

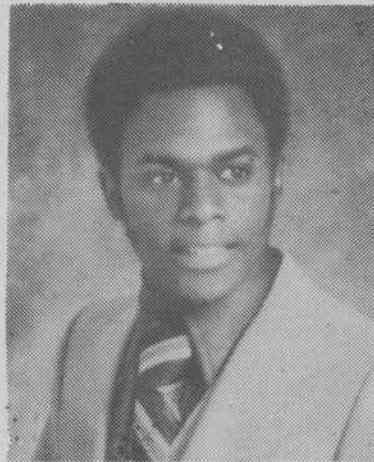
# SPORTS BOARD

SPORTS, GAMING, HORSERACING

NOVEMBER 22, 1984



## KEN'S COMMENTS



By Ken Wilson

Already several of the Olympic performers have begun to cash in on their efforts during this past August in Los Angeles.

Members of one of the more successful teams, former standout USA boxers made an easy transition from the amateur ranks to the professional level of their careers last Thursday night before some 18,000 fans at the famed Madison Square Garden.

Inspired by a national television audience and a large payday, six USA medalists were victors in their pro debuts. However, the lightest two in the group turned in the most impressive performance.

Flashy lightweight Meldrick Taylor made quick work of Pittsburgh native Luke Leece as the referee stopped the bout on the three-knockdown rule at the 2:31 mark of the initial stanza.

Meanwhile, another gold medal winner, lightweight Pernell Whitaker stunned Far-rain Comeaux early then finished him off at 2:50

of the second round in a fashion that prompted ABC announcers to tab the native of Norfolk, Virginia, as their choice to capture a pro title first.

Aside from light heavyweight Virgil Hill's second-round knockout of New York's Arthur Wright, a late substitute, all other bouts went the prescribed distance.

The largest of the Olympians, heavy-weight Tyrell Biggs continued to draw the wrath of crowds coast-to-coast as boos accompanied the Philadelphia throughout his lackluster unanimous six-round decision over Mike Evans, a movie-television actor.

Probably the most physically impressive boxer of the six, Evander Holyfield, highly touted after taking a bronze on a controversial disqualification, had an unexpected tough time, but managed to score a unanimous six-round decision against stiff-necked Lionel Byarm.

Crowd favorite and welterweight gold-med-

## Dwight Gooden Cops Top Rookie Honors

NEW YORK — New York Mets pitcher Dwight Gooden, who led the major leagues with 276 strikeouts, became the youngest player to win the National League Rookie of the Year Award Monday.

Gooden, who turned 20 Friday, received 23 of 24 first-place votes cast by the Baseball Writers Association of America. The American League winner will be announced today.

Gooden said he had gotten some help from Strawberry in approaching his rookie season.

"I talked with Strawberry about the things he went through, and it helped a lot," said Gooden, adding that he felt he could avoid the sophomore jinx.

"This award is even more meaningful because it came on my father's birthday," said Gooden at a Shea Stadium news conference. "I'll never forget this because you only get one chance to be rookie of the year. I'm going to

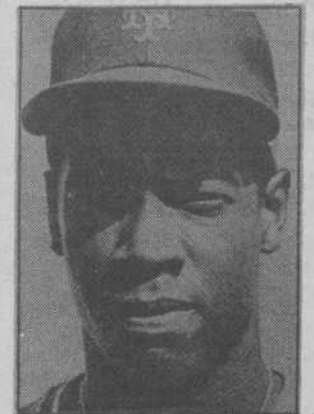
alist during the 1984 Summer Games, Mark Breland was stretched to the maximum, yet scored a unanimous decision with a strong finish. Breland, the owner of an outstanding amateur record of 110-1 with 73 knockouts while becoming the only five-time winner of the New York Golden Gloves competition, showed flashes of great talent. Still Williams was a tough nut to crack.

Bright futures await several of these boxers. Yet, only time will tell if this group can equal the feats and accomplishments achieved by the great 1976 Olympic squad that featured the likes of Michael Spinks and Sugar Ray Leonard.

take it back home (Tampa, Fla.), hang it up in my room and look at it every night before I go to sleep."

Gooden, who finished second to Rick Sutcliffe the NL Cy Young voting, struck out 276 batters in 218 innings for the Mets, breaking the rookie record of 245 set in 1955 by Score, of the Cleveland Indians. That mark fell on Sept. 12 when Gooden struck out 16 batters, three short of the major league record for one game.

Gooden is the third pitcher and fourth member of the Mets to win the award. Tom Seaver won



Dwight Gooden

of the Chicago Cubs in 1967, Jon Matlack in 1972 and outfielder Darryl Strawberry last year.

Gooden, who compiled a 17-9 record and 2.60 earned run average, set a major-league record for strikeout ratio, fanning an average of 11.39 batters per nine innings. The old record was 10.71 by Cleveland's McDowell in 1965.

With a fastball clocked conservatively at 93 mph and a parabolic curveball, Gooden immediately had the physical tools. He also, as it turned out, came prepared mentally, too.

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