

East so far this season would be decided by one pitch.

"This type of game, I thought it would take a home run to win," Kevin Elster said. "I just didn't think it would be me."

Elster, the No. 8 batter in the Mets' lineup, hit a home run in the eighth inning Friday night that broke up a tense matchup and gave New York a 1-0 victory.

A crowd of 49,584, the largest this year at Shea Stadium, saw the Mets win the opener of a four-game series and extend their division lead to three games over Pittsburgh.

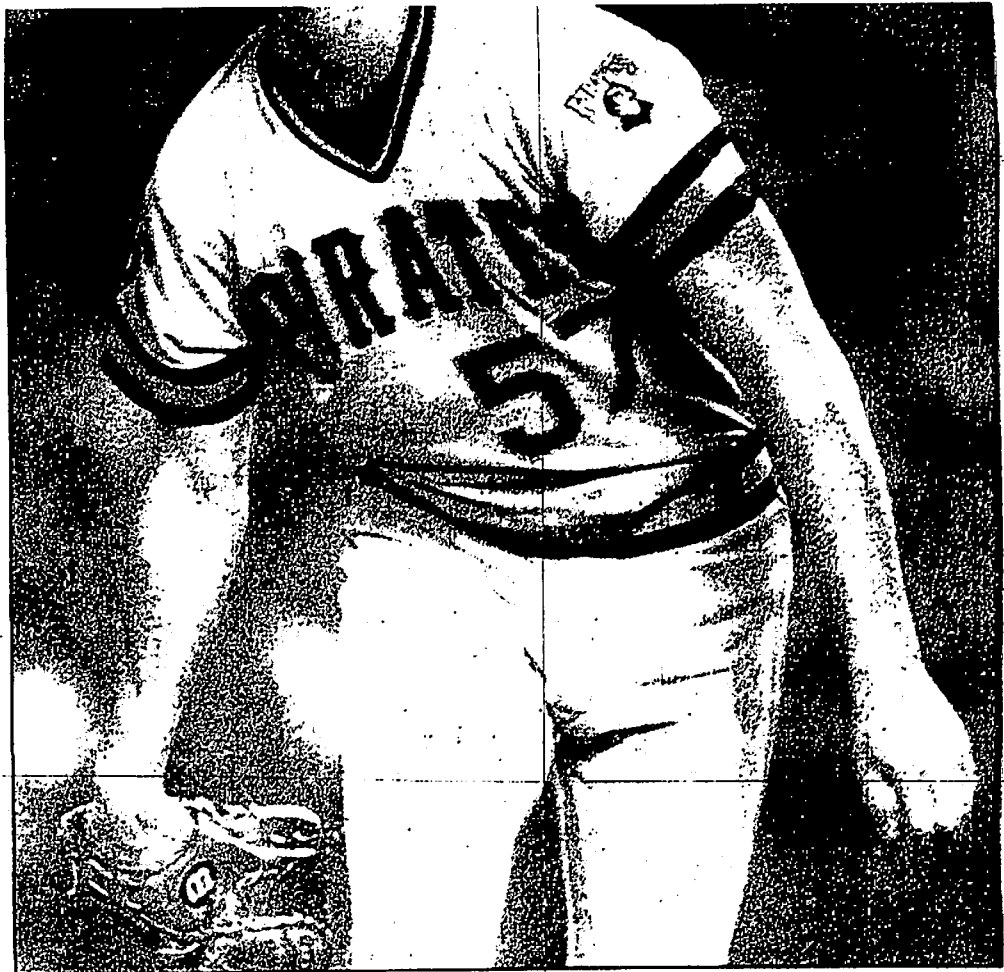
The Mets and Pirates are the two highest-scoring teams in the league, but no one would've known as Ojeda and Smiley each pitched three-hitters. Smiley had retired 19 straight batters before Elster connected with one out in the eighth, only the second Mets' hit.

"I went up there looking for a change-up. I knew he likes to get ahead with his change-up and off-speed pitches," Elster said. "I used a heavier bat than my previous times. That was as hard as I could hit it."

Elster, batting only .216 entering the game, connected for his first homer since June 29. He has homered in each of the Mets' last three games with Pittsburgh, all victories.

"Maybe he was sitting on that pitch. Elster looked bad on change-ups the first two times up," Smiley said. "The pressure was building as we both kept runners off the bases."

The second game of the series is tonight (WWOR-cable, 7 p.m.) at Shea Stadium. Brian Fisher (6-7) will



Pirates' John Smiley watches Kevin Elster's home run head toward the fence Friday night.

Please see **METS** 5-C

Early leaders drop drastically in Open

■ Scores, tee times. 2-C
By KEVIN THOMAS
Times Staff Writer

TARPON SPRINGS — Friday's second round of the Florida Open featured four men and an anticipated baby.

The four men, who were atop or near the top of the leaderboard after one round Thursday, dropped quickly with bogey scores Friday at the Innisbrook Resort.

Orlando's Bart Bryant moved into the lead with a four-under total of 139, but Bryant is not sure he will stick around. His wife, Cathy, is in Orlando, overdue with their first child.

"If something happens, I might have to drive home," Bryant said. "But now that I'm playing well, it could be a tough decision."

Bryant shot a 69 on the par-71 Copperhead course Friday. One stroke behind at 140 is Mike West of Orlando, who shot a 71 Friday on the par-72 Island course.

Four of the top scorers from Thursday, John Huston, John Morse, Greg Kraft and Don Reese, were a collective 25 strokes over par Friday.

Kraft shot an 80 on the Island course, Morse a 79 on the Copperhead.

Huston, of Palm Harbor, shot a 76 on the Copperhead. He missed an 18-inch par putt on

No. 12 and "it just shellshocked me," he said. "I was struggling so much as it was, I never recovered."

On the par-3 13th hole, Huston's drive buried into the bank of a lake. Once on the green, he missed a 5-foot putt and made double-bogey. He finished with a bogey on 18.

"I'm looking forward to getting back on the Island," said Huston, who is six strokes back. The final two rounds, today and Sunday, will be played on the Island course.

Reese, from Palm Beach Gardens, is five strokes back after his 76 on the Island. He could

Please see **OPEN** 3-C

INSIDE

Scott Verplank fires 66, leads Buick by two

— Golf, 3-C

Wide receiver Sharpe signs with Packers

— Pro football, 7-C

American League

Red Sox 6, Brewers 4 (1st)
Brewers at Red Sox, late (2nd)
Tigers 3, Rangers 2 (1st)
Rangers at Tigers, late (2nd)
Indians 7, Twins 0
Blue Jays 7, Yankees 1
Royals 6, Orioles 2
Angels at White Sox, late
A's at Mariners, late

National League

Mets 1, Pirates 0
Cardinals 7, Expos 5
Cubs 8, Phillies 3
Reds at Padres, late
Astros at Dodgers, late
Braves at Giants, late

— Details, 4-C, 5-C

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... many birdies with three successive birdies to close the gap on Verplank.

"It was a good round, but it wasn't anything special until the last few holes," Twitty said. "I hit the ball close the last few holes and

was among 14 players at 71 after the first leg of the 54-hole tournament over the 6,250-yard Bethesda Country Club course.

Meanwhile, the LPGA announced that the Lady Westchester Open has been canceled be-

CONCORD, Mass. — Bobby Nichols, who hasn't won a Senior Tour event in two years, shot a 5-under-par 67 to take a one-stroke lead after the first round of the \$300,000 Digital Senior PGA Classic.

before the 54-hole event I and Julius Boros, one of the "Seniors" at age 68, pulled out nine holes.

Two-time defending champion Chi Chi Rodriguez shot a 6 and was tied for second with Al Geiger.

Open from 1-C

be tied for the lead, were it not for three straight holes. He double-bogeyed 9 and 10, and bogeyed 11.

"You have to hit it good and I didn't do anything today," said Reese.

Bryant, 25, didn't hit it well, either. He was 1-over for nine holes after reaching only four greens in regulation.

"My putter saved me," Bryant said. "And on the back nine, it helped me again, I had only three chances for birdie and I made all three."

Bryant's birdie putts were from 4, 12 and 15 feet.

A doctor told Bryant three weeks ago that his wife could deliver at any time. He skipped a tournament, which was this week in South Dakota, but the baby has not yet arrived. So Bryant entered the Florida Open.

"I was just sitting home, driving myself crazy," said Bryant, who left instructions with tournament officials to be notified if his wife goes into labor. "Maybe if it happens tomorrow (Saturday), I could drive home that night and be back the next day?"

While Bryant "struggled" to his lead, West wondered how he lost it. After 13 holes (including an eagle on No. 11), West was a 6-under for the tournament. He bogeyed three of the last five holes.

"I just got a little impatient out there," said West, who played on the PGA Tour in 1986. "On 14 I hooked it, on 15 I was still thinking about 14, and on 18 I didn't reach the green again."

"But that's okay. In a four-day tournament you can afford to have a day like this."

And in a tournament where the scores can skyrocket at any moment, no lead is safe.



Times photo — STEVE HASEL
Greg Kraft shot an 80 Friday and dropped off the pace.

"The great thing about this golf course," said Steve Schaff, who is tied for third place, "is that you can be eight shots back and still be in it because the guy up there (in first) can shoot 80."

Schaff, teaching director at the Bloomingdale Golfers Club in Brandon, shot a 4-under 67 at the Copperhead for a 141 total, tying David Jackson (71-70) of Jacksonville.

There are 15 golfers within four shots of Bryant.

The tournament's lowest score so far is a 66, shot Friday on the Copperhead course by 1988 Florida Amateur champion Nick Martin (143 total) of Atlantic Beach.

Heat signs first player: DePaul guard Edwards

Associated Press

MIAMI — Former DePaul guard Kevin Edwards on Friday became the first player to sign a contract with the Miami Heat. Terms of the contract were not released.

Edwards, a first-round draft choice, joined other rookies and free agents Friday at the Heat's two-week summer camp, which started Thursday.

"I feel confident I can be a starter this year," said Edwards, the second collegian picked by the Heat and the 20th player selected in the June draft.

"Being an expansion team, we'll probably take our lumps this year. It's going to be a different feeling."

Playing on a losing team could

pro basketball

forget it and not practice as hard as if you were winning," Edwards said. "But since I'm preparing myself for it, I think I can adapt to it."

NBA notes

■ **Bulls:** First-round draft pick Will Perdue of Vanderbilt has come to terms with Chicago. Terms of the contract were not disclosed.

■ **Mavericks:** The Dallas Mavericks' Roy Tarpley, winner last season of the NBA's Sixth Man Award, will compete along with one-year veterans Steve Alford and Jim Farmer on a team in the Southern California Summer Pro

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'86 Chevy Spectrum — 4 Dr., 5 Spd., A/C, Stereo, 8,000 Miles #807052	WAS \$9995	IS \$9995	\$111 mo
'86 Crown Victoria — 4 Dr. Surf-Roof & LOADED #806324	WAS \$10,795	IS \$9995	\$217 mo
'87 Daytona Pacifica — Auto, LOADED #806009	WAS \$11,995	IS \$10,495	\$204 mo
'88 Taurus 4 Dr. Auto, A/C, Ta-Cruise, Stereo #806029	WAS \$12,995	IS \$11,995	\$21 mo
'88 Tempo GL — 4 Dr. Auto, Tilt, P. Door Locks, Stereo #806906	WAS \$9995	IS \$8495	\$14 mo
'86 Aerostar XL — Auto, A/C, Cruise, Stereo, #806015	WAS \$11,995	IS \$9995	\$21 mo
'83 Mustang GLX Conv. — Auto, A/C, Cruise, Stereo #807006	WAS \$7995	IS \$6995	\$21 mo
'88 Toyota Pickup — 4 Spd. #805905	WAS \$3995	IS \$3995	\$8 mo
'87 Ranger XLT — 5 Spd., A/C, Stereo #806975	WAS \$9995	IS \$7995	\$14 mo
'86 Ranger Supercab — 4 Spd. w/O.D., A/C, Stereo #806949	WAS \$8495	IS \$7395	\$14 mo
'86 E-150 Van — Auto, A/C, Re-Cruise, Stereo #806995	IS \$7995	\$164 mo	
'86 F-150 Lariat — LOADED #807006	WAS \$11,995	IS \$9995	\$217 mo
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