

# Inept Tigers, Washington Open Monday

By GEORGE MASKIN  
Observer Sports Editor

Maybe it has dawned on any of us... it'll be opening day for the Tigers next Monday.

President Nixon will toss out the first pitch in Washington and then the Tigers will square off against the Nats in the nation's capitol.

Somehow, this has been the winter and the spring when baseball hasn't excited the Detroit area populace the way it has in the past.

COULD BE THE Denny McLain situation in February took a great deal of the "zing" out of the Tiger training camp festivities.

Could be that the poor Tiger exhibition record has left the fans with a "who could care attitude." Or maybe the roaring finish the Red Wings have staged.

Or the million-dollar baby the Pistons acquired in Bob Lanier.

Or the showings made by such Detroit-area teams as Pershing, Garden City West, Pontiac Central and River Rouge in the state basketball tournament.

ALL OF THESE have combined in a way to keep the Tigers from the top of the sports pages... from the headlined stories on the radio and television shows.

They've kept the Tigers, too, from "taking over" as No. 1 in the interests of the fans.

But this is a land and a world in which interest can shift in a hurry and by Monday, you can bet the Tigers will roll into the driver's seat.

Who's pitching today?... what did Kaline hit... how's Horton doing?...

These will become the major topics of the day on the Detroit and Michigan sports scene. And, what about the Tigers?

IT'S GENERALLY agreed that they'll have troubles without McLain, who most assuredly would have won another 20 or 25 for the team.

Nobody has hit the Lakeland camp who can take the place of Denny. At least not yet.

Mickey Lotich will be No. 1, Earl Wilson or Mike Kilkenny No. 2 and the newly acquired Joe Niekro the fourth starter.

It's not the best foursome in the majors, nor is it the worst.

The relief pitching poses a question. There's still a problem or two in the infield. What about shortstop? Can Don Wert operate effectively and swing a good bat at third?

Will Dick McAuliffe be able to return to his old form at second?

HOW ABOUT Al Kaline? Will he hold up for another season?

How's Mickey Stanley's sore arm going to affect his defensive play?

What about Bill Freehan's throwing behind the bat?

These are field questions that remain to be answered.

But, more important, perhaps, is how the team will react in the long run to functioning without McLain.

The mental thing, it's reported, has disturbed the players and the management in spring training. Whether it carries over into the regular season time alone will tell.

IT SHOULD also be remembered that the Tigers

finished 19 games behind Baltimore last season -- even with McLain winning 24.

The Tigers know this. Without Denny, well, it's obvious the club is upset... but if the team can get off to a good start, things could change... and in a hurry.

The Tigers will spend their first week on the road this season.

It'll be Tuesday, April 14, when the lid goes up at Tiger Stadium. The Cleveland Indians will be in town.

By that time, baseball will have taken over. Just ask any school teacher whose desk will be flooded with absentee excuses, most of them reading:

"My grandmother was sick..."



## Farmington High Sprinter Takes EMU Relays Gold Medal

Sports produce surprises... and Farmington sprinter Mark Bender certainly was one in Saturday's Huron Relays in Ypsilanti. Mark is a senior. As a junior for the Falcons last spring he showed signs toward the end of the season of "coming along". He ended the campaign with a third-place finish in the Oakland County Invitational. Now it's a new season and Bender has made more strides than coach Jerry Young of Farmington expected. "We knew that Mark was improving, but we didn't think he'd be able to do what he did here," said Young after Bender sped to victory in the 60-yard dash for Class A schools in the Huron Relays.

MARK HAD WON in the preliminaries and then the semifinals in the Relays, which serve to kick off the prep track season in Michigan.

He was up against some fine runners, not only from all over Michigan, but from Ohio as well. But he hit the line in 6.6 seconds to take the title and provide the big noise for Observer-land in the Relays.

Farmington also gained points in the shuttle relay when Bender anchored the Falcons to a sixth-place finish in 29.9 seconds. Dan Steinke, Randy Pender and Steve Kemp formed the quartet, along with Bender.

Coach John Mackenzie of Farmington was most impressed with the showings of his small contingent. "We're very enthusiastic about the season ahead," said Mackenzie. Next stop for several area schools will be the Spartan Relays in Michigan State's Jensen Field House this weekend. Then next week the dual meet campaign begins even with the weather hardly conducive to running outdoors.

## At Last! Bentley High Nine Has A Diamond Of Its Own

Something new will greet the Bentley High baseball team when it opens its home season a week from Friday. The team will have its own diamond, right behind the school. No more will Bentley have to travel to Cass Benton Park or other fields to play "home" games.

Bentley's track team starts its schedule against Franklin next Tuesday while the tennis team faces Franklin in its opener on April 9 and the golfers swing into action on April 13 at Allen Park.

COACH MARTY KLOZIK will present a revamped lineup when the Bentley baseball season dawn. Graduation hit the team hard. So did other factors. Paul Miller, who sparked at first base and finished last season with a .485 hitting average, has moved to Houston, Tex. with his family.

Shortstop Hugh Shannon has been lost for the season after undergoing knee surgery. Back are pitcher-third baseman Dave Rice, pitcher Ken Ockerman and Jim Erwin and Bob Walden. Erwin played the outfield last season and has been moved behind the bat to work with Walden.

Al Hernandez, up from the JV team, appears to have won the shortstop job. Ron Cook, a lefty, is another JV graduate who figures highly in Klozik's pitching plans.

BENTLEY WILL open its season on Wednesday, April 8, at Thurston, then entertain Franklin two days later. A game with Stevenson will

DISCUSSING the sensational record-making harness racing season of Hazel Park are: (from left) Racing Secretary Ken Marshall, Driver-Trainer Frank Todd and General Manager Harold Duris. The track shattered wagers marks Saturday and Monday and has bettered existing marks for attendance in the meeting.

COACH BARRY BASEL'S track team will be led by sprinter-harder Greg Hubbard into opening action this weekend at Michigan State Relays. The dual-meet season for Glenn begins against Cherry Hill next Tuesday. The spring schedules for Glenn: April 7 - Cherry Hill, 8 - at Garden City West, 15 - at Garden City West, 14 - at Lincoln Park, 20 - at Thurston, 22 - at North Farmington, 27 - Franklin, 29 - Oak Park. May 4 - Groves, 6 - Thurston, 8 - at Churchill, 11 - at North Farmington, 13 - at Franklin, 15 - Ypsilanti, 20 - Groves, 22 - at Garden City East.

TRUCK April 13 - at Allen Park, 16 - at Plymouth, 20 - at Belleville, 23 - at Redford Union, 27 - at Trenton, 30 - at Allen Park. May 4 - Plymouth, 7 - at Belleville, 11 - at Redford Union, 15 - League meet, 18 - League meet, 21 - Trenton, 25 - state meet.

TENNIS April 9 - Franklin, 14, at Trenton, 16 - Stevenson, 21 - Plymouth, 25 - Allen Park. May 1 - at Edsel Ford, 5 - Trenton, 12 - at Plymouth, 19 - at Allen Park.

GOLF April 13 - at Allen Park, 16 - at Plymouth, 20 - at Belleville, 23 - at Redford Union, 27 - Trenton, 30 - Allen Park. May 4 - Plymouth, 7 - at Belleville, 11 - at Redford Union, 15 - League meet, 18 - League meet, 21 - Trenton, 25 - state meet.



MICHIGAN BOUND -- That's the word from Thurston High where All-State footballer Craig Mutch announced he had accepted a tender from the University of Michigan.

## Ex-Area Preps Top Golfers

Five former Observerland high school golfers are members of this year's Scholastic College golf team which opens its 1970 season at Monroe Community College on April 17. Leading coach Ron Rontoni's team are Gary Boherson from Plymouth High, Tom Karowski of Farmington, Dick Lind of Stevenson, Pete Lomonaco of Plymouth and David Daviss of Bentley.

In addition, veterans Carl Patron from Detroit Cody and Fred Zrznack of Ann Arbor are back from Scholastic which placed third in the state Junior College League a year ago. The 1970 schedule: April 17 - at Monroe CC. May 1 - Concordia at Burroughs, 2 - at Lorain, O., 4 - Henry Ford and Oakland-Auburn; 8 - Oakland-Auburn and Washington at Washington; 11 - Concordia and Delta; 12 - Flint and St. Clair at Flint; 15 - Oakland-Highland Lakes and Highland Park at Highland Lakes; 18 - League meet at Port Huron.

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## Searches For Outfielders

Are there any outfielders running loose? Coach Norin Hoenes of Glenn High's baseball team is on the search for some. That's the weak spot so far as Glenn readies to start its 1970 baseball season Tuesday at home against Cherry Hill. Hoenes is pretty well set at other positions. He has Bob Briggs, an all-league third baseman, returning with catcher Andy Kinunen and Dave Barrows, who played some at first base a year ago. That's where the Glenn letter winners stop. BRIGGS IS EXPECTED to share the pitching with Darry Demary, who also can play third base. "That'll make it nice," says Hoenes. "When one pitches, the other will be at third... and vice versa." Kinunen has recovered from a broken hand that kept him out of about half of last season.

Barrows may be one of the outfielders since it appears that Mike Borders, a sophomore, will play first with both Hoenes at second and Dave Wyrabkiewicz at short. Gary Paek, who hurtled a little last year but didn't win a letter, also is on the squad and should be used more extensively. COACH BARRY BASEL'S track team will be led by sprinter-harder Greg Hubbard into opening action this weekend at Michigan State Relays. The dual-meet season for Glenn begins against Cherry Hill next Tuesday. The spring schedules for Glenn: April 7 - Cherry Hill, 8 - at Garden City West, 15 - at Garden City West, 14 - at Lincoln Park, 20 - at Thurston, 22 - at North Farmington, 27 - Franklin, 29 - Oak Park. May 4 - Groves, 6 - Thurston, 8 - at Churchill, 11 - at North Farmington, 13 - at Franklin, 15 - Ypsilanti, 20 - Groves, 22 - at Garden City East.

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# Dr. KILDARE

Academy Award winner Ed Begley plays a crusty old sailor who enters Blair Hospital to pursue a farfetched scheme to collect on his soon-to-lapse life insurance policy.

9 AM FRIDAY  
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