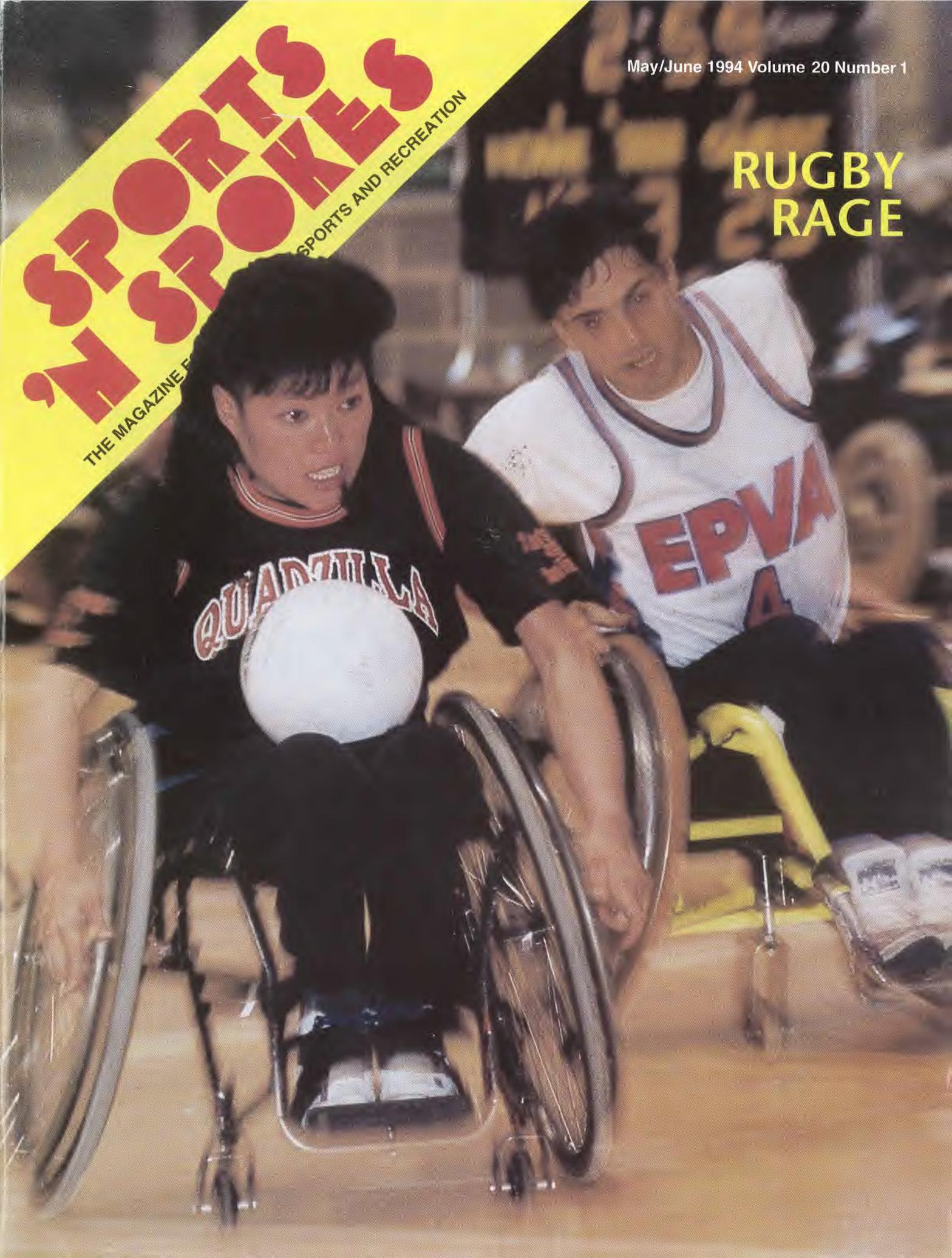


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SPORTS 'N SPOKES

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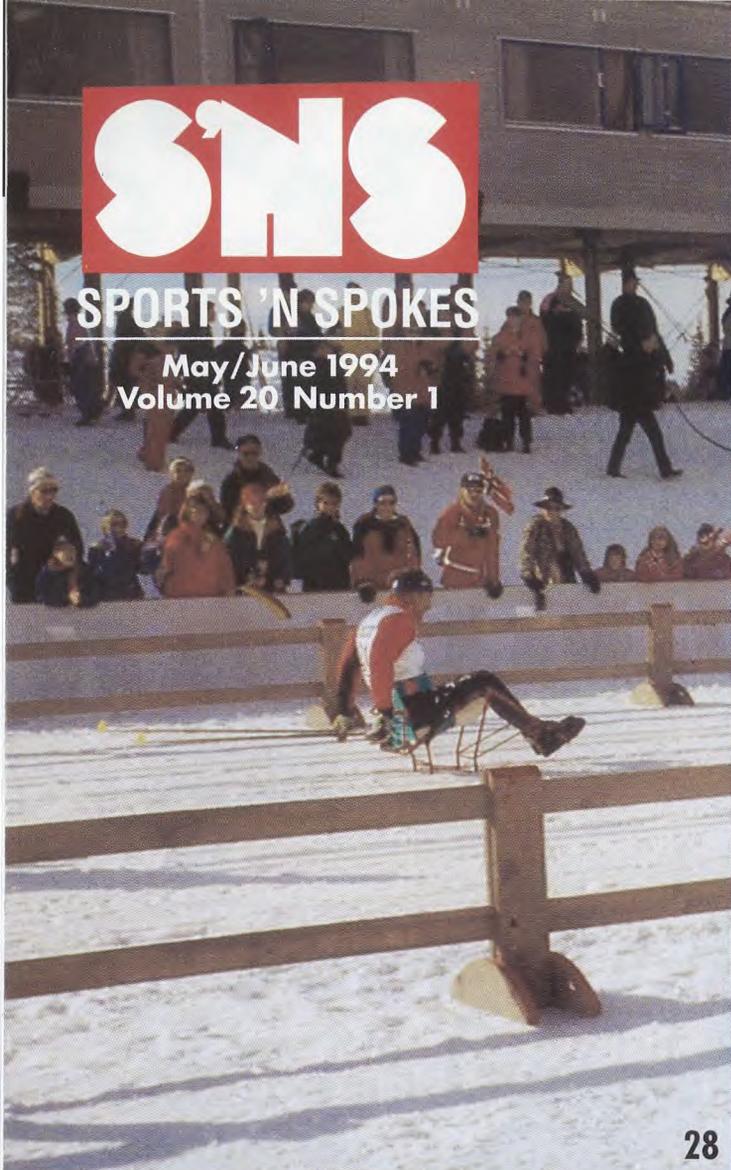
RUGBY RAGE



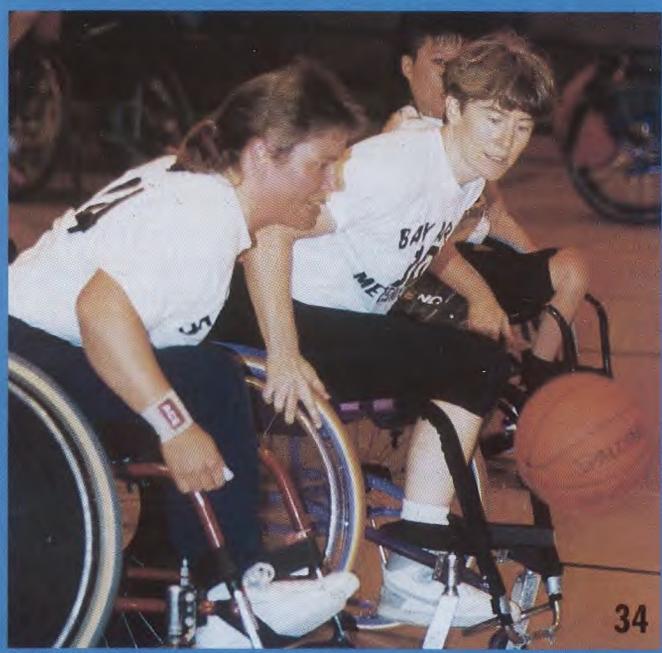
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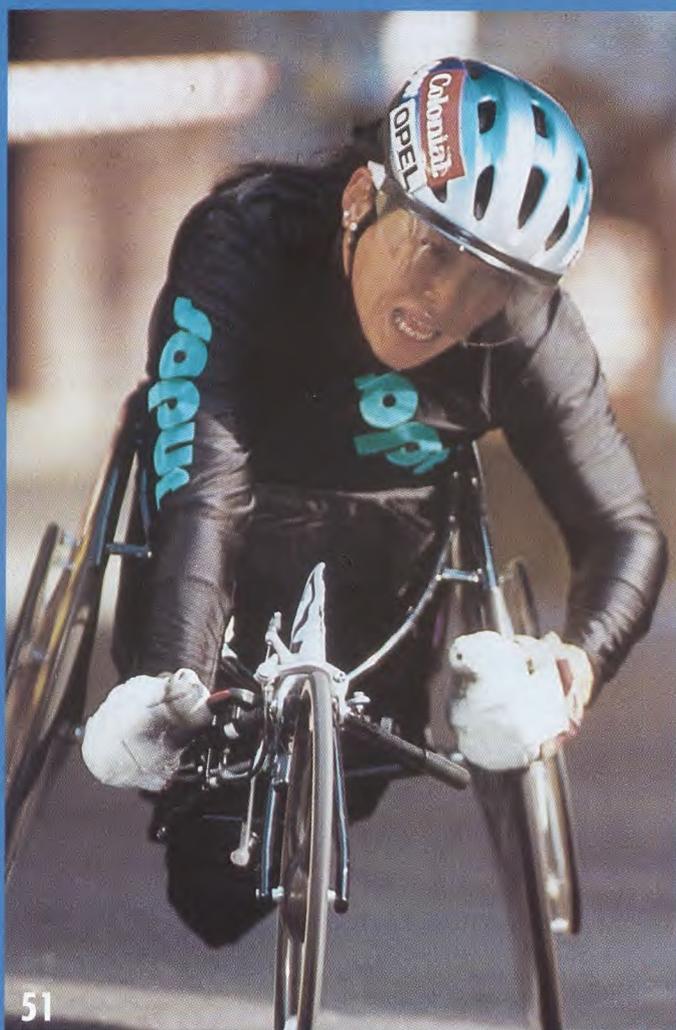
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NATIONAL INTERCOLLEGIATE WHEELCHAIR BASKETBALL TOURNEY

by Jim Hayes/photos by Robert Crosby

Coaches and players meeting at the University of Texas–Arlington were treated to a topnotch competition, full of good ol' Texas hospitality, lots of community support, and a school that is dedicated to treating wheelchair athletes with the same respect shown their able-bodied counterparts.

The 17th National Intercollegiate Wheelchair Basketball Tournament was held at the University of Texas at Arlington, March 7–9. Five teams were seeded for the three-day event: Southern Illinois University (SIU), Southwest State University (Minnesota), University of Wisconsin-Whitewater, the University of Illinois (U of I), and the University of Texas at Arlington (UTA). While all the teams came to Texas with "upset" on their agenda, the odds were in favor of a UTA-U of I match-up in the championship game. The teams split games earlier in the year and had met in the championships finals for the past two seasons.

Game one featured the Warhawks of Wisconsin against the Salukis of Southern Illinois. Coach Mike Frogley's Wisconsin team included a young Australian player, Troy Sachs, who had a reputation of dominating games with his quickness and offensive prowess. The SIU team, coached by Kim Martin, featured Eric Jordan whose talents as point guard were equally impressive, particularly with his previous playoff experience. Wisconsin proved too strong as they defeated SIU, 61–48. Sachs led all scorers with 31 and served notice he would be a great player for many years.

The Warhawks faced the number-one-seeded UTA Movin' Mavs in game two. In front of a crowd of 2,000 screaming fans, UTA had little trouble advancing to the championship game. The Mavs used their 11 players equally as they came out ahead, 95–41. UTA's all-American center, Jason Van Beek, broke the single-game tournament record by scoring 36 points while shooting 71% from the field.

The third game matched the second-seeded Illini against number-three-seed Southwest State. It was good to have Coach Lew Shaver's squad back in the



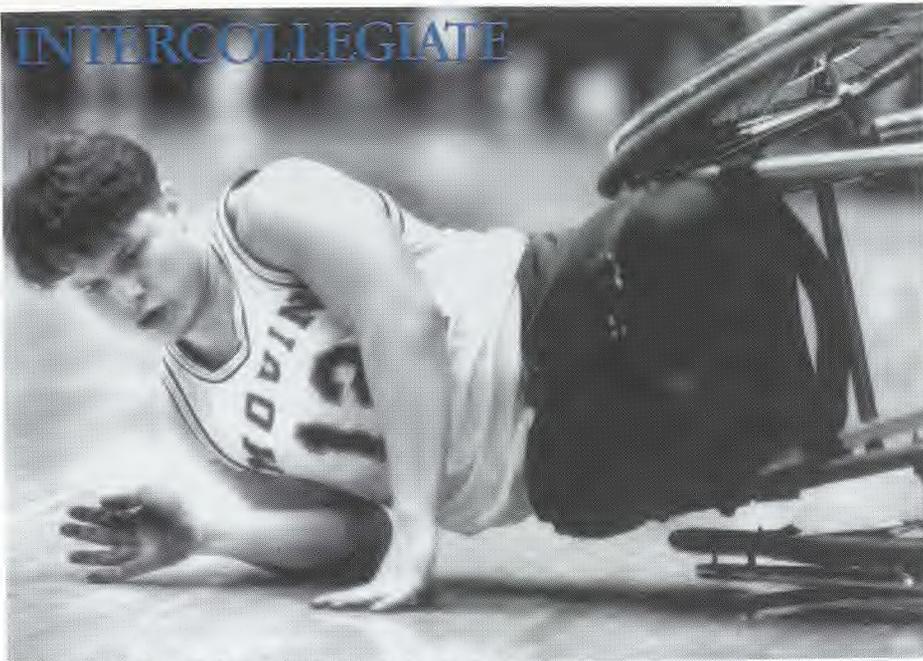
Closely guarded by a Movin' Mav player, Illini Curtis Lease looks for a shot.

intercollegiate spectrum, and with senior point-guard Jared Johnson directing the offense, many 3-point shots were expected. U of I Coach Brad Hedrick came in with a top-20 team whose balance and experience in post-season play proved too much for Minnesota. The Illini coasted into the championship game with a 81–32 victory.

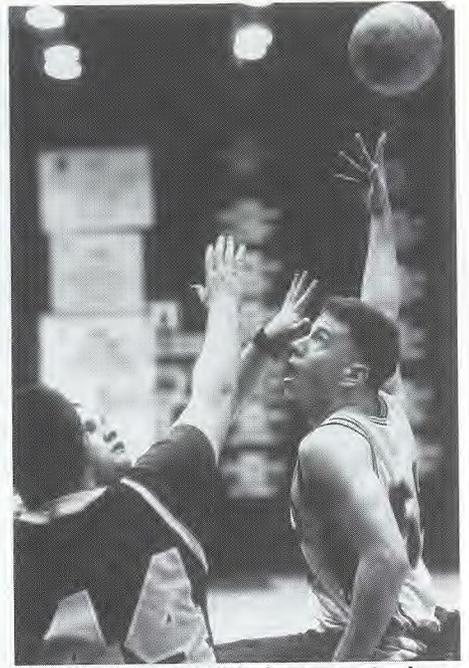
Game day was filled with all the excitement associated with any

national championship. A sell-out crowd, bands, and dignitaries from around the country gathered in Texas Hall to watch the "Brawl in the Hall." The two leading programs—UTA and U of I—had been there before, and UTA had come away victorious in a close contest. However, U of I had beaten UTA earlier in the season, and Coach Hedrick was hoping for a repeat.

INTERCOLLEGIATE



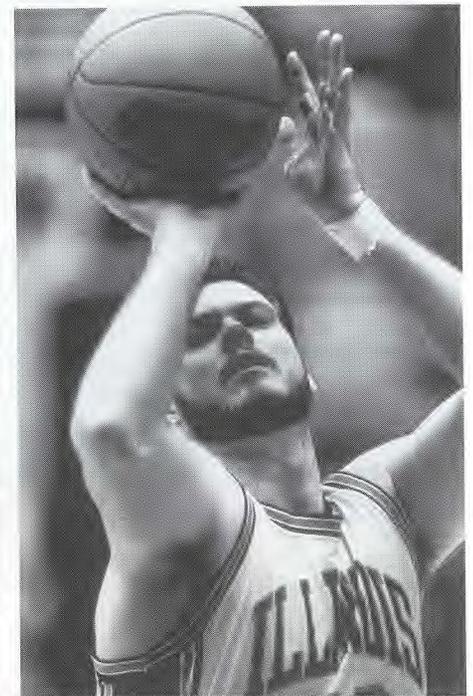
UTA's co-MVP Rusty Belknap takes a spill during the final game.



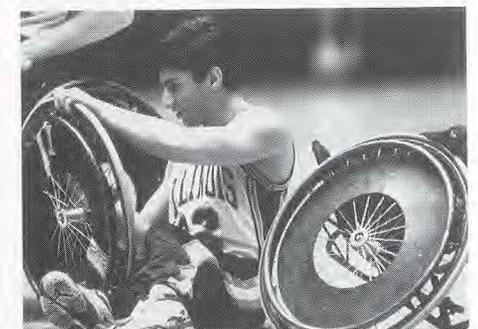
Illini Mike Prescott (right) shoots over Southwest State's Darrell Peters (#44) and Jared Johnson.



Southwest State's Jared Johnson dribbles past Josh Fabian of Illinois during the first round of games.



U of I player Rob Knight takes a shot during the final game.



Before a game, Illini Josh Fabian works on his wheels.

ALL-AMERICAN FIRST TEAM

Jason Van Beek	UTA
Javier Gonzalez	UTA
Eric Barber	Wisconsin
Curtis Lease	Illinois
Jared Johnson	Minnesota

MOST VALUABLE PLAYER

(3-way tie)

Jason Van Beek	UTA
Rusty Belknap	UTA
Jared Johnson	Minnesota

ALL-AMERICAN SECOND TEAM

Rusty Belknap	UTA
Chhayly Mak	UTA
Steve Coequyt	Minnesota
Earl Jordan	SIU
Troy Sachs	Wisconsin

SPORTSMANSHIP AWARD

Jared Johnson



UTA's Jason Van Beek passes off to a teammate.

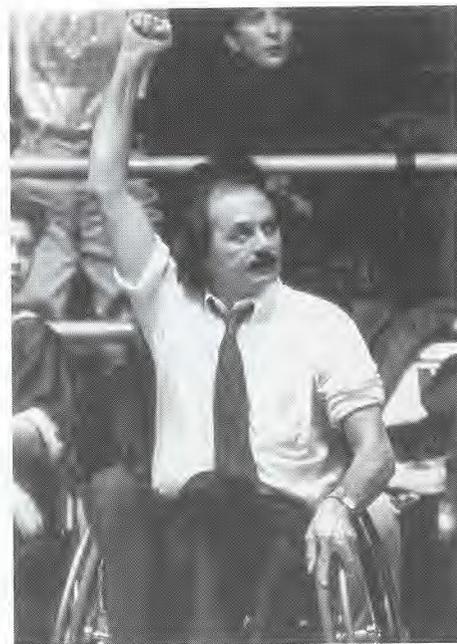
Look for complete coverage of the 46th National Wheelchair Basketball Tournament and the 2nd Junior National Wheelchair Basketball Tournament in the July/August issue of S'NS.

The UTA Movin' Mavs were coming off a successful Bluegrass Tournament that saw the young Mavs gel as a top-ten team. This game would be the last for the Mav's Van Beek and Illinois's Curtis Lease—the two premiere "big men" in the intercollegiate world. Another important match-up would be at the point-guard position, where U of I's Josh Fabian would face the Mavs' Javier Gonzalez.

UTA controlled the tipoff and the first half, 26-12, as Van Beek scored 18 points for the Mavs. Their tenacious triangle-and-two defense forced the Illini to take shots they were not comfortable with.



Wisconsin's new player from down under, Troy Sachs, shows he will be a force to be reckoned with for years to come.



With one minute left during the championship game, Movin' Mavs' Coach Jim Hayes checks the scoreboard.

Both teams improved their shooting percentages in the second half, but UTA proved to be too much for the Illini, as they won, 60-32. The win gave the Mavs four consecutive National Championships. Van Beek finished his college career with 21 points, Gonzalez hit 13, and freshman Rusty Belknap had 19. Lease was leading scorer for Illinois with 11. Following the game, UTA players dumped the ice bucket on Coach Hayes and cut down the net. ♦