

Heel Prints...

By Owen Davis

Stepin Fetchit, who has entertained so long he carries his birth certificate to prove he's the same person who made films with little Shirley Temple, was in Louisville last weekend, contemplating everything from Black Power to the Creation of mankind.

Fetchit wasn't in town to watch the NCAA tournament. He was picking up a buck here and there at a nightclub and planning strategy for a two million dollar law suit he will soon file.

But between acts Fetchit, named Lincoln Monroe Perry when born in Key West, Fla., 77 years ago, munched a few peanuts and reminisced about the days when he was tight with the first crowd.

"If The Champ quits messing with the draft, he'll be back," said the comedian, who for more than 50 years has performed in everything from plantation road shows to Hollywood films.

"The Champ is the greatest of all time. Nobody can hit him." Fetchit should know, because he was intimate with many of the old boxers, from former heavyweight king Jack Johnson to The Champ years later.

And The Champ showed Monday that not even the federal government can land a solid punch against his unmarked chin.

Muhammed Ali, once known as Cassius Clay, got a reprieve from the Supreme Court which eventually may put him back in the ring.

Ali's conviction for draft evasion may be overturned in lower court, because evidence against him is possibly inadmissible.

If so, fight promoters everywhere would like to have Ali throwing his left before huge crowds in September. His requiem would put pizzazz in a sport which has been slowly succumbing since his departure.

Ali is to boxing what a shepherd is to his flock. When he isn't around, the sheep stray.

And when The Champ isn't fighting, many fans go elsewhere to get their kicks.

Most folks don't exactly adore Ali. The majority despise him, but at the same time secretly envy his feats.

Who else could taunt Sonny Liston, the mean, old Bear with the suffocating stare, and not look like a bull at the slaughterhouse afterwards? Who else besides Ali could tell the faithful he doesn't care for boxing, and then go out and kayo every challenger with 10 knuckles from London to Lewistown, Maine?

The government, which has more power than 50 Joe Louis rights to the nose, hasn't even floored him.

He has wobbled slightly, and for awhile he appeared a goner, but Ali has more buoyancy than an ocean liner in a lake.

"That's why he's so good," said Fetchit. "When someone misses him, that's just like he has thrown a punch himself. When they start missing and missing and missing, they can't stand it. That sets them up for the knockout."

And Ali dodges once left to miss Uncle Sam and again right when a spectator aims a bottle at his head.

Thousands pay good money just to jeer him. He isn't the typical American hero. Few say, "I would like my boy to grow up like Cassius Clay."

But Ali smiles through it all. He figures Allah is on his side anyway, so there isn't much that can harm him.

The Muslims are another reason Ali is not revered as most great fighters are, as Jack Dempsey, Joe Louis, Henry Armstrong or Rocky Marciano were.

"Since the Muslims got hold of him, he hasn't been the same," said Fetchit. "He's scared of them now."

But Ali continues to preach Islam religion, and a lot of fans are uneasy about that. They feel threatened.

Without him, however, the fans won't show up at all. Few will go to see Jimmy Ellis practice footwork in a championship fight with only scattered punches thrown. Joe Frazier is a slugger, which the crowds love, but he lacks the aura of Ali.

Jerry Quarry, the Bellflower Bomber, has bombed out in the big ones.

Wherever you start, you always get back to Ali. His record is perfect, but more importantly he has a following.

Whether he hears huzzahs or the ugly taunts, which fight crowds can hurl best, is immaterial.

Because if boxing is to ever fill the outdoor stadiums again, where night fighting during the summer was once a tradition, Muhammed Ali must return.

He will smile, laugh, fake dodging the haymaker and then chortle, "Ain't I the greatest?"



...Corn Smashes Return as He and Rawlings Win First Court Doubles.

Netters Blank MSU

By RUSTY CARTER
DTH Sports Writer

A change in weather brought an even better change in Coach Don Skakle's netters Friday afternoon as they blanked the Michigan State visitors 9-0.

Playing between rains for the first part of the season and in 40 degree weather earlier this week, the UNC tennis team shined yesterday when the sun finally warmed the courts.

The netters have scored wins over Tennessee and Kent State and downed Williams College twice on route to their perfect record. The opening match with Ohio University and another with Bucknell were cancelled due to rain.

None of the singles matches went past two sets and only one of the doubles was pushed into the final set.

The Tar Heels were in complete command and finished the entire match in less than three hours. The most games won by a Spartan were five.

Lee Langstroth, leading UNC in the number one court, clipped Michigan's Tom Geay 6-2 and 7-5.

Joe Dorn followed suit in

the second position with a quick 6-1, 6-1 win over John Good.

Fred Rawlings finished off Andy Vollweiler 6-2, 6-1 as did Jimmy Corn over Michigan's number four man John Bufe.

Bill Shivar won his fifth spot over Rick Raines 6-2, 6-4, and Alan Lassiter scored two love sets over Wes Ichesco for a win in the sixth singles competition.

Rawlings and Corn, undefeated in number two doubles competition, moved to the number one position against Michigan State and won in the only three set match.

They scored a 6-2 in the first set, fell 6-0 in the second, but recovered to win the match with a 6-4 final set.

Langstroth and Doug Crawford edged Vollweiler and Bufe 6-4, 6-4 to win the number two doubles and Dorn and Robert Tate won the third over Raines and Mitchell Dane 6-0, 6-1.

The UNC netters play their fourth match in four days when they face the Toledo team at 2:00 this afternoon.

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THE BELL DROUGHT IS OVER

Diamond Men Host Virginia Tech

By OWEN DAVIS
DTH Sports Writer

Larry Kiser, a sophomore lefthander with the physique of a defensive tackle, will have retaliation in mind this afternoon when he starts on the mound here against Virginia Tech.

Kiser, a 6-4, 220-pounder, took his only loss last season to the Gobblers, and this is his first opportunity to pay them back.

Game time is 3 o'clock at the UNC diamond.

The Carolina pitcher is making his second start of the season. His first against Yale lasted only three innings, and

he gave up two runs, three walks and struck out three.

He has no won-loss record. "We'll let Kiser go as long as he can," said Coach Walter Rabb. "I hope he can go all the way."

Previously Rabb has limited his hurlers to three or four innings, since it is early in the season.

"We can let our pitchers throw longer now," he said. "The purpose of the early games is to see all the pitchers work, and we'll still do that some for another week."

The Tar Heels are currently 3-1 while VPI is 6-2.

Last year the teams split in

their two games, UNC winning 5-2 at home and losing 5-0 in Blacksburg.

"They've got a veteran ball club," said Rabb. Last season they were one of the better independent teams in the Southeast and were in consideration for the NCAA regional tournament in Gastonia.

"They've got some good pitchers and hit well, too." VPI is hitting a strong .295 as a team.

After four games, Carolina is hitting better than in past seasons, averaging nearly 10 hits a game.

"The boys are moving the ball pretty well," said Rabb, "but they are not hitting as aggressively as I would like with men on base. We're leaving too many men on."

"I think some are a little too anxious and are over swinging, but that will eventually iron itself out."

Freshman Mike Roberts is the leading batsman with a .500 average. Other starters hitting .300 or better are centerfielder Clem Medley (.333) and first baseman Eddie Hill

Gridders Hold Open Scrimmage Saturday

CHAPEL HILL, N.C.—Four newcomers drew top praise from Coach Bill Dooley at mid-week as the North Carolina Tar Heels capped one-fourth of their spirited spring football practice.

The Gridders will hold a special open scrimmage this afternoon at 2:00 o'clock in Kenan Stadium.

Defensive lineman Bud Grissom of Elkin, N.C., linebacker John Bunting of Silver Springs, Md., defensive back Jim Webster of Winston-Salem, N.C., and offensive back Geof Hamlin of Ottawa, Canada, were hailed for their fine performances so far. All are rising sophomores.

"I've been very well pleased with the attitude and effort of the entire squad," Dooley said. "We're an extremely green football team, so we're going to have to continue to get outstanding effort, especially from the young players, in order to make strides this spring."

Dooley also singled out three veterans for special praise. They are tight end Tony Blanchard of Falls Church, Va., halfback Saulis Zemaitis of Hamilton, Ont., and linebacker Bob Hanna of McKeesport, Pa.

The Tar Heels have only seven seniors on their entire roster. But Dooley predicts this will be his most talented and exciting Carolina team.

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