



## SPORTS...

By Eddie Ash

"FIFTH FLOOR! House furnishings—curtains, draperies—kitchenware!"

Roger Birtwell, a young man who writes sports for the New York Daily News, cocked his head. . . . The voice of the department store elevator operator had a familiar ring.

Birtwell looked closely at the tall, young, uniformed Negro. . . . Then he recognized him.

It was Johnny Woodruff—the Long John Woodruff who thrilled hundreds of thousands of sports fans at Randal's Island, at Berlin, at Tokyo, at Philadelphia—the lean, lank Long John Woodruff who came from last to first in the 1936 Olympic Games 800-meter championship.

BIRTWELL PROMPTLY made an appointment with the young man who came from Connellsburg, Pa., to the University of Pittsburgh, to New York University, there to pursue a sociology degree in graduate school. . . . They met later in a neat apartment on Edgewood Ave., on the fringe of Harlem, and Long John told his story.

"I'm studying sociology in the graduate school of N. Y. U. and running that elevator to pay my expenses," Woodruff explained.

"No, I haven't given up running." Long John guessed the question. "I work out several days a week on the New York U. track."

## Day Starts Early for Great Athlete

BIRTWELL IMAGINED that a young man going to graduate school and running the half mile wouldn't spend much time operating a department store elevator, but Long John said:

"You think not? Only from 6:30 in the morning until 4:30 in the afternoon, six days a week!"

Does Fritz Kreisler swing a pick and shovel? Does Lawrence Tibbett call trains in a railroad terminal?

No—but the fastest, longest-striding legs in the athletic world stand stiffly, protestingly, all day in the cramped confines of an elevator cage no longer or wider than one of Woodruff's copy-righted strides.

"I GET UP at 5 a. m." Pitt's only Olympic champion began to unfold his story. "For 15 minutes, I do stretching exercises to offset the effect of the elevator work on my legs. Then I take the subway downtown, about seven miles, and start work a 6:30 a. m."

"For three hours before the store opens, I half scrub women up and down, and other employees who come in early. I finish work at 4:30 p. m."

The three days a week, I go to classes from 6 until 10 p. m. On Mondays, Tuesdays and Sundays, I go out to Ohio Field for work-outs. Then I come home and study. Except for my workouts, I spend all day Sunday doing research work in the library, or writing here at home, I'm studying for a master's degree, and I have to write these."

## Grew Up in Pennsylvania Coal Fields

WHAT KIND of sociology does he study?

"Children's problems." Johnny explained. "Juvenile delinquency and prevention of crimes. I grew up in the coal fields of Pennsylvania, so I know there are a lot of kids who never had a chance."

"I supervised kids in their games and helped to keep them out of mischief at Centre Avenue Y. M. C. A. in Pittsburgh, when I was at Pitt."

Johnny told of his forebears—his grandparents as slaves in the Virginia tobacco fields, his parents born free in Virginia and moving to Connellsburg, his father working as a coal miner, his mother, a tall woman from whom he got his height and his great nine-and-a-half-foot stride, the longest in the legend of championship racing.

HE CRACKED a world's scholastic mile record while he was in Connellsburg High School.

He won the Olympic 800-meter championship between his freshman and sophomore years at Pitt.

He ran an 800-meter race in 1937 in 1:47.8, two seconds under the world's record, but officials found the track to be a few feet short of the full distance and the record didn't count.

Mr. Birtwell heard 1:47.8, then observed: "Wow! That's not running—that's broad jumping!"

## Golden Boy McCoy Faces Problems

CONNIE MACK will get back a neat chunk of the Benny McCoy investment during the spring exhibition games. . . . Baseball's Golden Boy is sure to receive a carload of publicity in ink and pictures just as soon as he dons a uniform.

Uncle Sam rubbed his hands after the Athletics shelled out a young fortune to the ex-Tiger, baseball's newest gate attraction.

The young bachelor will have to pay income tax on \$55,000 a year hence. . . . Not even Judge Landis can knock Mr. Whiskers out of the box when March 15 rolls around.

Golden Boy McCoy's problems are just beginning. . . . For instance, come spring and summer he will have to stand guard at second base in 22 games against the Yankees and hear the cannon shots whistle by his ear. . . . see the hits pin the rightfielder against the wall.

ST. LOUIS FLYERS of the American Hockey Association chalked up 17 consecutive home victories before the St. Paul Saints knocked 'em off the other night. . . . and last year the Saints stopped a Flyer string at 14.

The Flyers are well out in front in the A. H. A. race. . . . In that loop ties do not count in the points standing—just the victories at two per.

The Saints are running second, the Millers third and Kansas City's Greyhounds are not going as fast as their name indicates.

## Joe Williams Says—

NEW YORK, Jan. 31.—Connie Mack seems to think he struck a good deal for himself when he gave Benny McCoy a \$45,000 bonus and a two year contract at \$10,000 to play for his drab Athletics.

This should be sufficient. After all it was the old geezer's own dough and if he winds up with a dud no one else will be called on to share in the grief. There's an old saying that you can't rule a guy off for trying and this would seem to apply to the ancient Mr. McGillicuddy in the McCoy transaction.

Still, you'd be surprised how many baseball men think the old fellow made a bad deal. "Entirely too much dough," they say. Yet it should be kept in mind that at least 10 others were looking for the services of the young man who was taken away from the Detroit Tigers and made a free agent by Judge Landis because of certain irregularities in the original signing.

Some of the magnates who are criticizing Mr. McGillicuddy's business acumen undoubtedly are drawing a red herring across their own lack of daring and enterprise.

## Bad Deal?

But there is one magnate who subscribes to this criticism and his opinion is important though he has no interest in the acquisition of McCoy from the beginning. Had no place for him and made no attempt to compete in the bidding. This gentleman calls it a bad deal.

"It's bad from the point of view of straight business but it may be all right as a gesture," he said. "There comes a time when club owners must make gestures to show they are trying to do something to improve their teams. Possibly this is what Connie had in mind."

But the magnate wasn't so sure even about that. Listening to him you could see he was trying to be charitable. He didn't say it in so many words but he has the feeling that Connie has lost some of his old time sharpness as a dealer.

"There was the case of Bill Lillard, the San Francisco infielder," he pointed out. "A sports writer sold him to Connie in the lobby of a Cleveland hotel a year ago. Just said he was a great infielder and on this recommendation Connie bought him. Shelled out \$35,000. If my memory is right, Lillard was back in the minors before the season was over."

Well, it may be that Mr. McGillicuddy has become a soft touch for the Dodgers either, because they have presented the same defense—to tell us the only reason that quit bidding for McCoy is the fact that the young man insisted on playing second base.

We don't want the Giants—or the

## Capitals to Meet Lowly Ramblers Tonight

## Rain Clouds May Block Seabiscuit

Long-Idle Howard Horse May Be Taken Out Once Again.

ARCADIA, Cal., Jan. 31 (U. P.)—Clouds drifted over Santa Anita Park today, threatening rain and another delay in the comeback attempt of Charles S. Howard's Seabiscuit.

Trainer Tom Smith said he was anxious for Seabiscuit to run his first race in almost a year and that only a downpour would keep him out of the mile feature today. The forecast was for cloudy weather, probably with showers.

Bad weather and unfavorable track conditions already had caused Seabiscuit to declare out three times within a week, twice because of mud and once because he drew a bad post position.

Seabiscuit was assigned 124 pounds for today's race, the Anita Chiquita, heaviest impost in a field of six. The sturdy 7-year-old champion was spotting Heelyf, a horse which dead-heated with the Biscuit once in a mile race, 14 pounds. Heelyf has been working well and ran third in the New Year Handicap.

In four other entries, there seemed to be plenty of able competition for the long-idle Howard ace. They were M. T. Looff's Golden Gloves, 104; Valdine's Miss Viscount, 104; Circle S. Stable's Hyperion, 108, entry with Heelyf, and Millside Stable's Firenze, 103.

Howard today made a bid for the \$50,000 Santa Anita Derby by purchase of Midland, promising contender for the 3-year-old classic.

Terms of the purchase were not disclosed but the previous owners, Hawthorne Stable, reportedly rejected an offer of \$15,000. A bay son of Mio d'Arezzo, Midland won an impressive mile run Saturday.

## Heavy Glover



Henry Freeman, Senate Avenue Y. M. C. A. boxer, is entered in the Times-Legion Golden Gloves tournament and hopes to knock off the championship in the heavyweight open class. He's a clever leather pusher and Heelyf.

He is to take high-grade talent to beat him.

The third Times-Legion show is to be held at the Armory Friday night and 25 to 30 bouts are to be staged with action starting at 7:30. Reserved seat tickets are at \$1.00. General admission is 50 cents, with ducats available on Friday evening at the Armory box office.

## Bromwich And Quist In Army

U. S. Decides Challenge to Aussies Wouldn't Be Proper Now.

By LESLIE AVERY  
United Press Staff Correspondent

NEW YORK, Jan. 31.—It would be something less than cricket to fling a bold Davis Cup challenge at a nation in the throes of war, so the United States will pass up the midnight deadline and give Australia ample opportunity to rehabilitate her tennis forces before challenging for the big international trophy again.

Both John Bromwich and Adrian Quist, the conquering Anzacs who lifted the Davis trophy for the United States and sailed back "down under" with it a year ago, already have answered the call to colors and the unwritten laws of sportsmanship preclude the bare suggestion that Australia should be asked to defend the trophy with her depleted ranks.

Under the rules governing Davis Cup competition, however, no provision is made for war, and the United States or any other nation is at liberty to challenge.

**It Won't Be Sporting'**

Holcombe Ward, president of the U. S. Lawn Tennis Association, announced that the United States not only would pass up the challenge this year but would give the Australians at least a year or two after the war ends to restore her tennis team to full strength.

"It would not be a sporting proposition for us to do otherwise," Ward said. "The war is Europe and elsewhere in the world probably will result in shelving the competition until peaceful, happier times."

"The leading Australian players are known to be doing war duty. Any nation that might decide to ignore the war conditions would be strictly within its right by filing a challenge, but according to the information we have here, none has done so."

Coincidentally, Australia won the cup from the United States in 1914 and held it four years without challenge during the World War. Tony Wilding, one of the Australian stars who downed the United States 3-2 in that series, marched off to war and was killed in action. Despite the loss, Australia successfully defended the Cup against Great Britain in 1919, and the United States team, led by Bill Tilden and Bill Johnston, won it back in 1920.

Challenger Reports Spiked

If the present war hinders development of young Australian players or lasts so long that its established stars go stale, this country will wait, as it did in 1918, until the Aussies can put a strong squad in defense of the cup.

"We just wouldn't feel very sporting," one of the flannel pants of officials explained, "to challenge a nation that had been at war for any length of time. While our players were being developed, theirs would have been busy with war occupations. Our future policy with regard to challenging for the cup will depend upon how long, and how serious this war is."

The same official doubted reports that one or more of the Latin American countries contemplated last minute challenges, but added "even if they do they will still be defeated. Australia could field a team of young players—under age—who could beat any but the most powerful tennis nations, such as Germany, France or England, and they are all in the fight. Italy might be the exception, but I understand that Italy, like the United States, does not desire to play anything but Australia's No. 1 team."

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The annual Hoosier Athletic Club swimming championship meet will be held at the club pool Saturday night.

Events will include the 100-yard breaststroke for men, 100-yard backstroke for women and the 100-yard backstroke for girls.

In addition to the club championship meet, the H. A. C. junior boys will meet the Vincennes Y. M. C. A. junior boys. Swimming for H. A. C. will be Buddy Ratcliffe, Warney Bogard, Howard Smothers, Bob Allen, Bob Brogan, Clarence Caldwell, Sidney Ratcliffe, and Robert Hart.

The first event will get under way at 7:30 p. m. with Flora Kinder, H. A. C. coach. More than 100 club members and their guests are expected to attend the meet.

Action is planned in all 10 classes, with preliminaries at 9:30 and the championship series at 2 p. m.

Among top performers will be Ralph Burnuff and Robert Bader of Bloomington, Bill Owen and Walter Loudon of Bedford, Bromington of Rushville, Preeda of Ben Davis, Geiger and Higgins of Southport and Bayer, Mitchell and Bundy of Muncie.

The Giants explain that they might have topped all bidders if McCoy hadn't insisted on playing second base. Their manager, whose name escapes me at the moment, called attention to the fact that he had just paid out good money for Nick Witek, a second baseman, from the Yankees this year.

All of which is true enough and having seen both McCoy and Witek perform, your correspondent feels disposed to make the rash and very likely characteristically cock-eyed statement that McCoy can't carry Witek's glove as a second baseman.

In short, it's our opinion the Giants made a fine deal in getting Witek.

But let's discuss the reason the Giants gave for withdrawing from the competition for McCoy. It seems the young man insisted on picking his own spot in the lineup, second base. The Giants' manager said he had been around a long time and this was the first time he ever heard of a ball playing making such a demand.

It's Unusual, Sure

Take this fellow Bronko Nagurka. Pouf! Wesslers

commentary on the laddo whose brute savagery has carried him to the heavyweight championship of the world. Well, at least, Bronko is recognized as a champ by the National Wrestling Association.

Yup, yup. Nagurka is still a titleholder after winning last night's Paralympic Fund benefit "I strangle you and you strangle me," from Dick (Texas Tornado) Raines at the National Guard Armory.

Trains run on schedule, you know. Planes fly on schedule. And wrestling champions win on base. But that's beside the point.

## Caps Are Waiting for You, Max!



This star-spangled gentleman on skates is Max Bennett, forward for the Syracuse Stars. The Stars will be guests of our Indianapolis hockey boys tomorrow, although it's improbable the Capitals will treat them as such. The two teams last met Jan. 14 at Syracuse, when the Stars hung one on the Hoosiers, 8-3. Mr. Bennett had a lot to do with that victory, so you can figure for yourself what kind of reception he's going to get.

## Bowling

Ed Gaalema, City League pinman at Pritchett's, leads the bowling class today with a 695.

Rolling games of 235, 233 and 227.

Ed paced the Dr. Paul Schmidt team to team honors. And in that he was given some good assistance by Ray Schonecker and Paul Moore, who got 672 and 661, respectively.

The Schmidt was high with 3206.

The 600s:

Ed Gaalema, City League, Power & Light . . . . .

D. Ahern, Pennsylvania . . . . .

Bill Branson, Power & Light . . . . .

Faver, Parkway No. 2 . . . . .

Paul Moore, City . . . . .

Jack Wilters, City . . . . .

Lewis, Pennsylvania . . . . .

Voelz, Pennsylvania . . . . .

Bob Shaw, Parkway No. 2 . . . . .