

Sports Beat



BY
BILL JOHNSON

TELLING IT LIKE IT IS...

If half of the supporters of professional baseball, especially those who are critical of Charley Finley had to pay the huge salaries of the Oakland players, they would no doubt be more understanding of his action...And if the other half would stop purchasing tickets to the big league games, professional athletes and the owners would soon get the message.

The point I'm trying to make is that professional sports-as we know it today-is pricing itself out of business. It is doing so not necessarily because of the high salaried players or the tight purse string of management, but mainly because of the greedy agents who supposedly represent the athletes.

Anyone for a long Sunday afternoon with the Hopalong or the Long Ranger reruns!

Talk about the big one that got away. Consider the case of Clarence "Bighouse" Gaines, popular athletic director and head basketball coach and top recruiter at Winston-Salem State. Bighouse's son, Clarence Jr., recently signed a football grant with William And Mary.

Lee Elder has apparently encountered some second thoughts about suing the PGA and others. He has withdrawn the \$5 million suit. This writer would like to be among the first to publicly congratulate Jimmy Stevens, the new athletic director at North Carolina Central University.

But you didn't know that the voice calling the action -- or the lack of action -- Friday night between Muhammad Ali and wrestler Antonio Inoki belongs to Dr. Frank Bannister, well-known figure around the CIAA and the MEAC. Frank is the sports director for the National Black Network.

If you dig in the NFL record books, you'll discover that O.J. Simpson leads the active AFC players with a commendable 30 yard kickoff return average. You'll also find that the Juice, who says he will not return to the Buffalo Bills, has not runback a kickoff in three years.

Followers of CIAA basketball in general and the surprising Saint Paul's Tigers in particular are going to miss the sensational freshman Doug Collins on the courts this winter. Collins has withdrawn from the Lawrenceville, Va. school and will sign shortly with Augusta College in his hometown.

Now that Len Wilkens has been added to the unemployment rolls there are only two Black head coaches remaining in the NBA - Bill Russell of the Seattle SuperSonics and Al Attles of the Golden State Warriors. K.C. Jones, who was fired at the end of the season by the Washington Bullets, is assisting North Carolina coach Dean Smith with the U.S. Olympic basketball team.

John Marshall, one-time J.C. Smith assistant and former head football coach at Livingstone, has completed his most successful recruiting campaign since becoming the head football coach at Virginia State College. John's selection includes 28 players, mostly from the state of Virginia, to play football at VSC this fall.

In spite of that popular tooth paste commercial on TV, the average high school student has 10 cavities in his mouth.

If you're on the blackness kick, you ought to know that in the last five years three Black men have reached the 3,000-hit mark in big league baseball. They are Willie Mays, Hank Aaron and the late Roberto Clemente.

Mike Pressley, 6-8 forward from Eau Claire High in Columbia, S.C., will take his 21-point and 16-rebound averages to Howard University next winter. The Bison have also signed Mike Hollingsworth from East Forsyth High in Winston-Salem. An All-City choice the past two seasons, Hollingsworth is a 20-point a game shooter.



LIVINGSTONE COACH FLETCHER JONES

...With prize recruit Ronnie Wood

Livingstone Signs Prize

Prep Halfback Ronnie Wood

SALISBURY - Ronnie Wood, Salisbury High's outstanding defensive halfback, has signed a football grant - in - aid with Livingstone College's Fighting Bears.

Wood, who stands six feet

and weighs 160 pounds, won All-Rowan County and All-South Piedmont Conference for the past two years.

"He's the best defensive back I saw in the Piedmont area," said coach Baxter Hol-

North-South Stars Downs East-West

The North-South All-Stars rushed three runs home in the bottom of the ninth to edge the East-West All-Stars, 7-6, in the first annual Triple County Semi-Pro Baseball League All-Star Baseball game Sunday afternoon.

An overflow crowd at Harding High School's athletic field watch Manager Walter "Dub" Cuthbertson's squad produce a trio of tallies on three base hits, a walk and a fielder's choice.

Pinchhitter Ira Simpson of the Hawks started the rout with a single and Jerry Alexander of Hoskins pour oil on the flame with a base on balls.

Robert Davis of the Charlotte Hawks promptly singled to left field, scoring two runs and trying the score at 6 apiece. Smith also set the stage for Bobby Ashbrook's sharp single up the middle for the winning marker.

Fossie Davis of the Red Birds was the winning pitcher and Londell McClary of the Morris Field Rangers was the loser.

In addition to being the game's most outstanding performer with a long home run and two singles in five at bats, Ashbrook was named the game's most valuable player.

man after signing the Hornet star. "He can be a starter for us next season."

Holman, whose Bears have ranked among the best in the nation's small college ranks on defense for the past three years, said Livingstone will lose four defensive backs by graduation. They are Lawrence McDuffie, Ronald McCleave, Kenny Pearson and Garcia Gilmore.

"We feel Wood is going to help us at a deep defensive position," Holman pointed out. "There's a job open there, and we think he can do it for us. We also think Dave Robertson of East Rowan who recently signed with the Bears will help us a lot at a position in the secondary."

Wood also played basketball for the Hornets. He is the son of Mrs. Jean Wood of 1002 Short Street. His father is deceased.

Current NCAA Setup

MEAC, SWAC Hail Higher Status

Of the 53 predominantly Black colleges playing football, 14 have made the step to higher status in the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA). Of that number, 12 hail from what have become considered the two toughest Black football conferences - the Southwest Athletic (SWAC) and the Mid-Eastern Athletic (MEAC).

Grambling State University (10-1), Jackson State University (7-3), Southern University (8-3), Alcorn State University (6-3-1), Mississippi Valley State University (6-4), Texas Southern University (4-6), and Prairie View A-M College (3-7) will represent the SWAC

in the new NCAA Division 1A classification while South Carolina State College (8-1-1), North Carolina A&T State University (8-3), Howard University (8-3), North Carolina Central University (5-4-1), and Morgan State University (4-6) will be members from the MEAC (last year's team records are listed in parentheses).

Under the current NCAA setup, colleges are classified into three divisions according to their competitive strengths. Division I includes top powers like UCLA and Michigan while Division II included most MEAC and SWAC teams. The smaller programs fall into Division III. But under authorization to restructure this alignment for the 1977 season, the NCAA's Classification Committee is implementing the four-division concept which will lower former Division I teams like those in the Ivy League to 1A while 25 former Division II teams among them the 14 Black colleges, will be elevated to the higher status.

"Currently there are 138 members in Division I, 131 in Division II and 197 in Division III," said Louis A. Myers, committee chairman and faculty representative for athletics at the University of Ari-

zona. "Under the new implementation 97 will be in Division I, 91 in Division 1A, 82 in Division II and 196 in Division III."

upon hearing the decision. "We're playing in Division I in other sports and this could move us closer to a total Division I program in the future." Miles was one of the men who helped organize the MEAC six years ago and since has been the spokesman for Division I status in the league.

Douglas Porter, presently head football coach of the Howard Bison and former assistant head coach to Eddie Robinson at Grambling, feels that the change puts his program in a better position if Howard gives him the tools necessary to compete in 1A.

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