

# Spartans Gain Consolation Finals In Tourney

# Loss May Be Good Omen For Stevenson

Stevenson High's basketball team wasn't playing for the major championship Saturday night in the Northwest Suburban holiday basketball tournament at North Farmington.

Coach George Van Wagoner of Stevenson really had a great deal to be thankful for during this holiday series.

His team lost to Bentley, 59-58, in the first round of the holiday meet when Dave Rice made two free throws after time had run out.

But overall, Santa Claus has been good both to Van Wagoner and his team. They were co-champs of the Inter-Lakes Conference last season and hadn't lost either in the league or in any other contest until edged by Bentley.

THEN STEVENSON bounced back to whip Farmington, 86-74, in the first-round of consolation play in the holiday meet to up the Livonians' overall record to 5-1 in the league.

"Maybe the loss to Bentley will do us more good in the long run than we realize at this time," said Van Wagoner.

"Sure, you don't like to lose, but it was outside the conference and winning the conference is the big thing in the regular season. Then, of course, there's winning in the state meet. But that's something else again.

First things first, of course, and if you were to ask Van Wagoner what thrills him most about his team and players he might selfishly say—and who could dispute him—it's the presence of his son, Paul, on the Stevenson varsity as a starter.

THE VAN WAGONERS aren't the first father-son combination to have operated in Observerland, or elsewhere in state prep circles. There have been many... and certainly there are more to come.

But there's something different about this one. When Paul was seven months old he suffered a polio. His right arm was paralyzed and left foot limp.

And deformed, too. Any dad would have been tortured by such a tragedy befalling his son, but it had to be worse yet for George, an athlete and coach, who looked to the day when his son, Paul, might perform in sports.

Notwithstanding the fact Paul has only two-thirds use of right arm to this date, Paul has worked his way up the sports ladder.

"HE WAS in a tougher spot than most athletes at Stevenson," his dad was saying, "after all, he was the coach's son and were I to show any special favors, well, you know what people might say."

But Paul was on the reserve basketball team

two seasons ago and pop needed some help in mid-court on his varsity.

The call went out to the reserve coach: "Send up Paul."

And Paul stayed since... making major contributions to Stevenson sharing the league title last year and in the team's fine start this year.

"PAUL REALIZED early with his handicap that he'd have to battle harder than other kids," his dad declared. "He went through a series of early muscle-developing exercises and in more recent years he has used sports to keep his body active and help build himself up."

Paul stands 5-11 and weighs 150. He has run cross country and played some baseball for Stevenson. Two years ago the family drew an added scare. His right arm was broken. But it has healed perfectly.

Paul wasn't among the high scorers when Stevenson downed Farmington Tuesday night.

Rusty Gregg led the way with 26 points, while Ted Exarhos had 17.

GREGG HAD six points and Mike Swift seven in the last period when Stevenson opened up a big gap after holding only a 64-62 edge after three quarters.

Paul White continued his hot scoring for Farmington.

ton. He tossed in 26 points while Randy Cleveland shot in 18.

White had 11 in the first half when Farmington rallied for a 43-43 tie at the intermission after trailing, 25-20, following one quarter.

Southfield earned the right to meet Stevenson for the consolation title by ousting Redford Union, 80-68.

Redford Union started fast, taking an 18-9 lead after one period, but Southfield outscored RU, 29-13, in the second period to take the lead for keeps.

Dave Navdi had 14 points, Randy Taylor 11 and Gary Bevington 10 for the losers. Dave Hoffman flipped in 19 points for the winners.

MEANTIME, John Glenn hardly was the perfect host in the first round of its own tournament, romping past Livonia Churchill, 61-46.

Churchill led early, 13-12, but Glenn moved ahead, 33-23, in the second period and stayed in front the rest of the way.

Mark Magee scored 19 points for the winners, while Keith Armstrong had 18 for the losers.

In the other first-round game at Glenn, Wayne spanked Belleville, 65-49, with Jim Green the hot hand behind a second-half comeback.

Plymouth made its bid for laurels in the tourney starting Friday.

# Crisler Casts Vote For 'Tradition' Team

By W.W. EDGAR

Before he departed for Pasadena to watch the battle between Michigan and Southern California in the Rose Bowl on New Year's Day, Fritz Crisler, former Wolverine athletic director, got to discussing the pressure of major football games.

He had been asked what he thought Michigan's chances were of remaining undefeated in Rose Bowl competition and registering its fifth victory.

Surprisingly, he didn't come right out and predict a Michigan victory.

"Football's take some funny bounces," he said, "and you never know when the breaks may go against you."

"But I'll tell you one thing," he said, "If the game is close and the chips down I'll take the team with the most tradition."

HE DIDN'T ENLARGE on the statement, but a check of the records would indicate that if the battle is close and the pressure is really on, he'd have to pick Michigan.

No other team carries more tradition into the Rose Bowl than Michigan.

Not only are the Wolverines undefeated in four starts, but Michigan has become part of the Rose Bowl lore.

It was Michigan, in the days of "Hurry-Up" Yost's point-a-minute teams, that defeated Stanford, 49-0, in the first Rose Bowl game, and the feats of that team are part of football legends.

The fact that the 1947 Michigan repeated against Southern California by the same score, added further to the tradition.

FRITZ POINTED to the fact that tradition played a part when Bennie Oosterbaan's 1950 team that won the "Snow Bowl" battle against Ohio State, upset California, 14-6.

"When the chips were down," Crisler recalled, "Michigan came through."

The victory of "Bump" Elliott's 1964 team over Oregon State 33-7 continued the grip of the Wolverines in the granddaddy of all bowl games.

While Crisler didn't pick Michigan in so many words there was no questioning his choice when he said...

"If the game is close and the chips are down I'll take the team with the most tradition."



TWO FARMINGTON players close in on Stevenson's Rusty Gregg (41) after he had taken a rebound. That's Randy Cleveland (42) and Bob Chapman (25) getting ready to fight for possession of the ball. Stevenson won to gain a berth in the consolation finals of the holiday tourney at N. Farmington. (Observer photo by Vince Wittek)

# Magicians, Pistons Top Cobo Card

There'll be a special all-pro doubleheader for basketball fans at Cobo Arena Monday night.

The feature of the evening pits the Detroit Pistons against the Cincinnati Royals at 8:30 p.m.

In the first game at 6:45 p.m., the Fabulous Magicians will engage a team comprised of members of the Detroit Lions.

Among the Lions scheduled to try their hands at basketball is Wayne Walker, who makes his home in Livonia.

Walker, the Lions' fine line-backer, was an excellent basketball player before turning professional in football.

He Played

Wayne State University football coach Vern Gale played on the 1949 Wyoming football team which ran up a national record 81 yards in total offense in a game vs. Colorado State College.

## IN THE POCKET

As the record books close for 1969, bowlers from the metropolitan Detroit area have posted a mark that no other section of the country can equal.

Here is the imposing list of achievements turned in during the past 12 months.

Anita Cantaline's team, known early in the season as the Holiday Magics, lead women bowlers of the nation with a team series of 3230.

This team also holds the national high single mark with an 1160.

Elvira Toepfer, four time

Bowling Queen, is one of the few women in the nation with a league average of 200 or better. She presently is carrying a 202.35 in the All-Star Bowlerettes.

In the men's division, the Goebel team, of the All Star Classic that bowls in Observerland, is in second place on the national list with a team series of 3453. The national leaders is the Renault team of Dayton, Ohio, with 3493.

MEANWHILE, BUD MCLHOLLAND, of the Fire Bird team, has posted an 812 series

to join the national ABC leaders. Right behind him is Tony Liska, who has an 800.

No other area has two bowlers in the magic 800 circle. Aside from these outstanding feats during the year, the metropolitan pin spillers garnered two more honors.

Eddie Lubanski, one of the few men in bowling history who ever rolled 300 games back to back, is the 20-year leader in ABC tournament averages. Bob Stamp, former All-Star champion, tops the five year list.

Over the past 23 years, according to ABC records, Lubanski has bowled 233 games in the ABC tournament and compiled an average of 204.32. Billy Golembiewski, another Metropolitan area veteran, is in sixth place among the 20-year men with a 201.33 average.

Meanwhile Strampe is setting a last pace with an average of 209.92 over the past five years.

To add further to the area feats, Detroit holds five of the 10 places on the five-year list. Aside from Strampe, others on the list include Lubanski, Billy Golembiewski, Dale Seavoy and Joe Joseph, the Lansing veteran who compiled his average while bowling in the All-Star Classic.

No other area in the country even comes close to matching these performance records.

ELVIRA TOEPFER is well on her way toward a national record.

She turned in a 689 series Monday night in the All-Star Rings - Joe Neuenwander, a bowlerettes to continue a

"hot" streak that started more than a month ago. In her last five appearances she has posted counts of 616,704,618,657 and 689 for a 218 plus average.

Not bad for a gal who has been knocking them over in All-Star competition for more than a quarter of a century.

**Raiders Win 3rd Time In Gymnastics**

North Farmington High's gymnastic team thoroughly dominated in beating Flat Rock for its third victory without a loss.

The Raiders placed one-two-three in every event.

First-place winners for the Raiders were:

Parallel Bars - Lee Katterman, Vaulting - Bill Page, Floor Exercise - Larry Bens.

High Bar - Barry Rudner, Trampoline - Rick Page, Sidehorse - Brian Lussenden, Rings - Joe Neuenwander, Tumbling - Benio.

**Ex-Franklin Star On Hope Jayves**

Bradford Lyons, son of Mr. and Mrs. Ernest Lyons, 8351 Flamingo, Westland, is a member of the Hope College junior varsity basketball squad.

A freshman, Lyons is a 1969 graduate of Franklin high school. He is a guard on the Hope team.

# Falcon On Rampage

Forward Paul White of Farmington High School is on a hot shooting streak.

Consider White's efforts in his team's last four games:

He started his barrage with 39 points, followed with 34, then 39 again and then 26. That averages out to 32 points per game in the four-contest barrage.

# Turf Tips, Quips

By Doc Minard

Just two more nights—Monday and Tuesday—and Michigan's first winter harness racing grinds to a close at Northville where Jackson Raceway has sponsored programs since mid-November.

Originally billed as a campaign to furnish competition for Windsor Raceway and keep American dollars in Michigan, the meeting did give the Canadian track a race for the dollars but unfortunately it was much too late to furnish a real test.

The opportunity for real comparison would have come after the holiday when the tracks started meetings at the same time. Having Commissioner Leo Shirley eliminated that when he denied dates in January and February.

No one will know whether the Jackson-at-Northville Downs session would have cut into the Windsor pay or not.

THE MEETING is expected to end with a nightly average mutual handle of more than \$200,000, a bit short of the \$225,000 expected by President and General Manager Leon Slavin when he agreed to take the winter dates.

On the other side of the picture, Windsor enjoyed the best business in history with the wagering soaring past the \$350,000 mark—an all-time high.

Windsor swings into the second half of its winter dates Monday and outside of the competition from Jackson-at-Northville on Monday and Tuesday, it will have the show all to itself until mid-March.

Earlier in the winter season, we said President Slavin deserved a medal for holding out against the winter dates. We

repeat that now with only two nights remaining.

Slavin, who poured thousands of dollars into the annual meetings at Jackson before finally making it a paying proposition, took the outcome of the current campaign with a rather wry smile. But he was smiling and that shows a lot of poise when one considers he had to take a financial beating.

PERHAPS in another year and we are referring to 1971 and not 1970 since those dates already have been allotted. Slavin will receive a favorable nod from the commissioner and get the chance to compete head-and-head with Windsor.

The remaining nights will give fans an opportunity to view the pacers and trotters at the latest date in Michigan annals.

And believe it or not, the racing has been just as good as in mid-season. Perhaps the times aren't as fast but the competition is there and photo finishes are the rule rather than the exception.

THE 1970 harness racing dates are expected to be one of the top toppers at the annual convention of the Michigan Harness Horsemen's Association on Jan. 12 and 13 in Flint.

The standard-bred owners, drivers and trainers are more than a little disturbed about the failure to award dates in January and February and aren't too happy with an April meeting in Jackson going head-on against Hazel Park.

Then, too there's the matter of the supposedly winter dates next November and December when the commissioner ruled dark nights for the Jackson-at-

Northville Downs meeting on Mondays and Tuesdays. The campaign is supposed to end Dec. 19.

When one considers that if the track operated six nights a week, then the season would end early in December—exactly the same as when Jackson was operating over at the facilities of the Jackson-Farmingtons.

It appears Commissioner Shirley wanted to make it appear that he had awarded winter dates but actually he hadn't. Don't be surprised if he makes a change before the start of the 1970 racing season and gives Jackson permission to operate without dark nights with the exception of Thanksgiving Day.

REMEMBER when Hazel Park Racing Association took the Wheeling Downs track for thoroughbred and harness racing?

It was far from a successful venture and Hazel Park eventually disposed of its interests. Then the plant was destroyed by a disastrous fire.

It hadn't operated for several years but now Walter Fischer, a Detroit industrialist, is heading a syndicate that has taken over the plant, rebuilt the grandstand and will sponsor harness racing shortly after the start of the new year.

Present plans call for Wheeling to have programs three nights each week with dates for six nights weekly when warm weather arrives.

WHERE WILL horseowners go when the Jackson-at-Northville campaign ends?

Some have checked out already and will compete during the remainder of the winter in Chicago and a few will move to Wheeling, some will go to the various training centers throughout the state and those that can will probably seek stalls at Windsor.

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