

# Rogie shuts out doubt with hypnotist's help

By DENNIS O'CONNOR

How important is hypnosis to a professional athlete?

To Dr. Saul Morris, a Southfield-based hypnotist, hypnosis can be effective psychological therapy to the strains and pressures of the sports world.

Former Detroit Tiger pitcher Mark "The Bird" Fidrych is Detroit's most recent professional athlete who consid-

ers hypnosis an important element to his career. Fidrych currently pitches for the Tigers' Class AAA farm club in Evansville. He is trying to make a comeback after injuries forced his stint in the minors.

The most celebrated athlete in this area to rely on hypnosis is Detroit Red Wing goalie Rogie Vachon — one of Morris' patients.

Vachon, playing very poorly at the time, openly admitted he was seeing a

California hypnotist during the 1977-78 season — shortly after getting hit in the head by a puck while tending goal for the Los Angeles Kings.

And he enjoyed the relaxation of the psychological therapy so much, he sought help in Detroit after being traded to the Red Wings in 1978.

He found Morris, through a reference, last November and the two men have been friends ever since.

"It was just by accident that I met Saul (Morris)," Vachon said. "I was trying to find something in Detroit to keep up the hypnosis. It relaxed me so I thought I would keep it up — why not?"

"HE (MORRIS) understands my problems . . . we've always been friends," Vachon added.

Problems? Well, Morris doesn't think the problem is with Vachon, but he understands Vachon's need for relaxation.

"Rogie's up to par, as far as I can see," Morris said. "If there is a problem, it's a minor problem."

Morris believes Vachon lost a lot of self-confidence after being injured in Los Angeles. But, he added, that confidence was restored with the hypnotherapy.

"Self-confidence, pride and self-esteem — he had it before, so it was just a matter of bringing it back to the surface," Morris explained. "No matter how much of a superstar you are, if you keep losing and losing, you're bound to lose some pride."

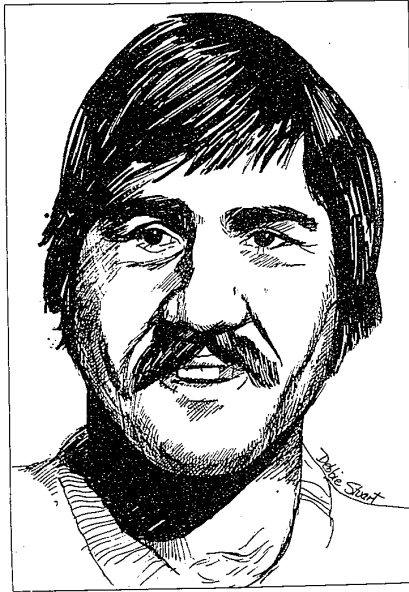
"You really ought to give him (Vachon) credit, because he sought help — he realized it (the problem) and he came for help. Some other athletes in other sports try to hide it."

SO VACHON learned to relax — thanks to a tape Morris recorded for him. Vachon was instructed to listen to this tape before every game — hypnotizing himself before stepping on the ice.

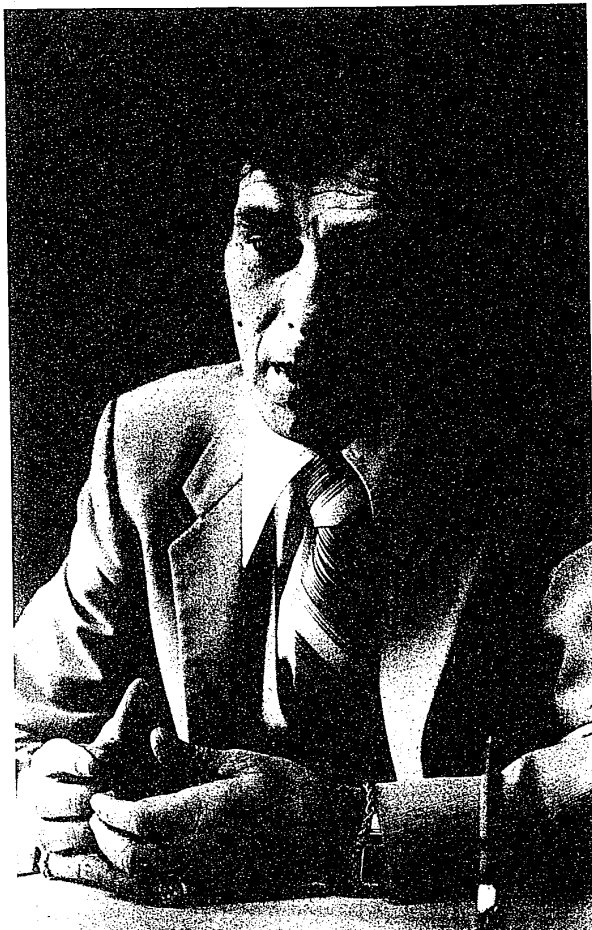
In a copy of this 30-minute tape, given to The Ecentric, which reveals that Morris repeatedly tells Vachon to recall the excitement he originally had for goaltending.

"As I count slowly from one to 10," Morris says on the tape, "you will be able to recall that game more vivid-

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Rogie Vachon, Detroit Red Wing goalie, feels much more confidence after hypnotherapy from Dr. Saul Morris.



Dr. Saul Morris, a Southfield-based hypnotist, has many theories on the stresses and strains of Detroit Red Wing goalie Rogie Vachon. (Staff photo by Mindy Saunders)

## Sky sailer grounded in Bloomfield

By BOB GROSS

How do you take advantage of a nice day?

Ma, 's you cut the grass, or maybe you putter around the garden, or maybe you finally get around to washing the outside windows. Alberto Negro of Bloomfield Township took advantage of beautiful weather Wednesday to haul his sailplane out for some last-second adjustments before the upcoming United States Open Championships.

A partially assembled sailplane nesting in front of a Bloomfield Township home is something just not seen every day. Negro said people passing by "look at me with a strange face."

And the sight inspired at least one of his neighbors to call up The Ecentric with an excited plea to "get a picture of this thing."

Negro, the director of research and development for Fiat in the United States, started flying sailplanes about 20 years ago in Torino, Italy. He kept

on flying when he came to the United States in 1968, but it was not until he bought a Polish-made Jantar A-2 that he got back into competition.

"Only last year," said Negro, "when I bought this open class sailplane did I have a chance to compete."

Negro explained that the best sailplanes are either made in East Germany or in Poland.

Negro's sailplane boasts a 67-foot wingspan dwarfing a narrow fuselage. The pilot, according to Negro, guides the aircraft while lying practically in a prone position.

"This time," he said, "my airplane is very competitive. I think it's one of the best in the world."

He'll have a chance to prove it's one of the best in the nation later this summer. Negro is taking his sailplane to Hobbs, N.M. for the national championships.

National championships for sailplanes are not judged by how beautiful the aircraft look against a desert sky, according to Negro.

"The way we use this machine in competition," he said, "is really racing against the time."

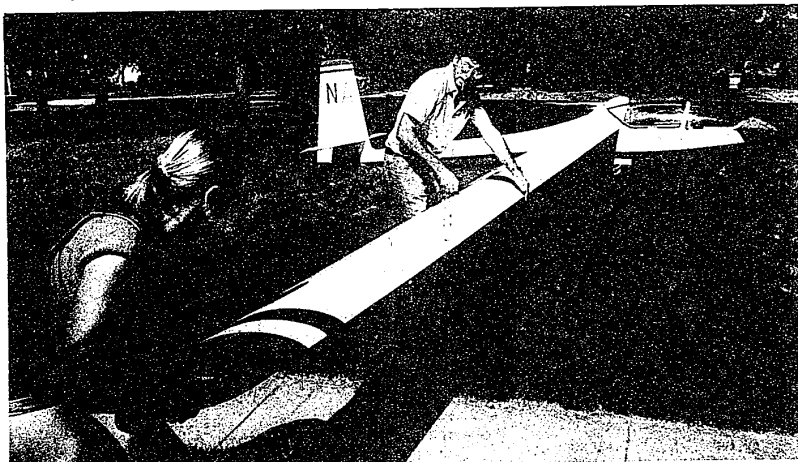
The competition and the challenge of flying, rather than the much ballyhooed beauty of the sport, is what appeals to Negro. The sport can become a little frightening at times.

"Sometimes," said Negro, "you have to have a little nerve when you're going down in a strange field to land."

"It's a good school for character and determination."

That's not to imply that Negro is totally self-reliant while competing in a sailplane. There's only room for one in the cockpit, but it helps to have someone on the ground. His wife, Chris, and their 16-year-old son, Paul, make up combination ground crew and chase team.

"The most important thing in flying gliders," said Negro, "is to have a strong crew to follow you and rescue you, and the best crew is your wife."



A sailplane in the front yard is a sure-fire way to cause heads to turn. Alberto Negro and his wife, Chris, put the wings on Negro's sailplane. (Staff photo by Stephen Cantrell)

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