

Message from a friend

George Maskin—
still a super guy

Editor's Note: Observer & Eccentric reporter Jackie Klein is a long-time friend of George Maskin, who was fired recently from his job as Publicity Director for the Detroit Pistons. Maskin is a resident of West Bloomfield Township.

By JACKIE KLEIN

I'm not a sports writer nor do I pretend to understand the intricacies of the games.

But I do know something about winners and losers, and I recognize a foul ball when I see one. And I know even more about George Maskin, former publicity director for the Detroit Pistons basketball team.

George is a super guy who feels like a loser these days. After 14 years of fronting for a losing team in order to sell to a disenchanted public, George got the old ax job in two short words — "You're Fired."

If you've ever been through a merger or acquisition, you know the apprehensions of wondering how and if you'll fit into the new organization. Some survive; others are eased out gracefully and replaced. Still others leave because they can't weather the change.

But to wipe out 14 years of dedication with two harsh words is a foul in anybody's ball park.

WE'VE KNOWN George for 28 years, ever since he crashed our wedding wearing an umpire's suit. He stood out like a pair of brown shoes in a world of tuxedos.

George came to the wedding to see Elaine, my best friend and bridesmaid, who later became his wife. In those days, George was writing sports for the old Detroit Times and umping a bit in the sandlot circuits on the side.

One bleak night, George and the rest of the Times staff got a telegram announcing that the paper had folded. The Maskins had a young family by then. Their security was shaken.

A job is a job is a job after all.



GEORGE MASKIN
Former Pistons PR director

And you can strike out at the drop of a Western Union message.

Guy's like George aren't cut out for the competitive jungle of the business world. Writers (even some public relations men) are traditionally sensitive, creative and idealistic. Sometimes they have accident-prone egos.

George has a tough shell, a soft heart, a soft sell and an iron-clad sense of fair play and integrity. He's a task master at his job and he stands 10 feet taller than anyone in the Detroit sports circle.

He's too sincere to be a PR bull shooter and his brusqueness covers up a basic shyness. But whatever he did, he persevered for 14 years while the Pistons turned over coach after coach, and player after player.

The Pistons finally made the playoffs last winter. But now the team has lost a loyal champion who never missed a game or took a vacation or had pitched the team when it was down.

George is a winner in anyone's lineup. He sure doesn't deserve to be counted out.

Federation Nationals coming up

Colts fall in tourney

By TOM BAER

North Farmington-West Bloomfield has fallen in the Colt Midwest Regional tournament, but the tournament trail stretches on for manager Bill Doerr and some of his NFWB squad.

Doerr managed the same group of players to a first-place finish in the Detroit Suburban Federation League. The Federation team, which compiled a 13-1 record, will compete in the Federation National Tournament in Dayton, Ohio this weekend.

"We're going to regroup and add six players for our trip to Dayton," Doerr said. "And we're going to work two-a-day sessions between now (Tuesday) and when we leave."

NFWB had only 10 players for the last four games at the Colt tournament in Mt. Pleasant last weekend. After an opening loss to Birmingham, NFWB defeated Waukegan, Ill. (6-4 in eight innings), Birmingham (5-2) and host Mt. Pleasant (2-0) to make the finals.

Mt. Pleasant defeated NFWB, 6-1, to win the Regional and ad-

vance to the Midwest District this weekend in Springfield, Ill.

Winning pitcher Dave Klumpff allowed NFWB's first run while striking out seven. Klumpff also knocked in four runs with a pair of doubles. Mt. Pleasant scored two unearned runs in the first inning.

NFWB scored its run in the seventh when Mark Parcell walked, moved to second on Mike Scanlon's single and scored on Cliff Marriott's single. NFWB stranded eight runners during the game.

NFWB used three pitchers. Bob Fleischacker worked the first two innings. Kevin McCrum went 3 1/2 innings, striking out three, walking two and allowing just one hit. Greg Mathiak pitched the last two innings.

MATHIAK FOUND his pitching talents much in demand. He pitched a portion of four consecutive games during a two-day span.

"He did a marvelous job," Doerr said. "He had not pitched a single game for us previously."

Mathiak was the winning pitcher in NFWB's extraordinary victory over Waukegan. He set down the heart of the Waukegan

Physical stuff

Physical examinations for football and other sports at Southfield High School will be held in the school annex building on Wednesday (Aug. 14) at 9 a.m. Southfield High School is located at Ten Mile and Lahser roads.

By TOM BAER

Farmington's American Legion baseball season skidded to a halt last Saturday in the Lincoln Park Connie Mack Tournament.

Manager Wally Christensen's Farmington team, which had dropped three-straight games since the end of its District 18 season, lost 3-1 to Lincoln Park last Saturday.

The loss knocked Farmington out of the tournament and ended its season at 18-9-2 overall.

Losing pitcher Tim Hammer balked in a run on an appeal play in the first inning. With two outs, Lincoln Park's Joe Cannon singled. Scott Bradley tripled, knocking in Cannon with the first run.

Hammer then threw to first base, claiming that Bradley had not touched the bag. The umpire called a balk, and Bradley trotted home with the second run.

"INSTEAD OF stepping toward the rubber, he (Hammer) just stepped toward first and threw the ball," Christensen said. "They called a balk."

Lincoln Park added another run in the fourth. The winners had runners on first and third with

two out. The runner on first attempted to steal. Catcher Rob Holton's throw went into centerfield, allowing the runner on third to score.

Farmington, which had base runners in six of the seven innings, scored a run in the fifth. Steve Koinis led off with a single. Randy Seitz bunted and both runners were safe when the Lincoln Park pitcher booted the ball.

Hammer then walked to load the bases with nobody out. Jeff Hermandt hit the ball to shortstop Jan Kowski, who turned it into a double play with Koinis scoring on the play. Tom Celani grounded out to end the inning.

Kowski was clearly the defensive star of the game. He handled seven chances, turning three into double plays.

Farmington, which once challenged Waterford for the District 18 lead, has been fading ever since the final game of the season — a two-all tie with Waterford.

"I think we lost our starch in that Waterford game," Christensen said. "We hit the ball real well, but Waterford was hauling them in. There were some great catches in that game."



Tim Hammer was the losing pitcher in Farmington's final Connie Mack loss

Southfield Pony-Colts ask for financial help

Southfield's Pony-Colt baseball league has some big problems—but League Commissioner Lloyd Rizzo isn't afraid to ask for help.

The Colt-Pony League, which serves more than 300 Southfield Youngsters from 13-16 years of age, experienced financial problems this summer. The league owes \$800 to area sporting goods firms for equipment purchased this summer.

Rizzo admits that the situation is desperate and is asking for contributions from residents.

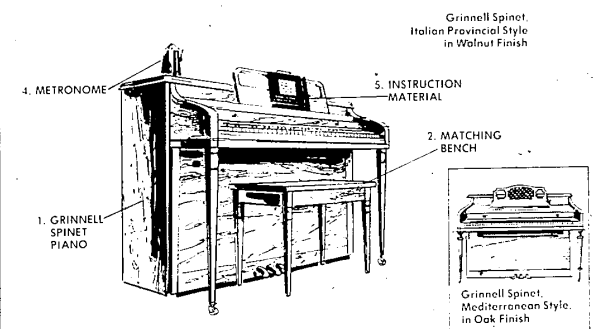
"We had to buy equipment—catcher's mits, shin guards and the like," Rizzo said. "All this wasn't in the budget and we fell about \$800 short."

"We're not talking about money for next year, we're talking about money to pay off our debts for this summer."

Persons wishing to contribute to this cause may contact Rizzo at 353-0042.

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Cranbrook keeps winning

Cranbrook Swim Club is favored to win its second-straight North-west Suburban Swim League Meet this week-end at Bloomfield Hills Lahser High School. Meet preliminaries will be held Aug. 7-9, with the finals set for Aug. 10 at 1 p.m.

Coch John Mason's Cranbrook team tared up for the league meet by defeating Woodside Athletic Club, 343-220, last week. The victory was Cranbrook's 21st in a row over the past three seasons.

Other record breakers: Kristyn Ryness (girls' 13-14 year) took the 50-meter butterfly in 33.1; Paul Koenig (boy's 9-10 year) finished the 50-meter breaststroke in 48.4; and Lesa Mitchell (girls' 7-8 year) finished the 25-meter breaststroke in 24.5.

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Rochester-Village Rochester Heart of the Hills stopped Village Swim Club 295-278, last week. The loss gave Village a 2-4 record in the Northwest Suburban Swim League.

Village's boy's 52-year IM relay set a team record of 2:15.4. The team consists of Bill Dunn, Scott Mansfield, Dave Smith and Kurt Maczei. Other Village records: Mike Konczal (boy's 9-10 year) took the 50-meter breaststroke in 48.0; Lesa MacMillan (girls' 9-10 year) topped the 50-meter freestyle in 33.9; and Mark Sarnacki (boy's 7-8 year) finished the 25-meter breaststroke in 23.2.