

by  
EDDIE ASH

A BASEBALL figure oldtime Indianapolis fans never will forget was Shorty Birch, the little man with the big cigar and the big megaphone . . . Shorty was his own radio and public address system.

He was the Indians' announcer at old Washington Park . . . Shorty also was the ball club's ballyhoo man . . . On weekdays when the team was at home, Birch mounted a horse, which was not too far away from the glue factory, and zig-zagged through the downtown district shouting through his megaphone all about the ball game scheduled for the afternoon . . . Shorty used the noon hour for his ride back and forth on Washington St., in order to catch the fans out for lunch . . . At the park, Birch announced the batteries and he had the proper voice for it . . . He even made it easy for the hard of hearing to catch the names of the pitchers and catchers.

Shorty took great pride in his work and would trade jobs with nobody . . . He got in on the huddles between umpires and managers just before game time and that was really something in his life . . . Also, any other announcements to be made, were passed down to Shorty . . . But one day he thought the world had tumbled in and the situation was hard to take for the popular little man.

BUT ON this particular day, Birch was frustrated . . . When Shorty wasn't looking, the ball players stuffed an orange in his megaphone just before battery announcement time arrived.

So Shorty got in good voice, planted himself in the proper stance, upped with the megaphone and let go with "Attention, please" . . . But there was no sound . . . The orange cut it off . . . A giggle rippled through the crowd and it became a roar when Birch reached into the megaphone and yanked out the fruit.

When the Indians won the pennant in 1928 and shoved off for Rochester, N. Y., to begin the Little World Series, Shorty was made a member of the party as guest of the Indians . . . Making a long trip with the team, especially to a Little World Series, was the greatest thing that ever happened in Birch's life and all the players saw to it that he had a good time.

BUT SHORTY didn't forget his megaphone . . . Somehow he figured he'd find a way to use it despite the fact he was headed for somebody else's home grounds.

Rochester had its own Shorty Birch . . . That didn't stop the Indians' Shorty . . . He went to the park early on the day of the first game and made the acquaintance of Rochester's megaphone hustler to whom he made a proposition.

"Let's split the announcement of the batteries," suggested Shorty. "You announce the Rochester battery and I'll announce the Indianapolis battery" . . . The Rochester lad was reluctant to share his "key duties," but finally consented, and Shorty Birch was on top of the world again even away from home.

Thirty-eight years ago (1913-14) the Chicago White Sox and the New York Giants made a world tour and the exhibitions of America's national pastime were well received everywhere . . . A second global tour is in the formative stage for 1953-54 . . . It is said the Cleveland Indians and the St. Louis Browns are interested in the project.

OWNERS OF the Dallas professional football team (nee New York Yankees) are swinging glittering gold braided lassos at every athlete sporting a Texas drawl, past and present, if he can still plunge, punt, pass or run . . . Whattaman Art (The Great) Shires, was born too soon to rate a stake in the new gold mine . . . Going big is a Texas custom . . . Dutch Meyer, Texas Christian football coach, is driving a Cadillac this winter, a gift from TCU lettermen and others . . . The fact that Meyer's Frogs were bumped off by Kentucky in the Cotton Bowl classic made no difference.

## Good Season Promise Gets Mickey Kisses

By United Press

GROSSINGER, N. Y., Jan. 22—Skinny Mickey McDermott of the Red Sox and his blue-eyed bride traded kisses and curve balls today in one of the most bizarre "baseball honeymoons" on record.

Although he pitches for a living, the gangling, goosenecked Boston southpaw has been doing most of the catching since his marriage six days ago.

"GIMME A kiss," he said to his bride over the breakfast table. "Uh-uh," replied the honey-haired brand new Mrs. McDermott, "not until you promise to win 15 games this year."

"Fifteen games! You're reeling off numbers like a stock broker. Gimme a break, will you, honey?"

"You heard me. No promise, no kiss."

"Oh, alright. I promise," pouted Mickey, puckering his lips.

There was a momentary pause while the former Barbara Riley tenderly kissed her lanky husband.

"WOW!" boomed the 23-year-old McDermott, "a couple more like that and I'll win 20."

"Whaddya think of this wife of mine? She didn't know much baseball to begin with, but after being married only a few days, she makes me promise to have a good year before she'll kiss me again."

The six-foot, three-inch left-hander, who weighs only 170 pounds and says he has been "eating everything in sight" at the Grossinger Country Club is an effort to put on some weight, thinks the added responsibility of being "a family man" will make him a better pitcher for Boston.

His pretty wife, it turns out, put I got her trained already."

# Olymps Roll Out Royal Welcome Mat

## Local Pro Cagers Seek 13th Straight at Home

By FRANK ANDERSON

COACH HERM Schaefer's pre-game talk to the Olymps tonight will probably follow this line:

"Remember where you are, not where you've been."

If the Olymps heed those words they'll beat Rochester for their 13th straight Butler Fieldhouse victory. Those interested can drop in at 8:30 and see what's in a word.

Home is a place there's no place like. And the Olymps will agree. If it weren't for the tonic of the Fieldhouse floor they would be digging a nice deep hole in the Western Division of the National Basketball Association.

MAKING LIKE a politician we say "Look at the record." The Olymps have won 13, lost 3 at home for a happy \$13 reading. The road is something else, showing only six wins in 22 tries for a puny .273.

With three losses over the weekend the road losing streak has reached eight games. So it's no wonder the boys are glad to be home.

So it seems that the only way to get well is a diet of home cooking. And therein lies Herm's material for a pep-talk. He'll mention pride, regard for the Fieldhouse fans and hustle. He might also mention that fourth-place Ft. Wayne is creeping up faster than tax-paying time. If the third-place (19-19) Olymps are wise, they'll give a listen.

ROCHESTER is rugged. It's been running one-two with the Minneapolis Lakers for first in the West most of the season. But the Royals haven't been too much trouble for the Olymps. They have been pressed to hold a 3-2 advantage over the locals. In the single game played here, the Olymps won in a double overtime.

The Royals have the league's seventh, ninth and 14th best scorers, in Bob (15.7) Davies, Bobby (15.1) Wanzer and Arnie, (13.5) Risen. Wanzer also is tops in free-throw accuracy (90.7). Davies ranks third in assists and Risen third in rebounds.

Incidentally, the Royals connect on 38.5 per cent of all shots from the field. True, the figures cited are cold, but they just might put warmth in the Olymp effort.

Anyway, Schaefer hopes so.

All the Olymps have to do is remember they're home and not on the road. It's that simple. Or is it?

"GOB" HELP us if the gamblers and fixers—even local gamblers and fixers—ever get to our high school boys," the coach declared.

He warned that a way to "ruin" high school sports is to hire a "big time" coach who can win.

If the downtown quarterbacks succeed in subsidizing your team, it's just too bad," he continued.

ALLEN LASHED out at fathers of athletes who try to sell their graduating sons to a college without considering its scholastic rating or academic advantages.

He warned against "betting, bribery, boozing, box-office and big time" as temptations to be put aside if high schools and high school boys are to be kept honest and above reproach.

## Indiana Jolts Iowa Out of Big 10 Lead

By United Press

Indiana rated an assist today for Illinois' undisputed hold on first place in the Big Ten basketball race.

The Hoosiers, who lost their pre-season United Press ranking of fourth place after three conference losses, smacked the fourth rated Hawkeyes last night at Bloomington, 82 to 69.

IT WAS the first defeat in 13 games this season for Iowa, and it left the Hawkeyes in second place in the Big Ten with a five and one record compared to four and zero for Illinois, idly in conference play since Jan. 14 and not scheduled to play again until 28 against Purdue at Champaign, Ill.

The game was a thriller until big Charley Darling, Iowa's 6-8 center, fouled out with 4:30 to go. With classy Chuck out, Indiana controlled the rebounds to forge into the game's only commanding lead.

Darling, the Big Ten's leading scorer, hooked in 31 points, and Iowa refused to substitute until he fouled out. His amazing hook and pivot shots were by far the outstanding features of the game. His rival in the pivot slot, 6-9 Freshman Don Schlundt topped the Hoosier scoring with 22 points.

THE GAME was tied a dozen times and the lead changed hands 13 times. At no time in the game, until the very finish, did either team enjoy more than a six-point advantage as the battle saw-sawed furiously.

The first period ended 18 to 18 and five quick baskets by Sammie Miranda gave Indiana a 39-35 half-time lead. But Iowa, led by Darling, McKinley Davis and Bob Clinton, roared back as the nip-and-tuck battle continued.

Davis, although bothered with four personal fouls in the second half, netted 19 points for the Hawkeyes, while Bobby Leonard and Bobby Masters contributed

Northwestern downed Michigan, 59 to 57, as Larry Dellefield caged 17 markers. Jim Skala and Don Eddy each hit 14 for Michigan, in last place in the conference. Bob Jewell of Indiana's scored 9 for the Wolverines.

Michigan State dropped Wisconsin, 50 to 36, with Gordon Stauffer netting 13 while Paul Morrow connected for 14 for the Badgers.

Center Paul Ebert was the Buckeye ace with 27 points while Bob Gelle dropped 15 for Minnesota.

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