

Turf Tips, Quips

By Doc Minard

Jackson Harness Racing Association, headed by President and General Manager Leon Slavin, has the unusual honor of closing the Michigan racing season Saturday and then opening the 1973 campaign the following Monday.

It could be added that Jackson officially started the 1972 racing activities with a month-long meeting at Northville Downs. The story will be the same in the new year.

Although many of the better trotters and pacers have been farmed out for a rest during the remainder of the winter while awaiting the opening of the Northville Downs season in late January, Jackson racing secretary Tom Smith still has some excellent horses available for the remaining nights at Northville.

Speedway Jackie, best of the trotters, is getting a much deserved rest. Erlant Valley, surprise winner of the \$10,000 finale of the late closing racing series at Jackson-at-Northville, is freshening up as is Michigan Mack, star of the Ralph Mages stable which won four of the six legs of the series.

Even with the loss of these speedsters, the competition is the keenest in years and Smith has little trouble arranging better than average programs.

With the Northville Downs opening only a month away, Smith expects to receive numerous requests for stall space from stables that have been freshening up horses since the close of the Hazel Park campaign.

But there is slight chance any of the requests will be granted. In the first place such applications have to be approved by the representatives of the Michigan Harness Horsemen's Association, and secondly all requests for stall space for the Northville Downs season have to be screened by the committee made up of MHA officers, Racing Secretary Harry

Peterson and others from the Downs official family.

From Wolverine Harness Raceway comes notice that stall applications are available and must be received by Feb. 15. That isn't so far away that horsemen can delay sending in blanks. All will be carefully screened by the committee and confirmation of stall allotments will be in the mail a few days later to all owners, drivers and trainers.

FOR THOSE MEMBERS OF the State Legislature who have been tiring with the idea of legalizing offtrack betting as another means of bolstering the state treasury, it might be wise to take a look at what has happened in New York.

Roosevelt Raceway, which began the year with hope and anticipation of big things in January, ended in despair and disbandment in December with attendance and handle showing declines.

New York City's ill-conceived, ill-advised and ill-operated Off Track Betting Corp. was the major factor in the dips, continuing its assault on both harness and thoroughbred racing in the metropolitan area.

Roosevelt's yearly total attendance was down 14.1 per cent and the handle dropped 6.1 per cent during 1972. The fall meeting, which ended two weeks ago, showed major declines in all statistics.

The average nightly attendance was 14,811, a drop of 18.5 per cent from the previous year, and wagering was down 7.8 per cent.

This despite the fact that Roosevelt had the best horses and drivers in the land.

ONE SHUDDERS to think what could happen to racing in metropolitan Detroit where all tracks, harness and thoroughbred, suffered during the year. Hazel Park and Wolverine more than held their own in harness racing but the Detroit Race Course

and Hazel Park runners had disastrous campaigns.

As we see it, lack of interest by management contributed to the decided dip in attendance and business at both tracks. Hazel Park's top brass knew it had the plant sold and apparently cared less whether the season was good or bad.

The situation was a bit different at the DRC where the track was plagued by miserable highway conditions on Schoolcraft and Middle Belt Roads. That added to the fact management was convinced prior to opening day that it was going to be a poor year and nothing could improve it. So it did nothing and actually crawled into a hole or buried its head in the sand.

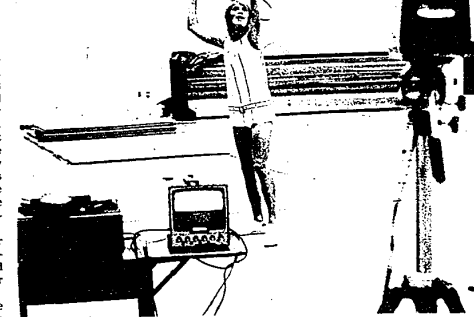
Small wonder that a change was made at the end of the year.

But just think what would have happened had the tracks been faced with off track betting...the legal kind and not that handled by bookies. If the large New York City tracks suffered big disastrous declines, those in metropolitan Detroit would just about have been ready to close the doors. That's what offtrack betting could have done and that wouldn't have boosted the state treasury a nickel's worth.

THIS 'N THAT...Eddie Landau, longtime assistant in the program departments at Jackson, Northville Downs and Wolverine Raceway, is back on the job at the Jackson-at-Northville meeting. Eddie was rushed to the hospital after suffering a seizure at Northville. However, examinations showed it wasn't a heart attack and thus he was able to get back quicker than thought possible at first.

Rollo Sims, Jackson insurance man, radio announcer and longtime handyman at Jackson Raceway, is the "Jack of all trades" at the Northville meeting. Rollo has charge of admissions, often spends part of the evening helping park cars, then goes to the judges' stands to post the official finishes of races while waiting for the official turnstile count.

From New York City comes a report that Herve Filion, the nation's leading driver with almost 600 winning rides, is planning trips to Illinois and perhaps Windsor during the remainder of the week. Herve, who set a world's record of 543 victories a year ago, is determined to make it 600 or more. The only problem is that he's running out of places to drive, with some of the eastern tracks dark until after the start of the new year.



TENNIS ON TV -- The Livonia Family "Y" is offering tennis lessons with the results being shown on closed circuit television to see just what you are doing wrong or right. (Observer photo)

Open League For Cagers In Lathrup

A Lathrup Village men's basketball league starting shortly after the first of the season.

Sponsored by the Lathrup Village Recreation Dept., it will be an open league with no residence requirements to get into the action.

Games will be held on Mondays at the Lathrup Elementary School starting at 6:30 p.m.

Team representatives will meet with Hime before the league play starts to decide on fees to cover referees and league procedures.

All men, 17 years and older, are invited to participate. Referees are needed and anyone interested should contact Hime at the city offices.

How Is Your Favorite Cage Team Doing?

Donoghue's Season Forecast	W	L	Season
REDFORD UNION	6	1	16-4
FRANKLIN	5	1	17-3
LATHRUP	4	1	14-6
JOHN GLENN	6	2	13-5
PLYMOUTH	5	2	15-4
N. FARMINGTON	5	2	14-6
BENTLEY	4	2	13-7
CHURCHILL	3	3	11-9
STEVENSON	2	3	9-10
HARRISON	2	4	9-11
G. C. EAST	2	4	9-11
BORGESS	3	5	9-9
G. C. WEST	2	5	11-9
FARMINGTON	2	5	5-14
CLARENCEVILLE	1	4	5-13
ST. AGATHA	1	5	3-14
THURSTON	1	6	6-14
SOUTHFIELD	0	5	5-15

Spartan Guard

Shannon Reading, guard on Michigan State's 1967 Big Ten co-championship team, now is assistant basketball coach at North Texas State.

WSU Harriers

Wayne State University's cross country team repeated as Chicago Invitational champions in 1972, copping the nine-team meet with 29 points.

Tennis Lessons On TV At 'Y'

Smile, you're on candid camera! At least you'll be on TV if you're taking tennis lessons at the Livonia Family Y. Bill Cameron, "yodel Court Jester," has secured two valuable teaching aids for his tennis instruction classes, one a "ball boy" machine that projects a tennis ball every five seconds, and a television tape recorder.

Cameron stated, "The ball machine can be adjusted to various angles and two speeds, enabling our students to get the full range of ground strokes, overheads and volleys."

He went on to say, "There is no doubt that a private lesson from a qualified instructor is the best way to correct a stroke deficiency. The ability

to see yourself making those strokes has to give added support to what the instructor is attempting to tell you.

"I've used it in my advanced class and it has helped the students tremendously. We've also experimented with it in our gymnastics and swimming classes. It is an invaluable teaching aid."

The next series of adult classes is scheduled to begin the week of Jan. 8. Four beginners, two intermediates and one advanced class will be offered, with beginners scheduled for Monday and Wednesday evenings, Wednesday mornings, and Friday afternoons; intermediate classes will be held Monday evenings and Friday afternoons and advanced class on Wednesday evenings. Enrollment is limited to 10 in beginners classes and six in intermediate and advanced classes.

Anyone desiring an evaluation of their game can contact Cameron for a private class at the Y. Registration for beginners will take place Jan. 3 for Livonia Family Y members and Jan. 4 for non-members. Advanced and intermediate players can register at any time.



DAVE JACKSON, '72 graduate of Garden City East and All-Area basketball selection, has landed a forward berth on Michigan State's varsity cage squad. The 6-4, 175 pound freshman is majoring in elementary education.

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Churchill Matmen Set Mark, Win 3rd

With 11 dual meets remaining, Livonia Churchill already has set a school record of three wrestling wins in one season, in a 42-16 triumph over Novi.

The Novi victory also marked the first time Churchill has ever won two consecutive meets.

TONY BONNICCI (98 lbs.), Pat Mullin (105 lbs.) and Rick Boehms (132 lbs.) remained undefeated in Jim Barr's attack with their three pin attacks, a six pin assault. Churchill sports a 3-2 mark. The meet results: 98 lbs.-Tony Bonnici (C) pinned Ed Weaver (N), 1:43; 105 lbs.-Pat Mullin (C) pinned Bill Livingston (N), 3:05; 112 lbs.-John Hesse pinned Jim Sastena (N), 4:25; 119 lbs.-Bill Mills (C) pinned Ron Hardecki (N), 0:42; 126 lbs.-Tom Ford (N) defeated Nick Siroyan (C), 5:4; 132 lbs.-Rick Boehms pinned Dave Miller (N), 3:49; 138 lbs.-Kris Schulz (C) defeated Dave Ward (N), 9:3; 145 lbs. Dan Jackson (N) pinned Bob Stowers (C), 5:09; 155 lbs.-Randy McGarry (N) pinned Mike Martz (C), 4:48; 165 lbs.-Bill Anderson (C) defeated Gary Staub (N), 11:8; and Dave Kuhn (C) pinned Gil Spiers (N), 1:54.

Globetrotters Invade Detroit

The Harlem Globetrotters will make their first appearance of the season in the Detroit area when they take on the Boston Shamrocks at Olympia Stadium on Saturday, Dec. 30, at 7:30 p.m.

Season's Greetings

The wondrous Holiday Season is here, time to wish all people on earth happiness and joy.

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