

Kearny welcomes home soccer stars

Continued from Page 21

The U.S. dropped a 5-0 decision to Czechoslovakia in its first game, then fell to Italy, 1-0, and Austria, 2-1. Midfielder Tab Ramos still keeps his head up high as did after the loss to Austria.

"I don't think that by losing there that we were hurt," said Ramos, who is talking to teams in Holland and Switzerland and might go play there. "We pretty much knew when we were going over there that it was going to be difficult. The first game against the Czechs, we thought that could be the game that we would have a chance to win and get the two points and I think we came out too offensively and we paid for it. They scored two early goals and then we were all disorganized the rest of the game.

"I think against Italy and Austria we did better and held the ball a lot more. If you are going to compare out teams with their teams, you can't go offensive against those kinds of teams, because if you play your best game and they play their best game, you're going to lose by three or four goals. So what you do is play the best you can and try to take them out of their game. We did that successfully against the other two teams, because otherwise, they would have blown us out."

U.S. goalkeeper Meola, who grew up playing in the Kearny Thistle League with Harkes and Ramos, seemed the most content with the tremendous support his hometown had given him. He too, like the others kept his head up. It was



Journal photo by Scott Lituchy

U.S. Soccer team's John Harkes shakes hands and waves to fans while riding in a red Corvette at a parade in his honor in Kearny last night.

him that the United States saw the morning after the U.S. fell to Austria. An Associated Press photo of Meola getting beat for a goal by Austria's Gerhard Rodax was plastered across practically every newspaper in the country.

Meola was so happy with his hometown, that he was even willing to make quite an odd trade.

"I tell you," said Meola.

who has also talked to teams in Europe. "The feeling (at the World Cup) was a feeling I never had before and tonight exemplifies the backup. We had a goal when we went to Italy and that was to get to the second round. We didn't do that and we were kind of depressed and here we come back and this is just as good as getting to the second round for us. We're real excited and it's really good to know that people are still be-

hind us after we lose three games.

"I couldn't think of a better substitute for getting to the second round than this. We knew (soccer fever) was this big. we just weren't sure on a Friday night how many people would come out. It's good to see that these people came out. Hopefully, this backup will stay this way, for as long as our careers and for the little guys coming up."