

By Gene observing sports

Did it ever dawn on you how really special the athlete is?

It really doesn't make much difference whether you're dealing with a boy who's on a Little League team, or playing in junior or senior high, or whether he's grown up playing in college or the professional ranks.

The standout sports performer, regardless of age, is something special.

He's singled out wherever he is or wherever he goes. And it could be a female just as well.

Attend any sports event. Let's say it's between a couple of high school teams.

One could be Garden City West, currently rated No. 1 in the Observer-area rankings.

When the West team reaches the gym for the game, early arrivals among the fans are quick to point out their first glimpse of Rick Drewitz, the sensational West's scorer and rebounder this season.

Then, when the team makes its initial appearance on the floor for pre-game workout, there are now even more in the audience who whisper and point: "There's Drewitz."

THE SAME, OF COURSE, holds true anywhere you go.

We were standing the other evening around 10 o'clock in the Statler Hilton Hotel in New York city across from Madison Square Garden.

The Pistons had just checked in and Walt Bellamy, Dave Bing and Jimmy Walker were huddled in a corner using the telephone. Eddie Miles was standing a few feet away.

Yet, within moments, youngsters who probably should have been home by this time started congregating around the Pistons.

They wanted autographs. They wanted a chance to say a word to these men, even those they represented "an enemy" and the next night would be battling their darlings, the New York Knicks.

Just to be able to go home and say, "I got Bing's autograph...or I talked with Gordie Howe or Bobby Hull..." that's enough to bring joy to any sports-minded person...and it really makes no difference how old you are...10 or 80 or even 53...there's that certain feeling which produces an extra thrill.

LIFE IS PRETTY much a case of follow the leader. They say that as soon as a baby realizes what life is about, he starts to mimic his mother and father and any others in the family close to him or her.

It's the same way as one gets older. We all look for leadership and guidance.

It helps when somebody who is a big shot is willing to take a moment to lend some assistance...to lend some advice.

The impressions one gets from such an incident far exceeds, although it really shouldn't, what we're told by our parents or teachers.

But I suppose, that's the way things are. And that's the way things always will be.

THIS IS A RATHER flattering day for the Sports Observer.

It's amazing how the "baby" has grown up in so short a time - meaning the Observer.

When we started here less than a decade ago, we found ourselves in the closely-defined area of Livonia and Redford Township...with just three high schools to think about.

Pretty soon, the paper branched out to Plymouth, to Farmington, to Garden City and Westland...and today, it's hello to our good friends in Southfield.

We always have had a soft spot for Southfield, even though it's not our home town.

There's hardly a day we don't go whizzing through Southfield coming and going at 55-70 miles per hour.

It's over at Southfield High, an old pal, Bob Hall, is the boss man and it's on the Southfield High basketball team that good friend John Miller's No. 1 son, Scott, is one of the stars.

Some of our favorite bridge rivals reside in Southfield and also a good many of our area's greatest athletes. Just to name Gordie Howe, Bill Freehan and Denny McLain.

Yep, the Observer baby sure has grown up!

First Half Observerland Swim Ratings Wins For Falcons

A big first half told the story as Farmington High's basketball team crushed Walled Lake Central, 71-55.

The victory was the fourth against two losses for the Falcons and kept them in a tie with Pontiac Northern for second place in the Inter-Lakes Conference.

Farmington pulled ahead, 20-13, in the first period when Randy Cleveland personally scored 10 points.

It was PAUL WHITE with 10 points and Cleveland six more as Farmington outscored Walled Lake, 24-14, in the second period to reach the half with a 44-27 command.

The Falcons then slowed their attack and took 30 for only good shots in the second half.

Cleveland was the big scorer and rebounder for the winners with 24 and 14, respectively. White chipped in with 19 points while Dan Steinke had 10 points.

Bob Kibbey scored six. Mark Maniewski three and Paul Kupferschmidt, Bob Chapman and Jim Schultz two each to aid the winners.

Stevenson Rally Tops R. Union

Stevenson High's basketball team recovered from a slow start to defeat Redford Union, 64-58, in a non-league game.

Led by Kirk Taylor with eight points and Gary Bevington with five, Redford Union took a 20-11 lead after one quarter.

Paul Van Wagoner hit for nine in the second period to help Stevenson take a 31-30 halftime lead. Ron Hoekstra paced a third-period uprising which extended Stevenson's lead to four points.

Van Wagoner had 25 points and Hoekstra 15 for Stevenson, winners of 12 out of 13 starts. Bevington led RU with 23.

2nd Half Blast Rips B. Borgess

A 50-point bombardment in the second half carried Pontiac Catholic Central to an 85-70 victory over Bishop Borgess.

It was the 12th in 13 games for Pontiac CC, champs of the First Division-West in the Catholic League.

For Borgess, the loss was only its fourth in 13 games. The teams were tied 35-35 at the half before Pontiac CC cut loose. Herb Larson had 25 points and Sam Brady 24 for the winners.

Ray Sobocinski tossed in 19 for Borgess while Mark Quay and Shay had 12 each and Jeff Crawley 10.

RU Finds Turnovers Costly

Turnovers are the nightmare of every coach and Dave Mattingly of Redford Union High's basketball team must certainly agree.

Belleville also held a big edge in rebounds with 59 to RU's 21.

Gary Bevington had 29 points, making 10 out of 17 winners.

He saw his cagers make 21 costly turnovers against Belleville Friday night. The mistakes were turned into 23 points and made the difference as Belleville emerged a 75-65 winner in a Suburban Six League game.

It was a dogfight for three periods. After Belleville led, 19-16, at the end of the first quarter, RU rebounded for a 35-34 edge at the half.

THE ONE-POINT RU advantage remained after three periods. Then Belleville broke loose in the closing eight minutes.

Medal Winners

Wolverines athletes won five gold medals for the United States at the 1964 Olympics in St. Louis. Archie Hahn won the 60-, 100-, and 200-meter dashes. Ralph Rusk took the shot put, and Charles Dvorak placed first in the pole vault.

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