

Two Area Sports Bosses Face Similar Problems

By GEORGE MASKIN
Sports Editor

PORT HURON—Back home in Farmington Township, their homes are less than three miles apart.

In Port Huron's Holiday Inn, they sat only a few feet apart, two men with the same problems.

Each has the same job—a general manager of a major sports team.

One is Sid Abel, former star in his own right, former coach and now general manager of the Red Wings.

The second is Ed Coll, who only in the last few years has moved into the Detroit area and into Observersland to become general manager of the Pistons.

Their teams have been "also-runs" for the most part in the last few seasons. Neither, for example, made the playoffs

a year ago -- and that's what the pro teams shoot for first...and then come the titles.

ABEL IN HIS usual pleasant way was talking about his day at the Red Wings camp in the heart of Port Huron.

"Who says we have it easy?" he declared. "We have 64 players in camp...they'll provide the players for the Wings, our farm clubs, etc."

"We operate in shifts. We start at 7:30 in the morning, so that means we get up around 6:30. We finish at the arena around 4:30."

"But our work doesn't stop there. We gather -- (meaning the coaches and Abel) -- around the dinner table and in our offices and long into the night to talk about players -- who'll we keep and who'll we ship elsewhere."

One player the Wings don't have to worry about is a point named Gordie Howe. Remember him?

GORDIE IS just a spring chicken, 41 and going on 42. "But it's thrilling still to watch him," Abel said. "He acts like a rookie, trying to make the ball clutch. Nobody dare push Gordie around. He sure can work them over when they get tough on him."

"And nobody works harder than Gordie. He's our spark. He's the man who sets the pace in camp. He's the guy every-

body looks up to. He's one in a million...maybe two million."

Abel paused.

"What about the Red Wing prospects and outlook?"

"I don't see it. I see a lot of our best camps in recent years...certainly we are far ahead at the moment than at this time last year."

ONE REASON for the Wings' excitement -- next to Howe -- is the decision of Carl Brewer to end his walkout on the National Hockey League.

Brewer was one of the great, all-star defensemen who was bowed out three years ago. He's back now, looking as outstanding as ever. And, remember, the Wings were sick on defense last season.

The Wings start their exhibitions this week. They play Los Angeles here Sunday night, then go to Halifax the next couple of nights to oppose Montreal. The regular season begins on Oct. 11, at Olympia.

AT THE OTHER table, meantime, sat the Pistons' Coll with

his new coach, Bill van Breda Kolf. The Pistons wound up sixth last season. They have no new face like Brewer to bolster their forces.

They have what could be a "name-check" player in Dave Bing, their star guard who has signed to play in the rival American League two years hence. This could cause some complications...especially if Bing has any sour moments.

The best new thing the Pistons have going, Coll says, is van Breda Kolf. Here's a winning coach, something the

team never before has boasted. Van Breda Kolf turned out college teams which won 66 per cent of their games. He had winners at Los Angeles in the National Basketball Association the last two years.

One visit to the Pistons' camp shows that van Breda Kolf means business. There'll be no fooling around.

"With Bill, we should be a lot improved over a year ago," Coll says. "He has the certain ability the great coaches boast -- getting the most out of his talent."

"All the people around the NBA think we have a team with potential. We think so too. And, van Breda Kolf is convinced that he can make this clutch."

Coll isn't just sitting around in the bleachers at Marysville High where the Pistons will complete their training this week. He's popping to the phone a lot.

He wants to make a trade, especially for a strong forward, where the Pistons would appear to need help.

"Outside of forward, we're pretty solid elsewhere," Coll says. "We have strength at center and at the guards."

"We have a new attitude on this club. And that's important."

THE PISTONS bounce into pre-season play last Saturday, going against New York in Grand Rapids. The regular season begins on Oct. 18 in Milwaukee against all people, Lew Alcindor. The home opener follows on Oct. 21 against Boston, now minus Bill Russell.

SO, THERE they sit -- in the same section of the Holiday Inn -- two men from Farmington Township, two men with the same problems and in rival sports.

They smile a little now. Hopefully, comes next April, both will be really laughing and enjoying their rides home from Detroit to the 11 and 13-Mile Road sectors in Farmington they call home.

Thurston Loses In Harrier Run

Birmingham Groves turned back Thurston, 26-29, in a Northwest Suburban League cross country meet.

Russ Meredith led Franklin, finishing second overall. His teammate, Steve Basler was third, Dave Dickson fifth, Tim D'Amato sixth and Tom Truesdale 10th.

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AREA PRODUCTS playing football at Wayne State University are guard (66) Fred White of Redford Union, and guard (61) Bob Buckley (Livonia-Bentley).

Raiders Make It Three In Row

A romp over John Glen by a 16-43 score and a hard fought victory over Andover, 28-31, lifted the North Farmington winning streak to three straight in cross country action this past week.

Gary Stokes paced a 1-2-3-4 sweep for North Farmington against Glen in the Northwest Suburban League opener for both teams. He was timed in 10:08 over the two mile course.

He was followed home by teammates Craig Dube, Matt Conklin and Carl Hebel. Fourth went to Glen's Paul March and with Stan Kouris of North coming in sixth.

Stokes was nipped for first place by a second against Andover, but Conklin placed fifth, Dube sixth, Hebel seventh and Harvey Freed eighth to give North Farmington the team victory.

Falcon Runners Split

Farmington High's cross country team gained one victory and a second in meets this past week.

The Falcons downed Lathrup, 25-35, in an interclass League meet at Dave Harsant of Farmington was second behind individual winner Bill Wilmet of Lathrup, who was clocked in 10:38.

Mark Burton of Farmington was third, Mike Foster of Farmington fourth and Kevin

Ryland and Gary Long, sixth and seventh, respectively, for the winners.

In a triangular meet, Farmington finished second with 35 points as Lahser won the meet with 32. Groves was third with 58.

John Donahoe, placing second, led the Farmington contingent. Mike McGee was fourth, Ken Hildebrand fifth, Harsant 10th and Foster 13th.

Franklin Over Bentley In Cross-Country

Franklin High's cross country team had no trouble turning back Bentley, 22-37, in a dual meet.

Led by Jim Kostova and John Dave, who placed one-two, Franklin grabbed off three of the first four spots.

Kostova won individual honors in the fine early-season time of 10:19.

Chris Morden, of Bentley, was third, followed by Bob Yuhaz, of Franklin, and Bentley's pair of Bob McGee and Dave Freed.

Then came Jim Courtney, Dave Buckman, Cliff Van Dyke and Adolph Cwik, all of Franklin to round out the first 10.

A blazing performance of 9:58 by Doug Kurtis for the two-mile run wasn't enough for Stevenson High's cross country team against high-powered Pontiac Northern in an interclass League meet.

Kurtis had to settle for second place behind George Pickering of Northern, who was timed in 9:43 as his team won the meet, 19-38.

Tim Warner was seventh, Paul Opsommer eighth, Dave Slupe 10th and Gary Sacharski 11th for Stevenson.

Stevenson had downed Waterford, 21-37, in its first contest with Kurtis winning in 10:16, followed by Warner third, Slupe fourth, Paul Opsommer sixth, Sacharski seventh and Mike Opsommer eighth.

Bentley and Redford Union leaped off to winning starts Thursday in Suburban Six Leagues cross country meets.

Bentley turned back Plymouth 21-35, while defending



Taking a tip from his father who rolled an 803 series, one of the highest in the nation a year ago, Bill Fife Jr. made a bid for stardom, by posting a 276 game in a 700 series in the Classic at Garden Lane.

In his big series last year Bill Sr. had a 300 game. Young Bill didn't go that far, but he gave signs that he'll be up with the leaders as the season rolls along.

While young Bill was recording his big game just a few lanes away Jim Fife had a 268. He couldn't stand the raucous atmosphere and fell to a low 600 series.

The Kowalski team fired a 3070 series and the Miller-Newmark combination had a 1069 single game to take high honors for the week.

THEY HAD QUITE A race for scoring honors in the Wonderful Classic Tuesday night.

When the final pin fell Bob Schon was out in front with games of 230, 214 and 255 for a 699.

Close behind came John Keever with 257, 254 and 179 for a 690. He just couldn't explain what happened in the final game, except, as the bowlers say, "rover hit him."

Dave Winkelman made it a three way race when he piled up a 278 and a 685 series.

TWO OF THE hapless women in Observersland last week were Barbara Firadick and Dorothy Martindale. Each posted the first 600 series of their careers.

Ironically, both series were bowled in the Ladies Senior House League at Wonderful.

IF THE FIRST TWO weeks are a criteria young Steve Heech, the 15-year-old star of the Wonderful Youth League, is headed for his best season.

Over the past fortnight he has bowled six games in league competition and is averaging 225.

CHUCK PETERS took scoring honors at Livonia Lanes with a 294 in 636 in the Junior House League. Right behind him came Jack Stevenson who inserted a 281 and Hank Tyl with 245 in the Monday Whirlwinds.

Steve Hinch and Terry Donaldson took opening night

honors in the new Monday night Classic.

LADY LUCK FROWNED on Harry Krenz at Merri-Bowl. The crown came in the opening frame when a solid hit failed to carry the strike. Undaunted, he came right back to strike out for a 290 game that gave him a 638.

In the invitational Ladies Doubles Betty Brooks took scoring honors with a count of 256.

SEVERAL AREA BOWLERS and officials will attend the opening of the Bowling Hall of Fame Saturday night in the DMA Annex in Flint.

Among those to be honored are the late Thomas J. Halligan, former president of the state and national bowling pro-prior's organizations, and Ben Grimes, long time secretary of the Flint Bowling Association.

The affair is to start with a dinner at 7:30 o'clock.

BERNIE PETERS took the patronizer role at Wonderful when he threaded games of 256, 234 and 222 for a 712. This is the highest score thus far into the Classic.

Right behind the leader came the veteran Bill Spargo with games of 201, 264, and 220 for a 675.

ANOTHER WAVE of high scoring hit Bel-Aire Lanes during the week.

Most of it came from the Senior House League where Don Taylor had 246 and 234 in 676, John King a 233 in 660, Joe Waddie a 253 game and Erv Watson a 247.

In the Classic John Capoules had 224 and 236 in 658 and Don Smith a 215 and 234 in 629.

The high scoring carried over into the Ladies League where Jan Vanderwill had 258 and 215 in 653; Pat Adams a 225, Jean Hansen a 227 and Ruth Kinjoraki a 237.

Jack Brown set a high for the season in the Monday Night Lady of Sorrows League with 672 that included games of 234 and 236.

The trophy goes to the low medalist. It went to Angie Bergamo, formerly of the Cardinals, and George Clark a year ago.

Among those expected to compete are: Dizzy Trout, Hal Newhouse, Gene DeSautel, Charley Maxwell, Paul Foyak, Steve Gronke, Joe Ginsberg, Mickey Harson, Ray Herbert, Billy Hoff, Dick Littlefield, Chet Laabs, Barney McCoskey, Bob Miller, Al Moran and Dick Wakehold.

Former Umpire Red Jones will be the guest speaker in the evening with Bud Lynch and Bob Winkler serving as MCs.

Golf Tourney Brings Baseballers Back

Major and minor league baseballers of the past and present along with managers, umpires, scouts and most any other connected with baseball will gather at the Spring Lake Golf and Country Club in Clarkston Monday for the second annual baseball players golf day.

The program is sponsored by the MIT and Pitch Club of Detroit.

The club was formed to promote good fellowship among those engaged in professional baseball.

The purpose of the tournament and golf day is to compete for the "Freddie Hutchinson and Bob Swift" memorial trophy. Hutch and Bob were former teammates and managers of the Detroit Tigers and died within a short time of each other. Both of cancer.

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