

# Sports writers not negative, just frustrated

The negative sports writing from Detroit's two daily newspapers is something that most sports fans have learned to live with and accept.

Though negative, sports writers from these two publications should be commended for their excellent reporting skills. Readers should appreciate the complete job of sports reporting they receive each day.

For these reporters are fulfilling their most important obligation to journalism — meeting the needs of their readers. This negative reporting is simply reflecting the same negative feelings which sports fans from this area have lived with for many years.

IF YOU WERE at last Saturday's Detroit Express home opener, maybe you can understand why the sports writers in this town are so frustrated.

Despite an overwhelming 6-0 Express victory, it was poor soccer. Memphis, Detroit's opponent, didn't even field a professional team because of a players' strike. Detroit, however, had most of its team present but still had trouble scoring in the first half against its inferior competition.

In that first half, one writer was seen

## Doc's Corner

By Dennis O'Connor



constantly rolling his eyes at every move on the Silverdome carpet. He was looking at everything around him except the game. He had that "What am I doing here?" look on his face as his pen dangled from his mouth.

The other writer watched the game for the first 21 minutes until he couldn't stand it any longer. He got up from his seat and began walking around, talking and laughing with colleagues and shaking his head in disgust as the game progressed.

NEGATIVE ATTITUDES, you may say?

Not really. These writers were just reflecting the same frustrations that many soccer

fans felt throughout the contest. The brand of soccer offered that night wasn't fair for the fans to pay and see. Thus, negative reporting.

Even many Express players agreed it wasn't fair to the fans.

Express defender, and Bloomfield Hills Andover's soccer coach, Sam Oates, for one, said, "I'm disappointed about the (strike) whole affair. It's not fair. The fans pay a certain amount of money to see the best possible two teams on the field."

THE EXPRESS had the excuse of the strike to fall back on, although that was no abili for the poor first half of action.

But what about the Detroit Tigers? It was said that Detroit sports writers were all but writing the Tigers off after an opening day loss to the Texas Rangers.

The only thing sports writers and fans see this year is the same fifth-place baseball team — minus its best clutch hitter in Rusty Staub and its best pitcher last year, Jim Slaton, who jumped to the Milwaukee Brewers in the free agent draft.

No wonder the sports writers were negative after the Tigers' pitiful performance on opening day. They could see another year of frustration approaching each fan.

It's really hard to take such frustration after a long winter of promises for improvement but never any signs of the promises being kept.

Wouldn't you be negative? The Detroit sports writers, many of whom are considered the most negative by their nation's colleagues, should be praised for their constant efforts to report complete sports stories.

All responsible reporters and columnists should strive to meet the needs of their readers by giving them the facts

behind each story. And, if such reporting leads to a sense of frustration and negativism, as in the case of many Detroit-area sports writers, then all the better.

For these reporters are sharing, through the written word, the same frustrations and negative attitudes which have become common feelings for all sports fans in the area.

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## Netter stars on college team

Craig Wittus, an All-American tennis player at Miami (Ohio) University, recently became the first Redskin to post 100 victories in a career.

Wittus' 100th victory came when he defeated Ohio State's Ernie Fernandez in straight sets.

Already the record holder for career singles and doubles victories at Miami, Wittus, a graduate of Bloomfield Hills Andover High School, is expected to continue his winning ways as the spring season progresses.

Redskin coach Steve Strome believes Wittus is one of the most improved players returning from last year's squad. This is significant because the local netter already reached All-American status last year.

"He's come an awful long way," said Strome. "And he's still getting better."

Wittus said he feels he has gained "a lot of confidence" since last year and considers that a major factor in his success so far this season. "Other

players are really nervous," he said of his opponents.

One of Wittus' best performances came during this year's spring trip down south. Ninth-ranked Georgia doesn't usually need to show opposing teams its best lineup, but Wittus proved to be the exception.

Last year's NCAA championships provided another highlight for Wittus as he rallied back to win an important match after being faced with match point. It was a victory which put him in the final round of 16 players, gaining him All-American status.

Western Michigan University's Mike Rose was the last opponent to beat Wittus when the two netters met in the Norte Dame Invitational last October during the fall season. Since that time, Wittus has won 18 consecutive matches to his record to 22-1, as of last weekend.

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