



ALL READY for season opener are: Racing Secretary Harry Peterson, Executive Manager John Carlo and Mutuels Manager Ernest Horvath of Northville Downs. But the track may be closed instead of opening Friday night because of an impasse in negotiations with the horsemens and the mutuels clerks. None of the groups had budgeted Wednesday morning and there was an indication that picket lines instead of customers would be ringing the plant in suburban Northville. The trio above are shown examining the new class enclosure for the ground level, that will keep patrons warm during those nasty early spring nights.

OBSERVING SPORTS

By George Maskin

YOU KNOW SPRING MUST BE HERE—OR AROUND THE CORNER:

When your wife starts yapping to do something about the dirt in the garage, the mess in the dogs' playpen, the lack of a hose to water the new lawn, and about her ever-crying need for some new clothes for the warm weather...

When the high school coeds stand around with their coats or jackets wide open, or maybe with no outer garments to cover their flimsy dresses, blouses and skirts...

When you run into broadcasters like Dave Diles, Ernie Harwell and Ray Lane, all back from Lakeland, Fla., where they've had their first peeks at the Tigers. (Non wants to talk pennant, but all agree they liked what they saw in the Tigers' fair).

When you get calls from various schools not to forget their annual sports banquets. You assure them you won't... and the first thing you go off, like for the Schoolcraft College fete. (Gentlemen, we apologize.)

When Dick Fredericks shows up at the weekly sports-casters' luncheons. He's around to promote the opening this week of the trotting season at Northville. When Northville starts, the horses will be moving to the Detroit Race Course before we know it.

SPRING HAS TO BE IN THE AIR:

When you sit down to work out the final averages of the Detroit Pistons. Anyway you figure the facts and figures, the Pistons still wound up the 1965-66 season last. But there's optimism—spelled Cazzie Russell—in the Pistons' future...

When Ron Cantera of the Red Wings announces the playoff tickets will go on sale this week at Olympia. They may have more seats at Olympia, but unless you line up early, you probably will be disappointed.

When high school coaches of baseball teams start lamenting over the fact they don't have a decent pitcher. Only one star moundman can make the difference whether a prep team has a great season or a lousy one.

When Son Richard, with his co-pilot Doug, begin making weekly trips to the Detroit Dragway and the Motor City Drag strip in their new bombshell sponsored by Barnett Pontiac in Dearborn.

We're not quite sure of anything about drag racing, excepting that thousands are flocking to the strips every week. It was all encouraging to get the word that Son Richard has developed "a real runner"—whatever that might mean.

SUMMER HAS TO BE NEAR, NOW THAT:

The high school fraternity has had its yearly fling up at East Lansing for the state basketball finals. This is the big weekend of the year for the coaches, principals, superintendents and their cohorts. Little wonder tickets go so fast for the finals and finals. They could tele-view right in Michigan State's Jonison Field House, and there'd still be a sellout.



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Observer Honor Stars

(Continued from Page 2B)

Comes next fall, Paul is set on where he will attend college. He has selected Wheaton in Illinois.

LELAND BJERKE, REDFORD UNION
Just missed hitting the 20-point mark for his final season's average. He scored 389 points to post an average of 19.999999, a school record.

In addition, Bjerke drilled in 40 points in one game for school record. But this 180-pound, 6-1 junior did more than score for Redford Union. According to Coach Milo Karhu, Bjerke was:

"Our best player, averaging six assists per game; our best all-around player and our best leader."

Bjerke spelled the big difference in keeping Redford Union in contention for Suburban Six League honors most of the season. Coach Karhu also had this to say about Bjerke:

"Leland did everything well. He was the kind of a boy who brought praise from the referees. That's saying something."

Bjerke was the first junior player to be named basketball captain at Redford Union.

MIKE WILSON, FARMINGTON

A three-year varsity player, Wilson made the Interlakes all-league team both as a junior and senior. He operated at guard for the Falcons, but this didn't affect his scoring.

Mike tossed in points at a 19-point average per



John Sandmann

game. He led his team as a playmaker and was a sound defensive player.

This is what Farmington coach Jack Quiggle had to say about Wilson:

"Mike was the rare athlete who could quickly make up for a mistake by getting the ball back either with a steal, interception or a good block."

"The boy has had a tremendous desire, plus a lot of heart. He was a co-captain on our team and also captain of the football team on which he was the star quarterback."

"Not too many boys like Mike could along at any high school in any five or even 10-year period. He's bound to be missed."

Sandmann One to Ask About Rule

For the second straight year, one of the two men in the striped shirts handling the Class "A" state championship game in the Michigan High School Association tournament Saturday in East Lansing had a familiar look for area scholastic sports fans.

It was none other than popular John Sandmann, well-known athletic director and coach at Plymouth High, who also has gained recognition as one of the state's most able basketball officials.

John was the varsity basketball coach at Plymouth High some 18 years ago when he first joined the faculty but gave it up after three or four years to become a fulltime athletic director and physical education instructor in addition to golf and crosscountry coach.

Then he joined the basketball officials' fraternity and gradually climbed the ladder until he now rates with the best in the state.

This is attested to through his assignment from the State Athletic Association in recent years and more particularly in the past two.

John has been a regular on the tournament officiating schedule for the past several years but last season he was selected as one of the crew that works through the district and regional meets to the quarter finals and then to the semifinals and championship

games in East Lansing.

A year ago, he was called upon to handle the "A" championship game.

This year, his schedule sent him to Eastern Michigan University for the quarterfinal battle between East Detroit and Mumfords—a game that was advertised as between the two top contenders for the title.

Then Sandmann went on to East Lansing where once again

he received the assignment to work as one of the two-man team in the finals.

Yes, that was John's striped shirt that helped handle one of the most thrilling championship "A" finals in several years.

And that's quite a boot for Plymouth and the Suburban Six League to have one of its members rated with the top page officials in the state.

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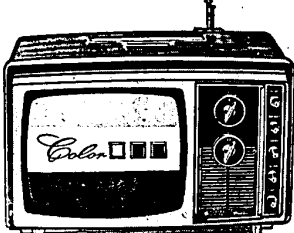
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