

THE HOT CORNER

BY
DWS
RENSER

It's all over but the shouting in the law school softball league and the King's Bench is on top of the heap. The Bench bombed the Beagles 12-2 this week to edge them out as the top law school squad. Howard's Heroes, long on talk, but short on bat, finished third, setting the world of softball prognostication back 10 years.

The whole sad story started some weeks ago when Joe Howard chose a team of all-stars- billed as the finest aggregation of ballplayers ever assembled in law school history...to say nothing of the American and National Leagues.. and entered them in independent competition aptly titled "Howard's Heroes." Unfortunately, there were those overlooked in the Howard draft who possessed some degree of skill themselves and the result was the addition of two teams to the law school list. The first to sign was a motley crew of players assembled by an equally motley manager, William "Skipper" Shannon, who labelled them the "King's Bench," at least the latter part of which was true. The second club of rejects was less imaginative though more famous, piloted by Casey Cleveland and called the "Beagles."

As time-worn adage runs, however the game is never over until the last man is out, and, by that time, the bench was leading the league. With but one game remaining, the Bench is leading the league, as yet undefeated by any law school squad.

The real trouble started when the Heroes were required to put their bats where their mouths were against the lowly Beagles. These worthies, paced by fleet Don Witty, the law school's fastest human, and ageless Bill Kline, the law school's oldest human, took a quick advantage which they never relinquished. Manager Cleveland was elated. The big prob-

lem with the Heroes was their hitting. With the exception of hard-hitting Curran Clem, most versatile utility man since Bert Campeneris played 9 positions for the Athletics, the Heroes went for the long ball and consistently dumped high cans of corn into the hot little hands of Kline and Witty. Result: Beagles, 13 - 3.

The Heroes troubles were just beginning, however. Next came the Bench and, though the upstate returns have not yet arrived, it looked like 22 - 10. Everybody on the Bench pounded the pellet, especially big Gus Smith, former Beagle quarterback who decided to play softball for more money. Smith got four hits including two home runs, while honest John Flanagan and Bob Scott (the Bench's answer to Mike Epstein) contributed their boiling bats to the effort. According to Shannon, all the Hero runs came from sloppy fielding, not weaknesses in Wayne Spencer, raw-boned rookie from Iron Claw, North Carolina. Spencer pitched fine ball.

The stage was then set for the Beagle-Bench game. The result was 13-10 for the Bench. "Our victory was a team effort," said an ecstatic Shannon. "So was our loss," added Cleveland. "I can only attribute our loss to the fact that the Bench as a team, got more runs than we as a team did."

Thus humbled, the Beagles again took on the Heroes and soon regained their confidence. Going into the final inning, however, the teams were deadlocked 2-2. The Hero hurler, Kent Miliken walked the first hitter and Howard brought in reliefer Crash Harding. The Beagles got four runs. Much credit for their victory goes to Cleveland who failed to show up and thus contributed immeasurably to his team's quality.

This left the Beagles with a single chance to even the score with the Bench and they blew it. Smith waltzed one out of the ball orchard, Spencer twirled his usual fine game, and it was all over....12 - 2.

Now the Bench cannot possibly drop the law school crown, though the lowly Heroes actually can redeem themselves by knocking the Bench out of independent league championship.

So it goes, but the Heroes need not take it so hard....even the Dodgers are in the second division.