

Betting Up 35%; Crowds Show 44% Hike

Wolverine Enjoying Business Boom

Business is booming at Wolverine Raceway and statistics for the first 10 nights of the meeting show attendance up 40 per cent and wagering 35 per cent above figures for the same number of nights a year ago.

And the horsemen are a happy lot these nights as their pacers and trotters race to faster times than ever in their careers.

Especially are they delighted that the first 1.58 mile over the big mile track was recorded by a Michiganbred, a five year old son of Knox Hanover who stands at the Burrell Downing farm on W. Seven Mile Road just outside of Northville.

owned by Bill Longo of Farmington, was in front as the field turned into the stretch. That's when Robert E. Adios, handled by Chris Boring, charged into the lead with Robert E. Adios coming up fast on the outside.

It was a three horse race to the wire with Knox Patch pulling away in the final 50 yards to win by a length.

It was so close that the official timer caught Robert E. Adios in 1:58.1 and Fanny Mite in 1:58.4. Five of the seven pacers were under 2:00 with the seventh clocked in 2:02.

For Williams it was two sub-2:00 victories on the same

evening, another first for the big mile track. Earlier he guided Bye Bye Darnold under the wire in 1:59.4, equaling the track record set a week before by C.K. Adios.

FANS WERE in a betting mood all through the night but the big race, the eighth, found them at their best. When the mutual machines stopped for the race, the crowd had wagered \$85,750, bettering Wolverine's record for a single race. The former mark was \$85,465 set on June 5, 1967.

Incidentally, Saturday's crowd of 12,671 was another all-time high for that night and

the second largest attendance at the plant. It boosted the nightly average to 8,732 — another mark for 10 nights.

Track officials knew they were in for one of the biggest nights business-wise when the nightly double pool soared to \$68,894. That shattered the previous high by more than \$11,000 and started the way to the record making extravaganza.

The former high for a double pool was \$57,074 on April 15, 1967.

The nightly double was hardly history until another

wagering mark went down the drain. That came in the Big Perfecta when the handle climbed to \$66,774.

It was followed by Knox Patch with his 1:58 and the record for wagering on a single race and to climax the evening the betting on the Perfecta, closing event of the evening, hit another high with a total of \$55,892.

AND THAT ALL added up to a total of \$216,972 for the night — the first time Wolverine cracked the \$200,000 barrier.

Taken all together, another

mark vanished when track officials found they had handled \$145,458 on Friday and Saturday. That shattered the record set a week earlier of \$1,367,778.

Now the track is looking forward to even greater things during the coming weekend with the traditional Merchants and Manufacturers trot slated for Friday with an estimated purse of \$25,000.

Then on Saturday, Racing Secretary Bill Connors is hoping to arrange another card equal to that of last Saturday — the one that turned out to be the greatest record producing program in Wolverine history.

observing sports

Just reading or watching (on television) about the recent developments at Goose Lake or it could have been Woodstock are enough to make your stomach ache.

Talk to reporters who actually were there, and you wonder: "What's the sense of carrying on. Things have reached an impossible situation."

And, to realize that many of those who went to Goose Lake came from right around our neighborhoods . . . maybe they live next door, or down the street.

What's happening to our teenagers and those just beyond that stage in life? It sure wasn't like this when we were that age . . . or was it?

ASK SOME OF THE KIDS . . . ask your own teenagers as we have done . . . on why they do some of the things they do . . . and they respond. "What else is there to do?"

You listen and you think. Most of the movies today bar teenagers unless they come with mom and pop. That means a couple out on a date get stopped unless they have faked their identifications.

It wasn't that way when we were kids. Most movies were for folks of all ages.

Remember how we used to have Eastland and Westland and Walled Lake where we could dance and enjoy the greatest orchestras ever — Glenn Miller, Harry James, Tommy and Jimmy Dorsey, Woody Herman, etc.?

There's nothing around now like that! So, maybe that's why our kids go exploring . . . to the Goose Lakes and where have you. Note, we say, maybe. We don't have the answer.

But one can take heart when he looks around and sees the part that athletics are contributing to trying to keep society on a sensible plain.

SURE, WE COULD be wrong. But it strikes us from our observations right here in Observerland — from Garden City to Southfield and Farmington — that the boys and girls who engage in sports are less apt to wind up at the Goose Lakes.

I put the subject to a young lady who's been around the school situation for a long time.

"Athletics give the boys an extra goal," she said. "If you succeed in grade school or junior high, you now set your sights for success in high school . . . for your various teams."

"The rewards are very high for the boys who stand out in high school sports. They can get free-ride scholarships to college or they might get themselves a bonus to turn pro in baseball."

"Look what success means for the college athlete these days . . . in some cases almost million dollar contracts to sign as professionals."

She paused . . .

"If you're an athlete, too, and a student you're very busy . . . you don't have time to run around. By the time you've finished the day in this classroom, by the time you have finished your homework, by the time you have practiced . . . you're pretty tired."

THE PRETTY ONE might have noted that most athletes somehow realize their "extra" importance to the community and seek to set an example.

Usually, it's a good example, which is why they don't become involved with the troublesome aspects of life as we have it in our communities today.

All of which gets around to a subject that most of us can be thankful for . . . that in the communities in which we live there is a great effort being made to present topnotch athletic programs, not alone on the school level, but during the summer in recreation sponsored activities.

To put all this on tax money . . . your money and my money . . . out of the tax bites being made of us.

Each of us has faced a millage vote in recent years. Several such votes. All of us know what each such vote means . . . more money for the schools if it passes.

The reluctance has been there, to say no, and see what happens. But by and large the majority of the votes have spelled out "yes."

This has kept alive schoolboy and schoolgirl sports and other activities, outside the classroom, from the lower grades on up.

Now community recreation has become bigger than ever. Right here in Observerland, the cities are coming up with hockey arenas, golf courses and more chances for one and all to enjoy some phase of sport.

It has been encouraging to note how the number of teenage baseball teams has swelled each summer hereabouts.

For awhile, it appeared that this age-tracket baseball was dead . . . giving way to Little League and Pony League and other types of ball for kids 14 and under.

But with more boys 15-19 getting a chance to play on established teams all during the summer, they are less apt to steer off the happy course we hope they'll follow in life.

So, take heart! Some patience and understanding on the teenage problem might help, too.

By all of us.

Plymouth Elks Muff Chances; Drop 'D' Title to Dearborn

For the Plymouth Elks Class D baseball team, it was a season in Manager Wayne

Sparkman's own words "in which we just couldn't cash in on the big ones."

In the final of the Greater Livonia playoffs, the Elks lost to Warholak Unroyal Tires of

Bedford. AGAIN FRIDAY, the Elks played for a title — this time in

the Inter Cities tournament.

Once more the Elks came up short — by a run in a 7-6, heart breaking loss to Dearborn. It took Dearborn two extra innings to achieve the victory with walks leading to four of their runs.

All in all, however, Sparkman was happy the way the season went.

"We were playing a lot of our younger boys from the high school team . . . mostly those who'll be back next season," he said.

"Considering that many of our opponents had varsity high school teams intact during the summer, it indicates we could have ourselves a fine prep team next spring."

An encouraging aspect, too, for Sparkman was the way his Elks didn't quit. They came into the seventh inning against Dearborn on the short end of a 6-5 score and quickly tied matters to force the extra play.

Dearborn scored once in the first inning, but the Elks bounced back with two runs in their half of the inning when Pete Jenner singled, Steve Straley walked and Mark Bidigare drilled a long triple.

STEVE LATIN's homer tied it for Dearborn in the fourth, but Plymouth quickly struck for three more runs in the bottom of the third.

This time Straley was safe on an error and Bidigare singled. Ken Rocco drove in Straley with a single and Paul Meels followed with a single that pushed in two runs.

Dearborn struck with four runs in the sixth with a three-run homer by Latin, the mighty blow of that inning.

Then in the seventh, Jenner walked, Mark Schroeder singled and so did Greg Wassman to tie the game for the Elks.

But in the ninth a walk helped pave the way for the game's deciding run.

Bidigare had two hits and so did Meels. Each drove in two runs.

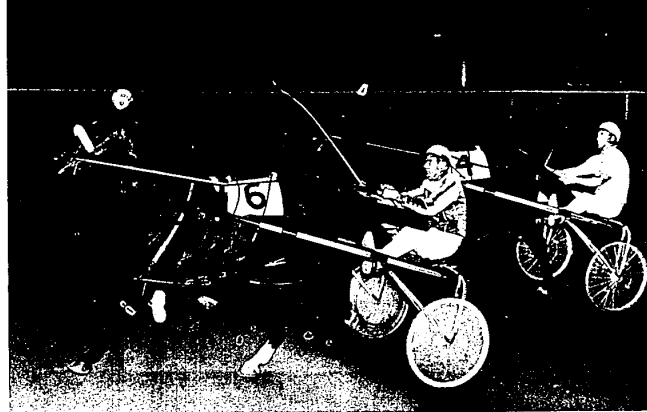
Bidigare pitched six innings with Schroeder finishing. He was the loser.

Will Officiate

Former Michigan State All-American football guard Dan Mason is a member of the Big Ten's grid officiating corps for 1970.

First Team

First team All-America honors have gone to 41 Michigan State football players since 1949.



FASTEST MILE ever recorded at Wolverine Raceway was made by Knox Patch, a Michiganbred five year old, who is shown crossing the finish line in 1:58 over the big mile track. With Bob Williams in the sulky, Knox

Patch came from far back in the long stretch to beat Robert E. Adios by a length. The latter was clocked in 1:58.1. The 1.58 mile was the second fastest in Michigan history for a pacer.

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State Golf Pros Clash In 'Open'

Ambassadors haven't had much success in the Michigan Open Championship.

In the Open's 50 year history, amateurs have only won on five occasions. The last victory was in 1946 when Chuck Kocis of Red Run took his second consecutive championship.

ship at the Black River Country Club.

For 23 straight years professionals have dominated the event. Last year's winner was professional Chuck Knowles of Holland.

Bedford Valley Country Club will host the 51st Michigan Open, Thursday through Sunday, Aug. 20-23. The 180-player starting field includes 115 professionals and 65 amateurs from all over the State. The Battle Creek layout was the site of the 1969 tournament.

A change of exemptions by the Michigan PGA Tournament Committee served as impetus for a record 352 entries to qualify for the 61 openings.

Qualifying was held at Bedford Valley, Silver Lake in Rockford and Plum Hollow in Southfield.

Seven past winners are entered in the 1970 Championship, worth a record \$10,000.

They include: Charles Knowles, John Molenda, Mike Souchak, two-time first place finisher Gene Bice, Thom Rosely, three-time victor Walter Burkemo and four-time winner John Barnum.

The field will play 18 holes on Thursday and Friday and then will cut to the low 60's and play for Saturday and Sunday titles.

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