

one out in the fifth inning on the mercy rule. Michael Johnson and Alex Atherton hit three-run home runs. Barbourville won five consecutive games in the losers' bracket of the double-elimination tournament.

Can horse be underdog vs. human?

Can Zippy Chippy finally win a race, even against a human? The losingest horse in the recorded history of U.S. Thoroughbred racing takes on Jose Herrera, the base-stealing center fielder of the Rochester (N.Y.) Red Wings, over 40 yards before Thursday night's home game against Scranton/Wilkes-Barre (Pa.). A 0-for-86 career record has gotten the 9-year-old gelding banned from racing at most tracks.

Boys' presence rankles softball opponents

Arizona defeated the Philippines 3-2 Tuesday in the Little League Softball World Series at Kalamazoo, Mich. No big deal. But it was a very big deal that Arizona, the U.S. West representative, had five boys in the tournament for 11- and 12-year-olds. Rules don't eliminate boys, but the other teams are all girls. "We were surprised and disappointed," said Philippines manager Damaso Sancon, whose team played only after a late-night meeting of players, coaches and parents. "We've been preparing for this for two years." Arizona defeated Jeffersonton, Ky., 4-2 Monday and plays Westfield, Mass., today. Three of four international teams and a Florida team have said they won't play Arizona.

Written by Don Cronin with staff and wire reports

Baseball Weekly

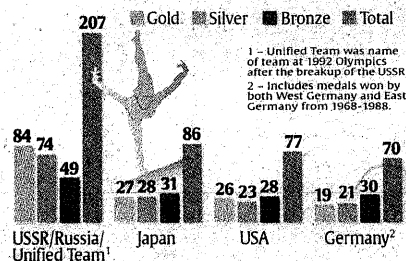
To live and thrive in L.A.: A more mature Gary Sheffield is putting up MVP numbers for the Dodgers but still searching for respect. In Baseball Weekly, on newsstands today.

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Russia still rules gymnastics

The gymnasts who will lead the USA at the 2000 Olympics in Sydney will be determined at trials beginning Thursday in Boston. Countries that have won the most Olympic medals in gymnastics (men's and women's):



Source: The Ultimate Book of Lists

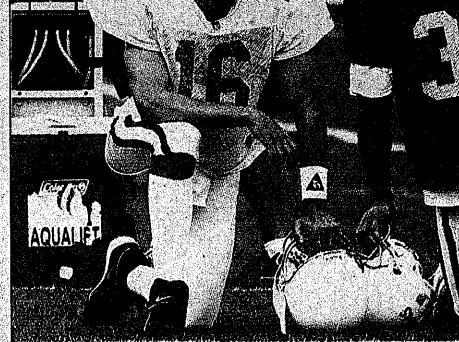
By Ellen J. Horrow and Quin Tian, USA TODAY

By Richard Weiner
USA TODAY

No wonder Jake Plummer showed up at training camp and didn't want to talk about the series of injuries that ruined last season for him. While Plummer plummeted from young savior of the Arizona Cardinals in 1998 to the NFL's lowest-rated passer last season, there was plenty of pain behind the scenes as well.

In a recent interview, Plummer said for the first time that the sprained right thumb he suffered in training camp hurt so much that he had to miss practice when he neglected to take anti-inflammatory medicine three nights before the second game of the regular season. Two days before kickoff, he couldn't even hold a ball, let alone throw it.

Plummer played anyway. His totals in a 19-16 loss at Miami: four interceptions, no touchdowns, 11 completions in 27 attempts for 112 yards.



Team stars: Jake Plummer and veteran cornerback Aeneas Adams expected to lead the Cardinals back to respectability.

"The first couple of games were just totally forced," Plummer says. "The ball wasn't coming out. I was on major anti-inflammatories. Without those, I probably wouldn't have been able to throw the ball."

Plummer also needed eight prior to the season could play with had suffered the cause Plummer

Hall still has the old zip

Free spirit defies diabetes, sets U.S. record in 50 free

By Karen Allen
USA TODAY

INDIANAPOLIS — Everything — and nothing — has changed for Gary Hall Jr. in the last four years. He's no longer the invincible human being he once thought he was. Diabetes, diagnosed a year ago, taught him that.

But he's still U.S. swimming's fastest man. Hall, 25, the defending Olympic silver medalist, won the 50-meter freestyle in an American-record 21.76 seconds Tuesday at the Olympic trials. He edged Anthony Ervin, 19, who is the first swimmer of African-American descent to make a U.S. Olympic team.

Hall is a free spirit with a 1960s-style irreverence that delights fans and often frustrates swimming's authorities. He served a three-month suspension for a positive marijuana test in 1998 and also was burned when a car he was repairing exploded in his face.

Then came the diabetes diagnosis, which his first doctor predicted would end his career.

"Being who I am," Hall said, "I immediately felt the urge to defy him."

He did. Hall will swim the 50 and 100 freestyles, the 4x100 freestyle relay and the medley relay in Sydney. Ervin, who finished in 21.80, also beating the Amer-



By Eileen Bla

Yes! Gary Hall celebrates winning the trial American record. Anthony Ervin, right, was

ican record of 21.81 by Tom Jager in 1990, the 50 and 4x100 freestyle relay.

Brooke Bennett will defend her Olympic al. She won the 800 freestyle in 8:23.92. Kai no finished second to qualify in her third event. She'll also swim the 400 individual n 200 butterfly.

Dara Torres and Amy Van Dyken finish qualifying for today's women's 50 freestyle finished in a trials-record 24.93.

► A change of plans, a change of teams