Sports

Loyola shaken by player's death

By John Nadel Associated Press

LOS ANGELES (AP) - The first sign of tragedy at Lovola Marymount was visible to all who entered the campus Monday — the American flag flying at half mast.

Even if it wasn't, the pall from Hank Gathers' death could be felt

You could see it on the face of the woman at the parking gate.

You could see it on the faces of the few students making their way from class to class at the small Catholic school in Westchester, a few miles northeast of Los Angeles International Airport.

At Albert Gersten Pavilion. where Lovola-Marymount plays its home basketball games, a hand-written message was taped to the door. It read: "Hank, We Love U." with a heart substituted for the word 'Love

Gathers, one of college basketball's premier players, died Sunday night less than two hours after collapsing at Gersten Pavilion early in Loyola's West Coast Conference tournament game against Portland He was being treated for an irregular heartbeat discovered af ter he collapsed at the foul line in a game Dec. 9 but had been cleared by doctors to play

He had just scored on a slam. dunk to give the Lions a 25-13 lead when he went down on the court

Nearly 16 hours later. Per Stumer, a starting forward on the basketball team, was wearing a black band on his right arm with Gathers' number '44" drawn on it.

"We're all pretty much stunned about what happened." Stumer said. hard to realize he's just gone. We all knew he had this problem, but nobody thought it was this serious. We didn't realize it was a live or die thing.

"All the players on the team are pretty close. Hank took care of all of us. He made everybody happy. He was an unbelievable

Lea Carbonatto, a student who works in the campus security office, said a few classes were canceled and that attendance was down at those that were held.

Like many of Lovola's 3,500 students. Carbonatto was at the game when Gathers, the NCAA Division leader in scoring and rebounding last season and the sixth-leading scorer in the country this season, collapsed.

"It was shocking," she said quietly "Sadness, that's just the feeling around here.

"It sure has affected the whole country." said a somber Jay Hillock, one of the Lions'

assistant coaches. "He was en ergetic and full of hope for all of us. It'll never be the same

One of those hardest hit by the death was teammate Bo Kimble, who leads the country

Gathers and Kimble go way back - good buddies who attended Dobbins Tech in Philadelphia before coming west together in 1985. They began their college careers at Southern Cal under Coach Stan Morrison, but transferred to Lovola after their freshman year when Morrison was fired and replaced by George Raveling.

"Hank and myself, we've been through some very, very tough times in the 10 years we've been friends." Kimble said haltingly at a campus news conference. "Hank and I were like brothers, we were so close

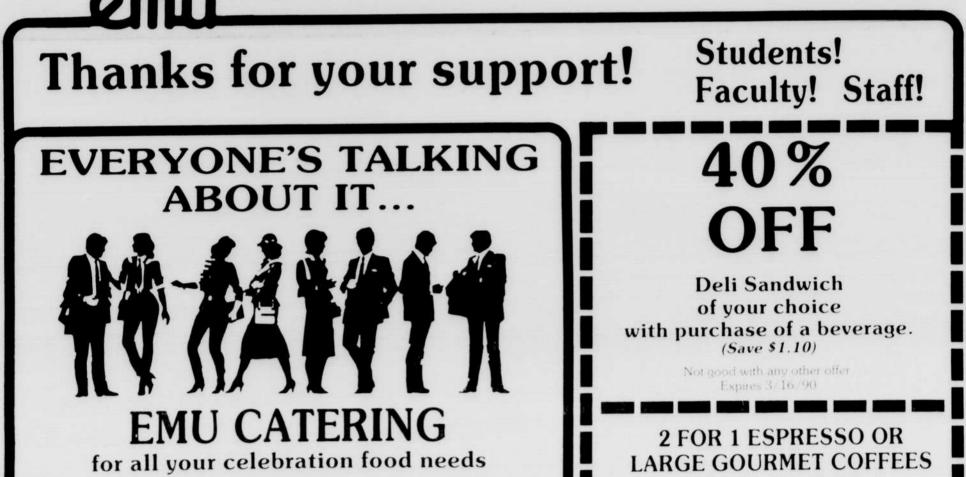
"There's not one thing you can remember about Hank. I have 10 years of great memo-

Before the news conference. Kimble and TV sports reporter Ed Arnold exchanged an emotional hug.

Last summer. Gathers and Kimble worked as interns at KTLA-TV, Channel 5, where Arnold works.

"He was one of the nicest. sweetest kids I've ever know. Arnold said of Gathers, who was a communications major





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