

Lions Stack New Winning Spirit Against Rebounding Packers

Could it be that winning spirit is contagious? Especially when you play in the same hometown.

The Detroit Lions might be thinking so, because they are tied with Minnesota for the lead in the Central Division of the National Football League.

2. The rest of the schedule would favor the Lions to roar on and emerge as kings just as the Detroit Tigers did this past baseball season at Tiger Stadium.

The Lions found the Chicago Bears a little tough in their return to the stadium after a 29-10 score as contrasted 42-0 when the teams met earlier at Tiger Stadium.

But it was the third win in five starts for Detroit and with Minnesota losing to New Orleans and Green Bay being bounced by Los Angeles, the

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By George Maskin

Observing sports

After what happened around Detroit last week, there can be no getting away from how much of an impact sports have on people.

Which is why we always shudder when in almost all Observerland communities, each time a miltage vote comes up, there's a threat with it: "Vote down the miltage and sports will have to suffer."

That was that way in Livonia and Garden City and South Redford and now we understand there's such conversation going around in Farmington.

We're not stupid enough to claim that sports are uppermost in this world.

Many other questions... many other matters... many other problems are far more important.

There's the struggle to quell cancer, to end the war in Vietnam, to bring down our taxes, to make our schools better and better, to reduce the racial squabbles which exist between black and white.

BUT SPORTS—well, they can be so wonderful. Take any one of our schools which fields a team. It can be in baseball, or football, or soccer, or basketball.

What single activity brings the student body, the teachers, the parents closer than sports?

Week in and week out, sports does it as the press switch from football to basketball to wrestling to the other sports.

Sure, schools have plays and concerts and other extra-curricular goings on which attract good-sized audiences.

But not the way sports do on such a consistent basis.

And, when there's a winner, a champion, well, everybody celebrates. More than one principal has been known to give everybody a day off to hail a sports king.

It doesn't happen that way when the band puts on a great concert or the student players rival a Broadway hit.

So need sports kicking. Enough of these three or less 'em out if the miltage fails.

Few communities in Observerland have rejected tax hikes for the schools. The people, who foot the bills, obviously want the best for their children... and most have to realize that it's pretty inexpensive to put on sports for what the student body gets out of them.

AS FOR OUR WILDERNESS after the Tigers wrapped up the World Series:

We don't remember seeing anything like it before.

When the Tigers won the pennant in '35, we were too young to comprehend what was going on. Besides, there was no television.

In '45, we were assigned to army duty in New York City where the Tigers won. So we missed those festivities.

But downtown Detroit was something the other evening. It's been a long time since any of us ever saw the community pulling together the way it was.

Nobody was mad at anybody. A black man, standing in the middle of Lafayette Blvd., near the main post office, grabbed the hands of everybody crossing the street.

Up the street at Michigan and Washington Blvd., a young white couple, caught in the traffic jam, offered bottles of something stronger than Coke to the black man, crossing the street.

People danced... they sang... everybody was a pal to the next guy, which is the way it should be every day of the year.

TO US! THE MOST touching part of it all came as we pulled into our drive at home and stepped from the car.

It was something like 12:15 a.m. and in the near distance there were shouts, there was applause, there was singing.

We wondered who might be tossing an open-air party on a school night.

Then it hit us—that over thataway Mickey Stanley lives. So we hopped back into the car and rushed the three-quarters of a mile to where the good neighbors in Kimberley North were saluting the return home of Mr. and Mrs. Stanley.

Boys and girls from North Farmington High stood in front of the Stanley home serenading the one who moved from the outisfield to shortstop in one of the boldest moves a player ever has been asked to make in the World Series.

They tol us it was the same over in Franklin when Al Kaline came home and in Southfield and Beverly Hills when Bill Freehan and Denny McLain returned from the wars.

Sports... ah, yes... what can be more wonderful?

Lions now share the top with Minnesota and Green Bay a game off the pace.

THE LIONS were "up" for the Bears, especially Mel Farr who pranced for three touchdowns in his finest effort in his brief season and a half, with the two teams tied.

But the two weeks before the Lions' reign in the NFL, the two teams tied.

"Hopefully we have jelled and we'll stay jelled," declared Schmidt as he began preparations for the game with the Packers Sunday.

The Packers were beaten on

a late field goal by the Rams, 16-14, Sunday and with a 2-3 record there are many now ready to count them out of the box.

All of which makes the Lions "down."

"We're up," said Schmidt. "It's a must" for Green Bay.

FARR RAN for two touchdowns and grabbed a pass from Bill Munson for his third TD,

Tom Nowatzke accounted for the final Detroit touchdown after a Munson pass. Earl McCullough passed to the ball deep into Chicago territory.

Chicago was in the game only briefly, being the game 7-7 on a long pass.

Detroit's defense thereafter was airtight and virtually stopped Gayle Sayers cold. The league's No. 1 rusher was held to 38 yards in 12 carries. His longest gain was for five yards.

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