Pele to play in Pontiac Stadium soccer game

By JOHN BOZZO

Four members of the Birmingham Athletic Club, including three Birmingham residents, provided the money to bring Pele, the world's greatest soccer player, to Pontiac Stadium for a Labor Day game.

"Several of us put a few bucks together and we're bringing him here," said Moe Lane (the one Southfield resident of the BAC quartet).

Lane simplified the amount of money involved. Gordon Preson, the co-promoter of the event, said it took $80,000 to put on the game between Pele's team, the New York Cosmos, and the Dallas Tornado at 7:30 p.m., Sept. 6, at Pontiac Stadium.

"Monday will be a tough day to draw a crowd, but we'll try it anyway," Lane said. "The reason I'm personally interested in the game is to give some fellows who play soccer a chance to really see top-flight soccer players more than any economic gain.

"He'll retire in one year, and this may be the last time kids from this area have a chance to see him."

Lane, who became a soccer fan while working in Europe for the Ford Motor Co., said that he hopes that the Detroit Tiger game against Baltimore that same night will not detract from the soccer attendance.

THE IDEA for the special soccer game originated between Preston and Troy resident Roger Faulkner, who is helping to promote the game. Both are natives of England, where soccer is a national sport.

"Gordon and I met downtown a couple months ago, and whenever we met, we talked about putting a soccer game on," Faulkner said. "He made a chance call to New York to see what the chances of getting Pele and the Cosmos were. He came back with the figures and said, 'There's no way we can raise the money.'

"I said, 'Let's look at the attendance requirements,' and that I could probably raise the money in two or three days. I sat on the patio of the BAC and talked with some members and I had raised the support in about four days."

Faulkner said the biggest soccer crowd ever before in Michigan was 12,000. He added that the people at the BAC were worried about bringing in the expensive Pele to an expensive facility like Pontiac Stadium but decided to go ahead hoping that the popularity of the world's greatest soccer player would attract a good crowd.

The 80,000-seat Pontiac Stadium was built with soccer in mind. Preston said the stadium architect called him to make sure the playing field would be large enough for soccer games.

A turnout of 20,000 is needed for the group to break even. Pele has drawn 50,000 fans in Seattle and record crowds in Minnesota, Tampa and Portland.

DAVID WILLIAMS, a Birmingham resident and a native of England is one of those persons Faulkner talked to on the BAC patio.

"We're anxious for the game of soccer to flourish in this area," Williams said. "We know the schools are starting up with the sport, and I'm led to believe that there are 14,000 youngsters playing soccer in Michigan.

"We feel to make teenagers more interested in the sport," Williams added, "we have to show them a good brand of soccer."

Williams called the Detroit Cougars, a defunct professional soccer team, a third-rate team that did not play a good brand of soccer.

The vice-president of Power Process Piping, Williams said he once played semi-pro soccer in England.

"The advantage of soccer is anyone can play and it's relatively inexpensive," Williams said. "If you can afford a pair of soccer boots and a ball, you've got all the equipment. You don't have to be any particular size to play. You can play whether you're light or heavy.

"We're thinking one step beyond," Williams added. "Is this area ready for a professional soccer team? This game will perhaps tell us that. If we have a good showing, we might take the next step."

STAN KEND, a Birmingham resident and divisional sales manager for Investors Diversified Services, said he had never heard of Pele until talk about the special game began. His nine-year-old son, who plays in the growing 225-member Birmingham Soccer Association, knew who Pele was and told his father.

"I got interested in soccer when my son wanted a soccer ball instead of a football all of a sudden," Kend said. "I am 40 years old, and when I went to high school, the sport was football. I'm trying to relate to this new generation, and so I got interested.

"I go to my son's practices, and I'm really getting involved," Kend said. "By the time Pele gets here, I think I'll know what's going on and be able to enjoy the game."

DR. LEE BERTLING, a Birmingham dentist, is another member of the BAC group with soccer-playing experience. He said he played at Cranbrook in the early 1940s and then stopped playing because the other schools he went to did not offer the sport.

His interest in the group began with a conversation with Faulkner, and he grew more confident about the game after hearing enthusiastic comments from some of his patients who play soccer.

"It's an inexpensive sport," Dr. Bertling said. "All you need is a pair of shoes and a ball—you don't even need soccer shoes, and you don't need pads, helmets, or skates. From that standpoint, I feel it will become one of the major sports.

"My son," he added, "is a neophyte, 12 years old, and I'm anxious for him to see another sport. He sees nothing but football, hockey and baseball. A lot of kids will be able to see a soccer game with two of the best teams in the business, and I feel it's really going to stimulate interest.

"I HAVE no intention in participating in a professional soccer program," he added. "I personally would like to see soccer become a major sport in Detroit inasmuch as there are so many kids playing."

The Windsor Star soccer team in Canada and a Royal Oak man, Scott Woodward, who is not a member of the BAC, are also helping to bring about the Cosmos-Tornado game.

Dallas also features a star player in Kyle Rote Jr., twice winner of the ABC-TV Superstar competition. Rote was a North American Soccer League scoring champion and won the rookie of the year award in 1973.

Tickets are on sale at Pontiac Stadium and at all Hudson stores. All seats are reserved at $4, $6, $8 and $10.

Farmington recreation softball playoff results

Following are the scores of the playoff games in the Farmington Area Recreation Council softball leagues.

RESIDENT A LEAGUE

Winner's Bracket—Michigan Crushed Concrete 18, Jensen 5; Michigan Crushed Concrete 13, Best Block and Concrete 7; Drakeshire Lanes 18, Wasch's Bar 14; Drakeshire Lanes 9, Michigan Crushed Concrete 7; Lauer's Bracket—Jensen 7, Best Block and Concrete 6; Wasch's Bar 8, Jensen 5; Wasch's Bar 7, Michigan Crushed Concrete 3; Drakeshire Lanes 8, Wasch's Bar 10 x—indicates playoff champs.

INDUSTRIAL A LEAGUE

Winner's Bracket—Dan's Submarine 23, Len's Drywall 8; Farmington Merchants 7, Lord Label 6; Farmington Merchants 7, Dan's Submarine 4; Loser's Bracket—Len's Drywall 10, Lord Label 4; Len's Drywall 7, Dan's Submarine 6; Len's Drywall 8, Farmington Merchants 7; Farmington Merchants 12, Len's Drywall 10 x—indicates playoff champs.

WOMAN'S OPEN LEAGUE

Winner's Bracket—New Way Bar 13, Nunney Sullivan Funeral Home 6; Angie's 6, New Way Bar 7; LaPlain's Raiders 7, Good N' Nasty 3; LaPlain's Raiders 6, Angie's 5 x—indicates playoff champs.

INDUSTRIAL B LEAGUE

Winner's Bracket—A Train Lounge 13, Stein Hess 6; Roman Terrace 18, Film Fair 9; A Train Lounge 18, Stein Hess 9; Roman Terrace 7, A Train Lounge 13; Stein Hess 7 x—indicates playoff champs.

2 local racers win at Waterford

Two area drivers, Barry Hartzel of Southfield and Paul Prill of Farmington Hills, were winners at Waterford Hills race track last Sunday.

Hartzel, a mechanic for a Westland sports car dealership, won the Feature Race No. 2 for cars with smaller displacement engines, driving an MG Midget. His fastest lap was a course record 1:18.0 around Waterford Hills' 1½ oval.

Prill, who works for American Motors Corp. in Southfield, was the winner in Feature Race No. 4, driving a Lotus. No winning time was available.

Another area driver, Steve Tveter of Southfield, finished third in Feature Race No. 3 for Formula Fords. He drove a Crassle Formula Ford. Andy Falbo of Detroit won the race.

All three drivers are expected to participate in Waterford Hills' Fall Classic race set for Sept. 25-26.

Meeting planned for grid managers

The Farmington Area Recreation Commission will hold a meeting for all managers of its recreation men's touch football teams at 6:30 p.m. Wednesday (Sept. 8) at the Farmington Hills City Council chambers, Eleven Mile and Orchard Lake Road.

The meeting will cover team registration dates, league rules and regulations, and other pertinent information. Additional information may be obtained by calling the recreation office at 474-6115.

CITY OF FARMINGTON

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS

The Farmington City Council will meet at 7:00 P.M. Monday, September 20, 1976, in the Council Chambers, 23600 Liberty Street, Farmington, Michigan, to hear all interested persons regarding the Federal Community Development Grant Funds for the fiscal year 1977-78.

All interested persons will be given an opportunity to express their views as to how the City should allocate approximately $38,700.00 in Federal Community Development Grant Funds during the fiscal year 1977-78.

Information regarding the Public Hearing may be obtained by calling the City Manager at 474-5500.

NEDRA VIANE, City Clerk

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