

'Most Optimistic, Happiest Fellow' Says Bump Elliott

U-M Teammates Of 1947 Mourn Jim Brieske

By W. W. EDGAR
Observer Roving Editor

"He was the most courageous and happiest optimistic fellow I ever met -- on or off the football field."

With these words Chalmers (Bump) Elliott, University of Michigan football coach and former teammate, paid tribute to the memory of James Brieske,

kicking star of the 1947 national championship team, who died last week, victim of lung cancer.

With the Wolverine coach as his coach were two other members of the coaching staff -- Wally Weber and Beanie Oosterhuis, each of whom recalled the many times that Jim, better known in those days as "Automatic Jim" furnished the

DEATH LIST
Observing sports

Would you believe it -- the fastest, growing high school sport in Michigan is wrestling?

Yep, it's real jumping -- and it's nothing like this you see on television.

This is scientific wrestling. The acting is OUT. Try it and you're OUT -- out of business.

The beauty of wrestling, area coaches will tell you, is that it makes no difference what boy weighs. Nor does his size have any bearing. He can be 5-1 or 6-3.

He can be fat, or slim.

Regardless of his physical makeup there's a place for him in wrestling and against competitors of similar size -- at least from the all-important weight standpoint.

As a rule the 100-pounder . . . and there are many in our senior highs . . . can find a place to contest on a varsity level in wrestling.

He need not fear that he'll be matched against a foe 50 or 80 pounds heavier . . . or one standing six inches taller . . . as you'll find in football or basketball.

WRESTLING INTEREST, too, on the prep front has swelled in recent years. Many varsity matches now attract fans in the hundreds. Sometimes the crowds top the 1,000 mark.

It wasn't always this way. In the not-too-distant past, there were many prep wrestling matches which were staged before a handful of rooters -- a few parents and a couple students.

Just about all the area's public schools now sponsor wrestling teams.

The squads have leaped to the point that starting with next March's state tournament it will become necessary to hold a district and then a regional meet to decide who advances on to the Michigan finals.

WELL, WE ALL can relax.

Those worries that ex-Farmington, ex-Farmington Township Denny McLain might hold out for that \$100,000 contract have vanished.

Denny has put his name on the line and for something much less than one hundred grand. The estimates range from \$65,000 to \$75,000.

Hiking McLain's pay something like 100 percent won't serve as the guideline for general manager Jim Campbell's handling of the other Tigers who have big ideas on how much they should get after the pennant-winning season.

There'll be a flock of raises . . . and some dandies . . . but the Tigers will pass on the hikes to their fans who'll pay 25 cents extra for each reserve seat they buy next season.

It's nice to have a winner.

YET, THE AREA high schools, winners or losers, find it difficult -- in fact, impossible -- to raise admission prices.

Most school officials would like to.

Granted, there are no big salaries to pay, but it's costing more and more every year for the schools to stage their athletic programs.

Uniform prices have leaped. Equipment is up.

Referees and umpires won't agree for their services. Moving the team for road games, even in school buses, costs more.

"How can we add to our prices?" one athletic director said.

"Most of our fans are students. They are paying now as much as they can. We might hit the adults up for a few more nickels, but that wouldn't really solve the problem too much."

Many schools have adopted season-ticket plans for both football and basketball, for students and adults.

IT'S A GOOD SCHEME -- for the school and the fan. The fan gets a bargain, the school draws in some working capital and doesn't have to worry about a bad day or night killing off the crowd and the gate.

A good example, on a professional level, was Thursday's Detroit Lions' game with Philadelphia. Something like 33,000 showed up. But the Lions had sold upwards of 47,000 tickets.

It really made no difference from a dollar standpoint if the fans came or didn't. The club had its money . . . most of it from season-ticket holders who had seen enough of the team in its first six home games.

Of course, the Lions' pride couldn't have soared when so many with tickets stayed away.

What happened on the field didn't help the Lions' pride either.

IT WON'T BE A DULL Christmas for most area high school basketball teams.

Virtually all have arranged to play in a holiday tournament, which suits the players and coaches.

Even when a team doesn't perform during holiday vacation from the classroom, the cagers, swimmers and wrestlers don't get a rest.

The coaches get their charges out, except on Christmas Day.

"You can't take a chance of laying the boys off for three or four days," one coach said. "It would spoil all the work you have been doing for weeks and weeks. Besides, as soon as the holiday is over, you have to have your players ready to plunge right back into league play."

In most holiday meets, teams play as many as four games, but are charged with only two against their regular-season allotment.

"It's great!" Bentley player said the other evening. "I'd rather play than practice."

Most of his playing, buddies agree.

inspiration for the team to turn aside the opposition on the way to the Rose Bowl.

"I never saw fellow like him," Elliott continued in other words of the coaching staff -- Wally Weber and Beanie Oosterhuis, each of whom recalled the many times that Jim, better known in those days as "Automatic Jim" furnished the

cessus.

"Look at his record," Wally went on, "and you'll wait a long time to see anybody match it."

"He kicked seven straight points after touchdown in the 1946 Rose Bowl for a Bowl record. And against Pitt that same year he booted seven out of 10 attempts and 52 out of 57 tries for the season.

"Over his career Jim kicked 67 points after touchdown in 100 games."

In an aside Wally added, "We had a high scoring team in those days and we had more opportunity than kickers get today."

"Wally is the man that day, telling stories, and taking pictures. You never would have known it, but he already taken it all through the amputation of his right leg."

"He was the life of the party and that's the picture of him most of us will remember."

WEBER, the Wolverine word-smith, was loud in praise of the talented kicker.

"Wally is one of the first in the long line of college football specialists we know them today," Wally pointed out.

"Wally had taken the Wolverines to Pasadena and con-

quered Stanford, 49-0, in the first Rose Bowl game.

It was this score that Fritz

Crisler and the 1947 team, rated one of the best in Michigan history, tried to match -- and

did it with Brieske's seven extra points.

THE COACHES also got to talking about the 1946 game against Ohio State when Michigan won, 58-6.

According to interpretation, with the score so lopsided late in the game and Michigan in scoring position, Crisler called to Brieske and said, "Jim, go in and try a field goal."

This was a surprise move, as there was no need for a field goal -- and no need to score at all. The play surprised Michigan as much as it did Ohio State.

With a wink, Oosterhuis interrupted, "As I understand it, Jim did it on his own."

"He had been up and down in the lineup to kick the field goal. Even Crisler was surprised."

"But the thing I'll always

remember," Brieske concluded, "was his visit here this spring. When I asked him how he was doing he turned to me and said, 'the cancer is in my lung now.'

"That takes courage."

AND SO, for a long time they'll be recalling stories of the courageous lad whose kicking enabled Michigan to win the national championship in 1947 and the Rose Bowl on January 1, 1948.

Automatic Jim has gone to rest, but his feats will live on.

At the time of his death he was the director of student activities at Stevenson High School in Livonia.

He leaves his widow, Ann; a son, James; and a daughter, Karen, along with two sisters and a brother.

Funeral services were held on Tuesday with burial in Holy Sepulchre Cemetery in Southfield.

"The thing I'll always

Seymour Elevated To Pistons' Coach

Promotion of Paul Seymour to head coach of the Detroit Pistons was announced Monday by General Manager Edwin E. Coli.

Seymour, who formerly guided the Syracuse Nationals, St. Louis Hawks and Baltimore Bullets in the National Basketball Association, replaces Donnis Butcher, coach since March 6, 1967.

Butcher will remain with the Pistons, returning to the job of basketball, a position he held before being named to lead the team.

Seymour, who has been Butcher's assistant since the start of the 1967-68 season, took over his new duties at a practice Tuesday at Cobo Arena and will handle the Pistons for the first time in a game Wednesday evening when they host the Baltimore Bullets at Cobo.

"We felt that we weren't getting the full potential out of our players this season," Coli said.

"This is where the Pro's are made."

St. Agatha Hits 102, 86 To Engineer Two Wins

Coach George Charnley has come up with a high-powered basketball team at St. Agatha.

At least, the first two games of the season would indicate as much.

St. Agatha soared past the

century mark in its opener to down Our Lady of Sorrows, 102-99, in overtime and then followed with an 88-77 victory over Wayne St. Mary's at the Catholic League divisional debut.

Jerry Miron already has 60 points to his credit. He drilled in 34 points against Sorrows and added 26 in the victory over St. Mary's.

The Sorrows-St. Agatha encounter was deadlocked at 90-90 after regulation time before Dave Charnley hit a surge in the extra time that produced seven straight points for St. Agatha.

Urban hit for 26 points and Chuck Costello 20 in the game while Tom Doyle tallied 25 in a losing cause.

ST. AGATHA came from behind in the final period to edge St. Mary's.

The Wayne team had led, 26-21, after one period, but fell with Urban making four baskets and Miron eight out of eight from the foul line.

Final four Spartans also were beaten.

Named as co-captains for 1968 by team members were Rich Saul, junior linebacker from Butler, Pa., and Frank Foreman, junior tight end from Louisville, Ky.

Dick Berlinski, senior fullback from Quinsigamond, was given the Dr. John H. Nauh Award for perseverance shown in efforts for the squad.

Eddy McLeod, senior center from Fairborn, O., received the player of the year. He was presented the Biggie Mum Award as the player contributing the most extra effort during the season and the Old Can Award as the player who contributes most in a humorous way to the team.

Kenneth Heft, senior defensive halfback from Birmingham, was given the Danziger Award as the player from the Detroit area who makes the most outstanding contribution to the team.

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Agatha pulled into a 46-41 half-time bulge.

But after St. Agatha moved ahead by 10 points-St. Mary's 52, Agatha 42--Costello came for the whiz.

Costello was tremendous in the rebounding department. He hauled down 23 during the game, averaging almost one grab per minute.

St. Agatha's tallest man stands 6-3. Three others are six feet, the rest under that.

"We have a lot of speed and some good shooters," Coach Charnley declares.

outburst by Miron, Inch had 19, Urban 13, Ron Blackmore 13 and Chuck Costello nine for the win.

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and see a gala fashion show featuring Mr. Engel's exciting '68-'69 women's skiwear collection. Join the fun. Bring friends. No tickets needed to our ski show in the East Court at Westland Center on Friday, December 6 at 7:30 p.m.

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