

Marshall Robbins keeps winning

On November 2 and 3, Marshall Robbins of Birmingham will be competing in the Champion Road Racing Classic, to be held in Atlanta, Georgia. While most competitors run in one race, this year Robbins will compete in both the introduction event driving a '73 Corvette, plus the A Sedan event driving a '71 Mustang.

The Champion Road Racing Classic is the top amateur road racing event of the year, with twenty-two classes of automobiles competing in separate races. The winner of each race is crowned SCCA-Sports Car Club of America-National Champion for his class.

Throughout the year, each of seven divisions in the United States conducts approximately 10 national races in its division, awarding points for first through sixth place finishes. At the end of

the season, the top four finishes in each class from each Division are invited to Atlanta to compete in the champion road racing classic.

Last year, Robbins competed in the champion road racing classic in the A-Production category. Although he won the race, during the technical inspection following the race he was disqualified because a gasket under the carburetor was ruled illegal.

Robbins commented, "Because of the energy crisis last year, we experienced poor quality fuel at many of the tracks throughout the country. For example, at the Watkins Glen Trans-Am last year, we were leading the race when a vapor lock occurred and dropped us from what appeared to be a sure victory to fourth place."

"That same vapor lock also cost us the Trans-Am Driver Championship last year. A first at Wat-

kens Glen would have moved us from our eventual finish of third place in the Trans-Am Driver Championships to first. In order to prevent the vapor lock from recurring, we manufactured a better gasket for under the carburetor. However, the Stewards at Atlanta ruled the gasket to be illegal. I felt my crew had properly interpreted the rule relative to gaskets but the Stewards did not agree. Needless to say, we were terribly disappointed. However, we became more determined than ever to return to Atlanta this year."

Robbins' bid to qualify in the top four for Atlanta this year in two classes was extremely successful. He ran in ten races, winning nine and finishing second in one.

At the end of the season, when all the points were tallied, Robbins had won the Central Division title in his A Production Corvette and finished second in points in his A Sedan Mustang. "I was never beaten this year in the Mustang but after I switched to the Corvette, Wally Parkins of Minneapolis, Minnesota, picked up enough points to edge me out in the A Se-

dan Central Division Championship," Robbins continued.

"Naturally, I was disappointed that we didn't win the division in both cars but that's history now. To the best of my knowledge, I am the only driver to ever qualify for the National Championships in both A Production, the top production category of cars, and A Sedan, the top category of sedan cars, in the same year. I'm proud of our record this year but now the only thing that counts is Atlanta."

Currently the Jim Robbins Company Mustang and Corvette are

being prepared for the Champion Road Racing Classic by Robbins' chief mechanic, Bill Spangler. Both the 305 cubic inch engine of the Mustang and the 454 cubic inch engine of the Corvette are being rebuilt.

On October 27, Robbins and crew leave for Atlanta to begin practice for the Champion Road Racing Classic. Last year Robbins returned empty handed because of a difference in rule interpretations. This year Robbins hopes to return to Michigan with two National Championships.

Sportswriter turns organizer

By RON HINGST

Retired professional baseball players can move into coaching or even into another profession and managers keep on managing as long as a team will offer a contract, but what about retired baseball writers?

Watson Spoelstra knew all along he couldn't retire to a warmer climate and sit around, and a daily round of golf wasn't his bag.

"Life today is more complex for athletes. It's more complex for everyone," Spoelstra said.

TO KEEP himself busy the 25-year resident of Birmingham has been working with Baseball Chapel Inc.

Two years ago Spoelstra called it quits to 30-years of newspaper experience and 12-years of covering the Detroit Tigers.

Baseball Chapel Inc. is a program designed to provide Sunday morning service for major league clubs on the road.

"When I traveled around, I found it was almost impossible, with the exception for maybe Catholic fellows, to find a service on Sunday morning," he said.

IN THE FALL of 1971, Spoelstra approached baseball commissioner Bowie Kuhn on the idea of Sunday morning services.

"I went back to see Kuhn after the '72 season and '73 was the first year the program was fully in action," he said. "Now we have 22 of 24 major league teams in the Baseball Chapel."

The Chicago Cubs and Minnesota Twins initially got services going, but every major league club is expected to participate next season.

Spoelstra emphasized he wasn't out to make a name for himself, but he has found Baseball Chapel a learning experience as well as a hobby-like activity.

ON RECENT weekends the former baseball scribe for the Detroit News has visited the current baseball playoffs to organize a game or a meeting and catch a game or two.

The Chapel meetings are not specifically geared toward one religious denomination, but players will gather before game time to hear a speaker lined up by Spoelstra's group. The speakers come from all walks of life to offer words on life and Christianity.

"We hardly ever have seminary trained speakers," Spoelstra said. "It's the players program, and I try to get speakers the guys want to hear."

THE BIRMINGHAM retiree said the program grew so rapidly that action was taken to start a non-profit organization.

The spring training season in Fla. is used by Baseball Inc. to line up team representatives who will organize the meetings over the 26-Sunday schedule.

Spoelstra singled out Oakland Athletic manager Alvin Dark, Sparky Anderson, Cincinnati Reds and Bill Virdon of the Yankees as three examples of management cooperation with the program.

"I don't think Yogi Berra (N. Y. Mets) has missed a meeting," he added.

"IF BOWIE KUHN hadn't

wanted Baseball Chapel, and if the managers wouldn't have helped, it would have taken 10 years to get the program going."

An estimated 3,320 members of the major league baseball traveling parties took part in 1974 programs with an endless list of super-stars featured on attendance rosters.

Professional athletes have a tendency to get their share of bad press — controversial material that makes good reading — but a group of grown profes-

sionals gathered together for chapel service prior to a game might sound different from the stereotyped image of free living, swinging pro ball players.

"Now people are more cynical towards athletes because of all the exposure around sports," the former newspaperman said.

"THERE ARE an awful lot of guys who the public never hear about, guys who go out and do their job everyday. Baseball Chapel is an area the ball players can be helped by a little bit."

The meetings, he said, are not aimed at converting ball players to any one faith, nor forcing religion on those who choose not to participate.

"It offers a dimension that wasn't there before."

As Spoelstra explained, professional athletes today are exposed to more pressure by the modern world and often need time out for thought and meditation.

"There is more pressure on athletes today because of more money, television and modern communications."

O.U. booters set for State

Not all eyes will be focused on the annual Michigan-Michigan State football game in Ann Arbor this Saturday. Ares soccer fans will be watching the clash between unbeaten Oakland University and Michigan State.

The two soccer powers meet for the first time ever in West Lansing at 1 p.m. Oakland has compiled a 6-0-1 record while the Spartans are 3-0 to date.

The Pioneers, who just missed a post-season N.C.A.A. tournament bid last season with an 11-2 record, would like nothing better than to defeat the prestigious State booters. The Spartans spent seven consecutive years in tournament play during the mid-sixties which included two national championship.

OAKLAND UNIVERSITY's own soccer prestige has grown rapidly the past few years under six year coach John Meyer. Motzer was just recently honored "Mr. Michigan Soccer" by the Michigan Soccer Association. His team has scored 22 goals this year while allowing only two goals against them in seven games.

The most recent of Oakland's six victories are a 3-1 defeat of University of Michigan-Dearborn and a 1-0 shutout over Kalamazoo College last week.

Oakland has more than its share of individual standouts. The brother combination of Ken and Barry Whiteside provides much of the team's scoring punch with eight goals between them this season.

Last year Ken was the leading scorer in Michigan with 20 goals. Mid-field is controlled by captain John Clark who has already contributed four goals.

Center fullback Andris Richters continually keeps the ball out of Oakland's defensive zone, and has

game winning goals in two 1-0 shutout victories. Senior goalie Dennis Masclak has already registered five shutouts in seven games allowing only two goals against him. Added to the above list is an abundance of talented veterans and aggressive newcomers which give Coach Motzer the depth needed to continually win soccer games.

A tough schedule consisting of perennial rivals Calvin, Kalamazoo, Spring Arbor, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee and new opponent Wabash (Indiana) College, becomes an important factor in choosing post-season tournament teams. A victory in this Saturday's Pioneer-Spartan contest could be the first big step towards an all-important tournament birth.

Oakland University Soccer Statistics 1974 6-0-1	
Oakland 1, Calvin 1	
Oakland 5, Macomb C.C. 0	
Oakland 9, Detroit Inst. Tech. 0	
Oakland 2, Eastern Mich. 0	
Oakland 1, Albion 0	
Oakland 3, Univ. of Mich.-Dearborn 1	
Oakland 1, Kalamazoo 0	
Oct. 12 — Oakland at Michigan State	
Oct. 19 — Oakland at Central Michigan	
Oct. 26 — Oakland at Northern Michigan	
Nov. 2 — Oakland at Wabash (Ind.)	
Nov. 6-10 — Oakland at Univ. of Mich.-Dearborn (Tournament)	
Nov. 9 — Spring Arbor at Oakland	
Nov. 16 — Univ. of Wis.-Milwaukee at Oakland	

Individual Statistics		Games	Goals	Assists
Barry Whiteside	7	4	4	
John Clark	7	4	4	
Ken Whiteside	4	4	1	
Andris Richters	7	3		
Pete Plank	7	2		
Salih Khalaf	5	1	1	
Gary Weber	7	1		
Mohammed Sadeg	6	1		
Bob Burkart	3	1		
Dennis Masclak	7	1		
Ahmad Shihab	2	1		
Goals For: 22				
Goals Against: 2				

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