OBSERVING SPORTS

By George Maskin

A Pat On Back For All Coaches

Perhaps, because of what happened to Bo Schembechler in Pasadena, more people today may have a soft spot for coaches and managers. As it generally stands in this world of sports, the coach or manager is the easiest man to replace, when a team is going sour and isn't winning you can't get rid of 10 or 15 or 40 players as the case may be, so you chop one man — the coach.

That it may not be the coach's fault makes no difference.

That it may not be the towards some that difference.

Invariably the demise of any team — be it a junior high or college or professional aggregation — isn't the fault of the coach or manager. It's simply that the coach hasn't had the talent to make his team a winner.

True, there are certain aspects of making a

THIS DEPARTMENT of the Observer always has had a fond feeling for coaches, particularly those on the schoolboy level.

Ve have learned over the years that coaching in any school is no simple job.

For one thing the coach is a teacher first.

He must spend several hours each day in the classroom.

Coaching comes secondary. And coaching piles on more than just fielding a day for a given number of games.

A coach is like a second father to most hour. To

A coach is like a second father to most boys. To

team tick that a coach can accomplish. But, overall, teams win or lose because of the talent at hand. And, for no other reason.

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stand by white the warming injury.

A coach must stay abreast with all the newest wrinkles in his profession. He must know how to scout opponents and use what he has learned about such a chore to advantage.

such a chore to advantage.

There are even some prep coaches who must fight the battle of luring talent.

This is prevalent at the all-boy schools in the Greater Detroit Catholic League. A coach has his pick of the entire area. He might be able to talk athletes from Livonia or Garden City or Farmington into playing on his team.

And some have.

WHEN YOU GET OFF to the college level of coaching, the task becomes more fierce.

Now it's no longer just the physical and mental job of coaching.

Now you're battling rivals from all over the country for standout high school talent.

And with so many colleges springing up and the struggle to get the good boys getting tougher and tougher, it's enough to drive any strong stomach and heart off course.

Too, when you take a team to a bowl as Bo Schembechler did last week, there are the "extra's" which hit you

which hit you.

There's Disneyland and Marineland, the Holly-wood studios ... There's television and press confer-

wood studies ...

Everything distracts from your basic mission to California... and that's to win in the Rose Bowl.

Some coaches don't mind the "extras." But many do ... and Bo Schembechler happens to be

ne. The hoopla got to him, just as the same fuss has

The hoopla got to him, just as the same fuss has gotten to other coaches.

Hopefully, Schembechler will be none the worse of his illness. Butonce a man is stricken, he tends to slow down in the future.

Whether Schembechler is that type remains to be seen. But from what we're told, he's a man who thinks and lives football 24 hours a day the year around.

I'll lake an iron-fisted doctor to change Bo. ind It'll take an iron-fisted doctor to change Bo

Schembechler around. . .

SHORT SHOTS: Livonia's Wayne Walker of the Detroit Lions probably will be busier in the off-season than he was during the recent Lions: campaign. He will play some basketball for the Lions' All-Stars. he'll devote more time to this plush restaurant in Detroit... he'll be back doing the weekend and other sports shows on Channel 2. Walker was disappointed the other night when he played in a basketball preliminary before a Pistons' game. The last time Walker was at Cobo Arena he scored something like 20 points... This time he was overshadowed by Charlie Sanders. Walker only scored a couple points. scored a couple points.
Poor fellow!

IMAGINE A WIFE calling her husband and ask-

"How's the weather?"
"It's cold and lots of snow."
"Sorry honey, it's 80 and I'm going back to the

It's sure nice, dear, to have a mom and pop who can put you up for a week in Florida. Isn't it?

The word around the Farmington school district is that several of the top assistant coaches at Farmington and North Farmington are in line for promotions to become head coaches at the new Harrison High next flat. There could be no more deserving men.

SEVERAL AREA TENNIS bugs are finding the new Franklin Racquet Club in Southfield quite a spot to enjoy their favorite sport, regardless of the

to enjoy their tavorne sport. Togethess a the weather.

The club, recently opened, has eight of the finest courts available and is open daily.

But unless you're a member, forget it ... they've loaded the list of members and have had to say "no" to several hundred others.

All of which proves that tennis is big stuff and a great sport for people of all ages.

PLAY BALL!
It's back to the title races Friday for the area's high school basketball players.
Because of the way the calendar has fallen this season, the preps have been off from title action in their leagues for three weeks.
The same holds true in wrestling and swimming.

It's All There

Michigan's 208-page record book of athletics lists every varsity letterwinner back to 1866.

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CRESTWOOD

DODGE



The real truth of Crister's statements came to the fore on the afternoon of Christmas Day in the North-South game in the Orange Bowl. A special rule had been adopted game in the Orange Bowl. A special rule had been adopted that eliminated a team's op-tion om fourth down—if it was at least nine points ahead A team in this posi-tion was forced to punt.

tion was forced to punt.

The rule was, brought to eliminate the "blitz" and possible injury to the lads.

The rule was brought to possible injury to the lads.

The rule bedsfired now-cert when he was forget and ran on fourth down. It was forced to cancel a long rup-top punt formation and/punt. The crowd was mystifiely and the officials had to tight elime out to explain the special rule.

Even then, it wasn't satis-

Even then, it wasn't satis-actory-to the fans or the

he experiment only wed the truth of Crisler's

As a member of the Rules Committee for years he is emphatic in his belief that there is no need to change the rules.

SKIERS . SNOWMORIJERS FETZ'S

LODGE

Torch Lake - Just Opened In the heart of the ski country, Excellent food, beautiful I od ge sur-roundings, miles of snowmobile trails. \$12 double occupancy

I drove into the parking lotat Mt. Brighton last week, it was my drawful trip in several years, where the parking trip in several years, which was a man and the mountain" or the great sea from the man made mountain" or the great sea from the sea from the sea from the man who introduced the two platon system to football and has seen such and the triple option offense of the most popular did reason that the two platon system to football and has seen such and the triple option offense come to the fore doesn't be lieve there should be any changes in the rules—a this time.

"We have a fine, interesting and execting game now." Fritz Crisier, former athletic director at the University of Michigan, answered when asked if he thought there should be any rules changes. "College football is drawing well," he said, "so are for a change."

It was pointed not that it might be a smart move on the pross. So, there is no need for a change.

CRISLER DIDNT AGREE. "We are doing all right with the goal posts where they are. Don't forget that while the pross. So, the goal posts where they are. Don't forget that while the pross are going all right with the goal posts where they are. Don't forget that while the pross are for a change."

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decreased when skiers gradua-ted from the beginner stage to intermediate skills.

Moral -- Take lessons!!
NEXT WEEK-Traverse City,
the family area.



hase of you planning to pur this season should know some

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THE BEST IN ARTIFICIAL SNOW!

RCONDITIONS VERY GOOD TO EXCELLENT



C'ville High Starts New Year With 4 Winter Sports Teams serverland, one finds full sports programs everywhere. The four Livonia high schools all have football, cross country. baskeball, swimming, wrestling, track, base-lall, tenis and golf Pirmouth at the imment lacks wrestling. Thurston and Redford Union have all the sports. So do Garden City East and West, North Farmington and Farmington. Even in the smaller Catholic

sport teams.

There are some in the spring, for example, who play baseball and run track almost simultaneously.

Thanks to the schedule maktage are the teams perform on difference.

Thanks to the schedule mak-er, the teams perform on dif-ferent days, thus making it possible for a young man to pitch or slug the ball one day ... then run the hurdles or the sprints the next.

LOOKING AROUND Ob-

A new decade has dawned.
As it does, high school sports
flourish greater than every in
Observerland.
From the days when many
high schools fielded only teams
in sports like football, basketball, baseball and track, their
interscholastic activities have
broadened considerably.

interscholastic activities have broadened considerably. A typical school is Clarence-ville.

Operating in a relatively small district with just the one high school – contrasted to four in Livonia, two in Garden City. two in Farmington (with a tihrd coming—Clarenceville boasts one of the most complete sports programs in the state.

IN THE FALL there's foot-

IN THE FALL there's foot-ball and cross country.

Now, during the winter months, Clarenceville is represented in four sports - basket ball, wrestling, swimming and gymnastics. Only two other schools in Observerland - Farmington and the farmington of the farmington

tenns and goi:

IT'S NOT EASY for a smaller school like Clarenceville to put on so many sports.
For one thing there's the
cost But the Board of Education, backed by the school
administration and the parents, solidly supports a compiete athletic program.
Another problem is manpower.

Many boys at Clarenceville participate on three and four

Preps Back In Action

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Continued from Page 18
Farmington too. rates watching in the league. The Fairon resums with a 1-t core farence slate and a highpowered team which has averaged veil over 75 points per game. Paul White and Randy Cleveland provide the major firepower for the Falcons. White himself has averaged 30-points in the team's last four games.

CATHOLIC LEAGUE
All three Observerland learns are "citth tup" there in

CATHOLIC LEAGUE
All three Observerland
teams are "right up" there in their respective divisions.
Bishop Borgess in the First Division-West had a 5-2 mark and was tied with East Catho-lic behind Pontiac Catholic Central (7-0) when the teams in the loop played Tuesday night.

in the loop played Tuesday night.
St. Agatha, the South-west-Second Division champ in football, is locked in the thick of the light for the basketball crown these days. St. Agatha, Mt. Carmel and St. Francis de Sales all stood 62 and tied for the top when the new year began. Wayne St. Mary's was right bebind at 3.3.

5-3. Our Lady of Sorrows in the Northwest-Second Division held down second place with a 6-2 record behind Orchard Lake St. Mary's, which swept to victories in its first eight games.

THERE'LL BE occassional diversions from league play during the rest of January and through February for the area

through February for the area teams.
But there won't be many.
Come March, of course, everybody starts over again in the state tournament, but right now nobody is thinking about that.
The indications are that it must be a state of the course winter in league play for most of the Observerland schools.

FOITOR'S NOTE. say about watching the middle line backer or the flanker on the line play, most people watch the ball. The television camera can follow the ball, no EDITOR'S NOTE: Farmington resident Philip Sheehan is employed by one of the metropalitan area TV stations. His views on the best type of sports television programming seem especially pertinent for this weekend of the Super Bowls. camera can follow the ball, no matter how fast it moves on the ground or in the air. We watch the middle linebacker on instant replays; the real action is where the ball is, where we can see the pass, the run, the tackle, the score.

NOW WHAT? That appears to be the question Franklin's Randy Lee (50) faces as he looks around for someone to pass off to after taking a rebound in the game against John Glenn.

Football Is Best TV Show

Super Bowls.

Try to design a television program.

Forget the idealism of educational television, the drabness of public service programming, the vast expanse of wasteland. Accept the present condition of commercial television, and design a perfect program for it. The time outs are long enough for commercials, and the pauses between plays are long enough for a slow motion or a split screen replay. Half time is long enough for a sandwich and a beer, or in a well-organized household, long-enough for Sunday dinner.

condition to communication with the communication and design a perfect program for it.

It was a communication and color, bring in tension and drama, give us heroes and villains, too. Produce it on a recognizeable scale, taking advantage of television gimmickry ment. Allow periodic breaks for commercials. Put on a new one every week.

OBVIOUSLY, what we have enough for Sunday dinner.
Professional football is a new show every game. The worst team in the league just might beat the champions one week-end, and regardless of who wins, every play is a potential scoring play. Something is always happening in football. Something is a laways there to put on the screen.

The North Farmi

there in the put on the screen of the commercials. Put on a new one every week.

OBVIOUSIT, what we have described is professional footing. The professional footing the final gun. It is man against man and team against team, with heady rivariers at both levels: it is life, on a more proposed to the final gun. It is man against man and team gainst team, with heady rivariers at both levels; it is life, on a more proposed to the final gun. The professional proposed to the professional professional

the cut short of the ingineary than on the gridron.

American man's love of football is nothing ominous. Football is a game – despite state of the control o

(Observer photo by Craia Gaffield)

Favor Mat Challengers

Undefeated this season, wrestlers from North Farmington High School are rated favorites to take the title from Redford Union in the second annual Invitational Tournament Saturday.

The North Farmington matmen have a 5-0 record. They'll compete with teams from Farmington High, Clar-enceville, Southfield, Thurston, Wayne's John Glenn, Garden City West, and the host team.

Larry Fortner, RU coach, has preliminary bouts set to start at noon and finals at 7 p.m. in the RU gym at Curtis and Kinloch. Student tickets for 50 cents and adult admission at \$1 will admit fans to both the after-noon and evening events.

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