

George Smith observing sports

Everybody else has had his say about the Tigers, so why not this department? Our association with manager Mayo Smith wasn't much during the regular season... a few hellos... a few waves outside the clubhouse at Tiger Stadium.

We did get to talk to him a little more in spring training down in Lakeland and he impressed us as a hard-working, dedicated baseball man.

And he was! True, he made some mistakes. But who doesn't? He had his ideas about relief pitchers, riding one while he was hot. What's wrong with that kind of strategy? As long as the Tigers won, the Smith theory was terrific.

But when they didn't win Sunday night in the most important single game ever played in Detroit, well, Smith's way of doing things suddenly brought forth a flock of jeers... And criticism.

WHAT MANY SEEMED to forget all of a sudden was that if it hadn't been for the job turned in by Smith, maybe that one game wouldn't have meant anything. The Tigers might have been five or 10 or 15 games off the pace. Sure he said to us and everybody else down in Lakeland that the Tigers had a great shot at the pennant.

He qualified his remarks by adding: "If we don't suffer any bad injuries, illnesses and things like that." And when the season started, Smith didn't have Willie Horton around. Even when Willie returned, he never operated at full steam because of a bad foot.

Smith lifted the Tigers over that problem... and the stupid injury Al Kaline suffered when he poked his hand against a bat rack and fractured some bones. And the army pulling Lolich away throughout the summer... and the injury that kept Denny McLain idle much of the last month... and the mumps that turned Northrup from a consistent hitter into an "up and downer"... and the injury which sidelined Gates Brown most of the year.

Yes, and wasn't 1967 the year that Norm Cash did... so little? And Ray Oyler didn't hit a lick? And regular third baseman Don Wert was out for quite a stretch?

And, yet, it all boiled down to just that final game!

SOMEWHERE ALONG the way Mayo Smith had to do a bang-up job to get the Tigers where they were when you stop to consider all the above. Also the fact that the team had a weak-sister infield... problems in starting and relief pitching.

Maybe if the Tigers hadn't come within an eyelash of tying or winning the pennant, there would have been those who with calmer heads could have reflected and remarked: "Smith did a tremendous job of managing."

It also should be noted that the Tiger manager, "shot the wad" to try and win. They raided their Toledo farm and those who came up made valuable contributions. They made a deal for Eddie Mathews... and, oh, yes, didn't Mathews fall down the stairs in his Milwaukee home and miss several key games in the last month?



A CHILLER—horn player Tom Brown, 16, of Redford Union, came prepared for winter...luckily when Plymouth played last Friday at Redford Union. Plymouth suffered a chilly 14-7 defeat.

Age, Weight Rule League

Weight and age... These are the two most important factors in determining who can and who can't play in the Farmington's Lower League football program for boys. Yes, the league's rules do specify BOYS. No Girl may play on a team.

There are three divisions of play in Lower football named after a former area grid star. Boys play in varsity, junior varsity and pony competition.

TAKE THE AGE factors: Varsity—No boy may have reached his 15th birthday by Aug. 1 of the year in which he is playing. Junior Varsity—No boy may play if he's 11 years old by Aug. 1 and weighs more than 95 pounds; but if you weigh under 80 pounds, you can play at age 11, but not if you become 12.

Livonians Set Again On Wings

When the Detroit Red Wings start their 1967-68 season next Wednesday evening at Boston, two Livonians again will be playing leading roles in trying to lift the team back into the playoffs the Wings missed last season.

Collegians Up String In Soccer

The unbeaten ways of Schoolcraft in soccer continue. The collegians now have played 12 straight games without losing since the sport was adopted at Schoolcraft last fall. After an 8-0 record and national ranking in 1957, Schoolcraft rolls along with a mark of three wins and a tie this season.

Oakland University became Schoolcraft's latest victim Wednesday when blanked, 3-0. On Saturday, Schoolcraft was to go against Lorain College of Ohio, the only team that hasn't lost to Schoolcraft. The teams tied earlier in the season.

JOOP DOORN, Schoolcraft's All-American from The Netherlands, and Bahram Fahramand, a first-year exchange student from Iran, added to their honors in the 3-0 blanking of Oakland.

Each made one goal to lift his season's total to six. Doorn counted first for the winners. Then Doug Morrison fired in a shot to make it 2-0 by halftime.

Fahramand's tally came midway in the second half. After Saturday's game with Lorain, Schoolcraft will be idle until next Saturday when the collegians face the University of Windsor at 10:30 a.m.

SCHOOLCRAFT'S CROSS country team had its problems on Wednesday, losing to Henry Ford College of Dearborn, 23-32.

Pete Johnson of Ford was the individual winner, hitting the finish line in the three-mile race in 16 minutes and 44 seconds. Larry Buchheit of Schoolcraft was second, two seconds behind.

Third went to Joe Vitale of Schoolcraft. The barriers have a date Tuesday with Monroe Community College and the Oakland University freshman. Next Sunday they'll run against Concordia of Ann Arbor and Oakland Community College's Highland Lakes Branch at Highland Lakes.

Cheers For U-M Cheerleaders

ANN ARBOR -- A big yell is being echoed across the country for all University of Michigan alumni cheerleaders. They are being invited to the first annual Michigan Alumni Cheerleaders' Day for the homecoming game with Indiana on Saturday, Oct. 21. The idea originated with Ralph Watts Jr., co-captain of the 1956 Michigan cheerleader squad.

University of Michigan alumni cheerleaders can write Watts at 592 Bird, Birmingham, Mich. 48009.

Livonia vs. Farmington Collisions In Football

This shapes up as the week of "head-on" clashes for area high school football teams. More specifically, it's Livonia vs. Farmington.

On Friday afternoon, Stevenson's surprising young team invade Farmington with the kickoff slated for 3:30 p.m. Saturday morning at 10 o'clock, Franklin welcomes North Farmington.

Farmington High has an edge or two to settle in the game with Stevenson. The reason is that Stevenson's sister Livonia school, Bentley, clipped the Falcons in the season's opener. That was a non-leaguer.

The Farmington-Stevenson clash rates as "a must" for both teams if they're to stay in contention for honors in the Interlakes Conference.

AS FOR FRANKLIN vs. North Farmington, it could be labeled as "the game of the year" in the Northwest Suburban League. The general feeling is that these are the teams to beat for the crown.

Both have gotten off to good starts, giving indications that their collision at Franklin will spell a chance for either to seize undisputed leadership.

After the game Saturday, Franklin will have only Oak Park and John Glenn left in the league, while North Farmington must play Glen and Groves in its remaining loop tussles.

Bentley, meantime, tries to keep alive its Suburban Six League bid with an invasion of Allen Park on Friday night. The Falcons have pulled a surprise or two and could be tough for Bentley.

Plymouth will be home Friday to host Belleville. CLARENCEVILLE ALSO is in for a major assignment in Bloomfield Hills, a game to be played under the lights at Clarenceville.

New Award To Plum

Life has changed for Mill Plum, the Detroit Lions' No. 1 quarterback, who resides in Farmington Township. Despite the Lions' loss at St. Louis last Sunday, Plum was voted the Detroit Sports Broadcasters' Association's weekly award as "the player-of-the-week."

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