defender drew a handball penalty in the final minute of a National Collegiate Athletic Association quarterfinal match against Colorado College. The Tigers converted the penalty kick for a 3-1 victory.

When confronted again at a critical juncture Saturday, though, Kopmeyer withstood the pressure. She presented enough of a challenge for Hartford forward Kim LeMere to thwart a sure second-half goal and preserve a 1-0 victory for fourth-ranked UW in an NCAA quarterfinal match at Breese Stevens Field.

A gathering of 716 saw the Badgers (16-2) advance to the Final Four for the first time since 1987. They will play Colorado College (17-2) — a 1-0 overtime winner over Stanford — Saturday at a site and time that will be determined tonight.

Not that particulars matter.

"We're going to be up for . . . whoever they throw at us," Kopmeyer said. "The team motto right now is 'Just bring 'em on.'"

Hartford (13-7) brought on the No. 7 ranking and perhaps the nation's most potent forward duo in LeMere (16 goals, 10 assists) and Rose Daley (14, nine). UW's defense, cushioned by a first-half, second-effort goal from Amy Warner, tackled the tandem with determination.

"They are so dangerous when they're working together," Badgers goalkeeper Heather Taggart said. "We wanted to isolate them and make sure they couldn't connect together. They try to connect up the middle and that's a nightmare."

The Badgers' dream defense didn't shatter until the 23-minute mark of the second half. LeMere and Daley worked a give-and-go to perfection on the sloppy side of the field and drew Taggart from goal.

Taggart tried to smother the ball only to have it squirt through her legs. Kopmeyer moved into goal and deflected the ball to LeMere,

Please turn to 12D, Col. 2

Hartford	0	0	1	— 1
Wisconsin	0	0	1	— 1

First half: W — Warner, 27:58.
Saves: H — Romero 3, W — Taggart 2. Shots: H 6, W 15. Corner kicks: H 3, W 4. Fouls: H 23, W 24.

It's Miami — by a foot

State Journal wire services

TALLAHASSEE, Fla. — After 59 minutes and 35 seconds of sweat, struggle and fierce fighting, the battle between top-ranked Florida State and second-ranked Miami came down to this — one foot.

But for the Seminoles, who always seemed to lose to Miami in pressure games, it was a foot the wrong way.

Gerry Thomas' 34-yard field-goal attempt sailed wide right by the length of a football with 25 seconds left Saturday, giving Miami a heart-pounding 17-16 victory and a solid shot at its fourth national championship in nine years.

"When I saw it go right, I almost fell face first," Miami Coach Dennis Erickson said. "It's the greatest win I've ever been involved in. I'm still shocked."

It's the fourth time in the last five years that Miami (9-0) has spoiled the Seminoles' bid for a first national title. But this may have been the most painful loss of all for Florida State (10-1), which has been No. 1 every week since the start of the season.

"I just have an empty feeling inside," Seminoles offensive lineman Kevin Mancini said. "This was our year. We should have won this year."

Thomas, a walk-on sophomore who had made his three previous field-goal tries in the game, walked onto the field with Florida State facing a third-and-9 from the Miami 17. When he kicked the ball, the outcome was in doubt for a few agonizing seconds until the official under the goalposts made the no-good signal.

"I thought it was good for a second, then it faded right," said Thomas, who had made eight of nine field goals since winning the job a month ago.

The miss triggered a wild celebration by Miami players, who threw their helmets in the air, ran

Please turn to 5D, Col. 5

Miami (Fla.)	7	3	6	16	— 17
Florida State	3	7	3	3	— 16

Miami — McDuffie, 1, run (Duarte, kick)
Florida State — Sanders, 1, run (Thomas, kick)
Florida State — Kinchen, 1, run (Thomas, kick)
Florida State — FG, Thomas, 31
Florida State — FG, Thomas, 30
Miami — FG, Duarte, 40
Miami — Jones, 1, run (Duarte, kick)
A — 83,482.

■ No. 3 Washington romps/3D

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