

By George Maskin

observing sports

Another schoolboy sports year has ended. And this means the end of the line not only for so many great young boys who have participated on the various teams in Observerland, but also certifies for some of the men who have distinguished themselves as coaches.

Two examples of retiring coaches are Keith Baughman of Plymouth High and Jim Knotts of Thurston.

Baughman is stepping out after 15 seasons. He'll stay on the school's faculty, but the pressing load of other duties makes it impossible for him to coach any more.

Knotts likewise won't leave Thurston. But he's going back to school himself to study for a doctorate. Thus, he, too, is knocked out of the coaching box.

When men like Baughman and Knotts quit coaching, it's a loss to the school, to the community and especially the boys who certainly would have benefited from their knowledge, their instruction, their help.

Track has undergone major changes since Keith bowed at Plymouth.

"The improvement in times and performances is unbelievable," he said. "Virtually all of our records have fallen since I've been here. Many have gone by the boards several times."

Baughman declared that changes in training methods and facilities have had a lot to do with the greater performances.

"When I started, we wouldn't have dreamed that we could put the boys through the workouts we do now. We have discovered that there really is no limit to what the body can take physically."

The fiberglass poles and the grass-text tracks—these, too, have contributed to the record-breaking performances.

A natural question of Baughman was for him to pick an All-Plymouth track team from the boys he's coached.

Bob Steele was his premier hurdler and probably his best product. Steele went on to star at State and in the NCAA. In the dashes, the votes went to Ed LaRoche and Jerry Kelly.

Don Williams and Jerry Latham head the 440, Tony Hunt and Bruce Cavender the 800, Bruce Ladden, Ed McLendon and John Norman the mile, Bob Goepf the two mile, Bruce Bauman the pole vault, Hugh Sarah and Tom Elias in the shot put, Paul Cummings and Russ Mecklenberg the high and long jumps, respectively.

It's to be noted that Latham, McLendon, Norman, Goepf and Bauman all competed on his last team this year and each set a school record.

The fact that his '68 team won the Suburban Six League title brought Baughman his greatest thrill. He cited Dave and Steve Montgomery, the co-captains, for providing the leadership the team needed to win.

OVER AT THURSTON, Knotts did his part in lifting wrestling into a major sport on the high school sports scene. He also in proving that there is no comparison to the wrestling one sees in schoolboy meets to what he views on television.

Knotts repeatedly has said that wrestling is one of the few sports that finds a place for every boy.

Knotts made many realize that wrestling requires concentration, strong bodies, determination and dedication. When he started at Thurston 11 years ago, a scant few would show up for the meets. Some laughed at the thought there could be wrestling on a school-boy level.

Under Knotts, Thurston built individual and team champs. He promoted the sport so that he rivaled basketball and swimming on the winter program and attracted big crowds.

The team has reigned in the Northwest Suburban League as mat champs since the circuit was formed some seven years ago.

Thurston has won two regional titles and finished second five times. The Townshippers regularly have placed among the leaders in the state meet.

He's had three state champs—Dave Post at 154 pounds in 1961; Bob Phifer at 111 in 1962 and Randy Ault at 138 last year.

SO IT'S Auld Lang Syne to Jim Knotts and Keith Baughman. What they've done won't be forgotten.

Raiders' Jumper Named All State Pair Drive To Honors

More honors have come to high jumper John Mann of North Farmington High School. He has been named on The Detroit News All-State team, selected by Ken Williams.

Mann turned in the best leap of the season in the state when he soared six feet, eight and a half inches in the Northwest Suburban League championships.

He also won the Class A regional crown and finished second in the state meet.

Four other area track-and-fielders landed honorable mention in the News selections.

The Williams twins, Gary and Larry, of Farmington ranked third and fifth, respectively, in the mile and two-mile, while

Dale Wendell of Stevenson stood fourth best among the state's high hurdlers.

Piston Briefs...

WEDDING BELLS will ring on June 29 for star forward Dave DeBuschere of the Pistons and Miss Gerry Warnock.

FORWARD LEN CHAPPELL was happy about the results of the expansion draft that sent him from the Pistons to the new Milwaukee team. He had planned to retire after the 1967-68 season, but since his wife falls from the Milwaukee area, where the Chappells plan to live, he has decided against bowing out of the cage wars.

Farmington Pair Drive To Honors

Garrett Van Camp of Farmington was among the big winners last weekend in the opening competition of the season at the Waterford Hills Road Race Club's Spring Sprites.

Van Camp in an E-Production Porsche triumphed in two events.

Tom Abbott, also of Farmington, driving a Formula Vee, won the Action of Lizards turned in a victory in a B-Production Mustang while Toni Franciosi of Garden City drove an NSU to victory.

Waterford Hills will be the site of the Midwest Regional races for Sports Car Club of America on June 29-30.

Wolverine Ends Season With Wagering Record

Despite the roughest campaign in Michigan annals—one that saw the first two nights marred by an eight-inch snowstorm, followed later by a four-night blackout because of curfew and then rain on the final three programs, Wolverine

Harness Raceway shattered the state's all-time records for wagering during the 56-night season which ended Wednesday. This without metropolitan Detroit newspapers, on strike, for the entire meeting.

The Grand Circuit roared into the Motor City for the final three nights and saw Batman, from the Quaker City Stable of Salem, O., win the Matron Pace for three-year-olds; Master Yankee, of the Guttridge Stables of Philadelphia, take

the Matron three-year-old trot; Sandy Lobell, of the R.D. and H.A. Ricketts stable of Houston, Texas; the two-year-old trot; and Penn Hanover, owned by the B.J. Stables of Goshama, Ontario, the two-year-old pace.

With an all-time high Wednesday crowd of 8,779 on hand for the closing night's program, the handle soared to another all-time Wednesday high of \$621,587.

Attendance and wagering showed increases over 1967 figures with the turnstile count up one per cent with a nightly average of 5,875 on a total of \$329,036 and the betting showing a 2.5 per cent hike with an all-time high average of \$435,343, and a total of \$24,379,196.

The previous Michigan all-time record of \$427,972 was set by Wolverine in 1965.

TOM MERRIMAN, of Wayne, captured his first driving championship with a winning percentage of .480. He had 22 winners, 19 seconds and nine thirds in 74 starts.

Don Hall, of Northville, was second with a .493 average on 23 firsts, 24 seconds and 15 thirds in 105 starts. Wally McInnurray, lanky Lankin, Mich., reinsman, had the most winners during the meeting with a total of 31 and was third in the standings with a .380 average. Others in the top five were Don McMurray, of Plymouth, with 348 and Chris Borning, of Adrian, with 343.

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