

Thursday, August 26, 1976

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Sidelined for year

Goals depend on his foot

By CORINNE ABATT

In his heart and in his thoughts Bill Benton, an accountant at Farmington Hills City Hall, is a distance runner. He probably always will be in spite of the fact that he has not run for the past year. And that hurts.

But then, so did the foot which finally kicked up such a fuss. At least five medical specialists advised him to rest for a while.

They didn't say how long it would take for the inflamed foot to get back to normal. They simply said that Benton should rest until all the pain disappears.

This year is the first since 1971 that the 36-year-old hasn't run in the Boston Marathon—something he dearly loves to do. But don't count Benton out of the race for good.

He said that in running there's a piece of philosophy: "The longer the distance, the later the peak." Benton said that at 26 he is approaching peak age for a distance runner, and matter of fact he added, "And I'm chomping at the bit to get going."

After running anywhere from eight to 20 miles after work each day for years, he said not being able to run is like being unemployed. For a while, at least, you wonder what to do with all your extra time.

of some of the races would have been different if they completed.

The marathon is the exception, he said calling it "the worst race in the world to try to call."

He agreed that few had heard of Oerouski of East Germany who won the marathon's gold medal this year. "But then no one had heard of Frank Shorter before the 1972 Olympics," he said.

Shorter has never run the Boston Marathon. There have been lots of greats in that race but Shorter has never been in it.

Benton estimates that about 75 runners out of the total field of more than 2,000 in this year's Boston Marathon were women. Only recently have they been allowed to participate in the 26-mile, 385-yard race.

Especially pleasing to Benton is the steady growing interest in running. Not all of those running today are serious beyond the point of finding running enjoyable.



BILL BENTON

THE BELLE ISLE group that Benton has run with regularly on weekends has grown to as many as a hundred runners. Another group that he has run with in the past, Somerset-Troy Fun Run Club, often has 30 or more out.

Benton said that he knows running has been called a lonely sport making it sound quite dismal. But it doesn't have to be that way.

Clubs such as the Belle Isle or Somerset groups make it a lot of fun and besides Benton said he enjoys himself even when running alone.

Until the issue in his foot is completely healed, Benton is working on his large collection of sports memorabilia and plans to do some cross-country skiing this winter.

While some of the skiing movement is

the same as running, there's a softer landing surface for the heel and Benton said he is enthusiastic about his new sport.

However, skiing, working in his office, city hall, collecting sports memorabilia or watching sports. Bill Benton's thoughts go in one direction—getting those legs and feet moving again—hitting the rhythm, feeling the kick coming back, the surge of energy that wonderful confidence that tells you there are miles ahead and all of them belong to you.

Starting anew

Farmington's three high schools began football practice this week as coaches conducted two sessions daily. As North Farmington and Harrison took to the scrimmage fields behind their schools, Farmington High players ventured to football camp to prepare for the season ahead. On Monday morning, area squads will don pads and contact begins as players vie for starting roles as potential gridiron stars.

Harrison head coach John Harrington (rooster) discusses his roster and plays with starting tailback Mike Bowden (left) and quarterback Jeff Thorne. Trying out for the squads' kicking specialist, Mike Colomina gets away a high boot while Mark Durcell holds the piskin during Tuesday afternoon's workout. (Staff photo by Harry Mauthe)

FARC hosts ladies tourney

Twenty-two women softball league champions will vie for the Michigan Recreation and Park Association Women's Class B Tournament of Champions crown Sept. 3, 4 and 5 in the Farmington community.

The Farmington Area Recreation Commission will host this year's tournament with the women's team competing against other league champions from around the state.

Yr Olde Cabbage House, the second place team in the Farmington Area Indoor League, will represent the host community against the Troy area women's league winner in the first round.

Competition will begin Friday at 6:30 p.m. and will continue through Sunday with a 9 a.m. starting time both Saturdays and Sunday.

Games will be played at three sites: City Park on Shawassaw in Farmington, Drake Park Field on Drake Road in Farmington Hills, and the Knights of Columbus Field on Middle Belt between Nine Mile and Grand River also in Farmington Hills. Championship rounds will be played at Drake Park on Sept. 5 beginning at 11 a.m. while the finals will start around 2 p.m.



Tennis exhibition brings old friends together again

By JOHN BOZZO

Highly touted professional tennis player Charles Pasarell experienced a lot of nostalgia during his Aug. 19 visit to the Birmingham Athletic Club (BAC) where he played a tennis exhibition.

Before starting to play, BAC tennis professional Walter Orben told the crowd of about 200 people that he and Pasarell were childhood friends and had played their junior tennis together.

"I tried to convince him," Pasarell said, "that his big breakthrough came in the 1964 Junior French Bowl doubles when he reached the finals and lost to me." Orben quipped before the start of the match. "Of course I had the best junior tennis player in Florida on my team."

Pasarell then defeated his childhood friend 6-3 in a doubles match. After a short rest Pasarell also played a doubles match, playing with BAC member Bob Blackner against Orben and BAC member Bruce McDonald. Pasarell's team won 8-4.

He played easily, driving his opponents to the back of the clay courts and then dropping a shot close to the net.

A NATIVE of Puerto Rico, the 31-year-old Pasarell and his wife Sharon, live at Palmar del Mar, Puerto Rico, where he is director of tennis.

His tournament victories have come in the doubles competition and include the ATP Junior Player tournament, the First National Bank of Louisville Championship and the American Airlines Tennis Games. In 1974 Pasarell earned \$54,633. He played collegiate tennis at UCLA and since 1962 has been consistently among the top players in the United States Tennis Association.

He left for Benton and the U.S. Professional Championships right after his exhibition at the BAC and also plans to enter the U.S. Open at Forest Hills later in August. He made the quarterfinals at Wimbledon earlier this summer.

I've been playing World Team Tennis for the L.A. Strings," Pasarell said. "I'm hitting the ball real well. I'm in pretty good shape and I have a lot of feel on the shots."

"What has happened in the last eight years to tennis is absolutely incredible," Pasarell said. "Not just in the professional game with increasing prize money which is almost as high as golf, but also on the recreational level. Everyone is becoming exposed to tennis, indoor clubs are popping up everywhere, and racquet sales are booming. It's truly the biggest participant sport."

"I'm glad to have been part of it and been able to play as a professional," Pasarell said. "Every year it seems to get bigger and bigger. I said that professional tennis not begun in 1968 I doubt that I would still be playing tennis today. I'd have to go out and get a job."

"I've been able to play as a pro and make good money," he added. "I hope to play as long as Ken Rosewall who's 41 and still winning titles."

Pasarell said that he has a "burning desire" to win one of the four major championships: Wimbledon, the U.S. Open, French Open, and the Australian Open.

"If I could win one of those I would probably be so satisfied that anything that would happen from there on would be okay," Pasarell said.

HOWEVER, ALONG with the boom in popularity and prize money has come a boom in competition and winning these tournaments is tougher than ever, Pasarell said.

"Ten years ago there used to be 30 to 40 tennis players touring around," Pasarell said. "Now there are 300 and that makes it tough. They're all good, they all play year-round, and they all train hard."

"The difference between number one and number 300 is very slim," he added. "And number 300 can beat number one on any given day. There's no easy match, you have to fight them all. That was 10 years ago. Then there were 20 good players and below them the rest of the players. In the old days if a good player didn't reach his top at age 20 he had to get another job." Pasarell said. "Now they make enough money to keep playing. They get to be 23 and they're improved and by the time they get to be 27 and 28 all of the sudden they're pretty tough, and the old guys like Rosewall don't retire, they're still around."

Pasarell said the secret is to never stop and continue playing tennis all the time. He said that he practices three times as hard and takes the game much more seriously than he did 10 years ago.

Orben said that his childhood friend has "the same old style—just a little deeper. Both agreed that playing together brought back a lot of memories.

"You can tell the difference," Orben said. "As soon as you but it you appreciate what they can do with the ball. They professional tennis players; all do that, just put so much pressure on you."

THE PROBLEM is that I have to get used to playing outside on clay again," he added. "Team tennis is played indoors on the carpet and it takes a little while to get used to it. I play real good out."

Charles Pasarell

Men's, Women's Open Golf Tournaments Sponsored by the Observer & Eccentric Newspapers and Whispering Willows Municipal Golf Course

Men's 36 holes medal play Saturday and Sunday Sept. 11 and 12. Entry fee \$22 (greens fees, trophies and prizes).

Women's 18 holes medal play Thursday, Sept. 16. Entry fee \$8 (greens fees and trophies). Make checks payable to Gary Whitener, tournament director and enclose with entry blank.

NAME _____ ADDRESS _____ PHONE _____ HANDICAP _____

Men's entries close Wednesday, Sept. 8 at 8 p.m. Call for starting times on Friday, Sept. 10 at 10 a.m.

Women's entries close Monday, Sept. 13 at 5 p.m. Call for starting times Wednesday, Sept. 15 at 10 a.m.

Open to all residents of Livonia, Plymouth, Canton, Garden City, Westland, Redford Township, Farmington, Farmington Hills, Southfield, Birmingham, West Bloomfield, Bloomfield Hills, Troy, Rochester and Avon Township.

Entries may be mailed to Tournament Director Gary Whitener, Whispering Willows Golf Course, 20690 Newburgh, Livonia.

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