

# SPORTS

## Sordid, Inner View

# Athletes Write About Drugs

BY BARRY COOPER

It is with mixed feelings that we present a sordid, inner view of cocaine abuse, for by doing so we may actually help line the pockets of three ex-jocks, each of them well known, each a recovering junkie, each now shamelessly seeking to turn years of snorting and free-basing into a six-figure windfall.

Mercury Morris, the former Miami Dolphins' star, former basketball great Spencer Haywood and one-time pitching sensation Steve Howe all either have tell-all books on the market or are awaiting their publication. That is a bit of news that merits being told. But now, a tip: Save your money, for theirs is the same old story — big-time athlete falls prey to drugs, nearly loses life perhaps his family. Finally rights himself, maybe is born again, and now wants to tell the world, by way of a \$19.95 or so hardback, that it's best just to say no.

Only Morris' story, *Against The Grain*, is off the press; Howe claims to be readying *Between The Lines* and Haywood says he is finishing *Standing Up For Something Or Fall For Anything*.

No matter whether their tales have been bound and shipped or still are being proofed, all three men are working up advance publicity. Examples are Haywood's admission that he and goons from Detroit, between long pulls on free-base pipes, plotted to kill former Lakers Coach Paul Westhead; Howe's story of how an innocent, weekend excursion to Las Vegas turned into a five-day, cocaine-induced "blackout" and Morris' blow-by-blow account of how the Miami police, in a classic bit of undercover work, legally lured Morris into a cocaine conspiracy that netted Morris a 20-year prison

sentence from which he since has been freed.

To trumpet their stories, Howe, Morris and Haywood recently appeared on the morning talk show "Geraldo." They told all you need to know about their forthcoming works.

Said Morris: "It sounds crazy, but a guy comes to your house to a guy who is free-basing his brains out and he says, 'Hey, listen, I'll give you two ounces of cocaine and \$2,000 if you will introduce me to somebody that has some coke.' But I would later find out that this guy was sent to me by the police. It sounds like a Murder She Wrote plot, but my gardener set me up."

More chilling is Haywood's admission, initially made to *People* magazine, that he wanted Westhead dead.

In Haywood's opinion, Westhead had committed an unpardonable sin: alerted to Haywood's snorting, he kicked Haywood off the Lakers squad in 1980, only three games before LA was to win the NBA title.

Haywood also said he was often so high during games that he had to rub football "stick 'em" on his fingers to help him hold on to Magic Johnson's passes. He joked that the ball became so greased with the glue that "kareem (Abdul-Jabbar) would go up for a sky hook and the ball would stick to his fingers."

The more intriguing story is the

would-be murder plot.

Said Haywood: "I called up old friends in Detroit and I said, 'Come on out, I've got something I want you to do.' They came out to see what it was I wanted done. Then we road around by (Westhead's) home and they said, 'Okay, perhaps we will have to sabotage the car.' So we came back home and sat around and did some more coke. Strangely enough, all of a sudden my mother was on the phone and she says to me, 'There is something up. What are you doing?' I became super paranoid. I said, 'My God! What is going on here?' I don't think it would have happened anyway because we were sort of hallucinating (when we were) talking about these things."

Howe: "I was going to go on a trip to Las Vegas, Nev. I took a quarter-ounce of cocaine. I got on the plane. I said, 'I am not going to do this stuff on the plane.' I talked myself into one (snort). Five days later I woke up in Mexico, in a villa, didn't know where I was at, where I had been. That was my first blackout on cocaine."

It is unlikely that today's youngsters will read these books and swear off drugs. It is not that easy. The drug business is too powerful, too booming, its profits stretching from the people who deal in them all the way, sadly, to the ex-athletes who chronicle their experiences. This summer, there must be better reading.

## Fall Leads To Charges From Former Champ

CAMDEN, N. J. (AP)

Former heavyweight champion Jersey Joe Walcott has filed suit against the Atlantic City Convention Center, charging he fell from a poorly lit stage after watching a bout there.

The suit, filed last week in Superior Court in Camden, says there were no barriers at the edges or stairs of the elevated stage where Walcott was sitting in the VIP section during a news conference after the Mike Tyson-Tyrell Biggs heavyweight fight in October.

Walcott, 74, whose real name is Arnold Cream, Sr., suffered a concussion and back injuries in the fall, his attorney, William Tomar, said.

"He had a spinal operation as a result of this," Tomar said and was hospitalized for about three weeks.

The lawsuit names Trump Plaza Hotel and Casino, which hosted the fight; Donald King Production; Butch Lewis Enterprises; the convention center; Spectraguard; and unidentified contractors who built the stage.

Walcott, of Pennsauken, defeated 49 opponents during his boxing career. He later became Camden County sheriff and served as state boxing commission chairman.



**MAKING A BID**—Kenny Bannister, formerly of St. Augustine's College has spent time with the N. Y. Knicks (NBA) and played professional ball overseas in Italy, Jerusalem and this past season in the CBA with Mississippi. Recently Bannister tried out with the Milwaukee Bucks, and was very impressive. Bannister a free agent by NBA standards will be making a bid to land a spot on the Charlotte Hornets roster when he attends their free agent camp in late July.

## Will World Cup Spark American Soccer As Exciting Athletics?

BY BARRY COOPER

We had hoped to reach Diego Maradona, who is to soccer what Eric Clapton, John Elway and Dan Marino are to that other brand of football that Americans find so comforting.

With sadness we report that our attempt to quiz Maradona fizzled, like a sudden-death penalty shot buzzing past a helpless goalie. Please pardon if the terminology does not quite fit. Soccer remains foreign to much of the United States. You are aware of the reasoning: soccer, so much fun for kids to play, is a pain to watch.

Soccer is a cerebral encounter, an intellectual exercise, with all the excitement of a chess match. Okay, maybe that is a little harsh, but the game really is for the fan more interested in stratagems than frequent displays of athleticism.

That contrasts with the attitudes of American sports fans, most of whom would prefer that after a day at the office, their brains act on automatic pilot.

We'd rather have the pure — and more frequent — excitement that a three-point shot, home run or touchdown catch can provide. Goals in outdoor soccer are scored much too infrequently, and all but true soccer junkies find themselves fighting off yawns in between scores.

Yet America, seemingly so soccerless after the athletic demise of Pele and the passing of the North American Soccer League, will have another chance to embrace the sport.

Think soccer, because you are going to be force fed, inundated with

soccerspeak. Charts. Diagrams. Mug shots. Open your mind for an intravenous transfer, for the World Cup is coming. Mark the year: 1994.

This month-long World Cup, so fervently cherished by foreigners, will offer American soccer two options. The '94 Cup will either reaffirm America's relative disinterest in the sport or create a new groundswell of support.

Do not expect a lasting love affair. In America, bit-time soccer has been a series of one-night stands, passionately embraced early on, only to be aborted after an initial rush.

We saw this with Pele and the New York Cosmos, when crowds of some 70,000 crowded into the Meadowlands for matches. We watched the old Washington Diplomats once draw more than 50,000. So did the Tampa Bay Rowdies.

It turned out that those early, large audiences presented but a kiss of death. Those fans were curiosity seekers, front-runners ready to ride with whatever was hip. Once the novelty wore off, they turned away, realizing that the only football they cared about was one that could be thrown.

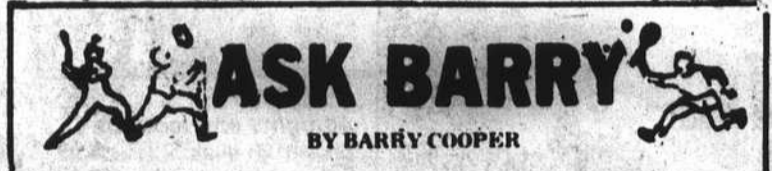
Sure, there are legions of youth

soccer programs in virtually every hamlet in America. The kids in these programs once were soccer's future in America. But we now know that as madly in love as some kids are about soccer, the overwhelming majority eventually walk away from it.

Though the chances for a quick fix to America's soccer apathy seem bleak, proponents of the sport cling to hope. It is all they have. The '94 Cup will be their rallying point.

The Cup will provide us with a new perspective. Like some of those early matches involving Pele and the Cosmos, these soccer encounters will be played to sellout audiences. The intensity of the fans is one of the reasons the Cup is the greatest sporting event in the world. Why, some \$80 million folks turned in to the last Cup final, and it is estimated that a Cup can generate \$2 billion for the host country.

America relishes raking in that kind of money, and true believers in American soccer are hoping for some residual effects. For those soccer supporters, we offer this question: Will the Cup provide a helping hand that lasts, or another shot of morphine for a dying patient? We will see in '94.



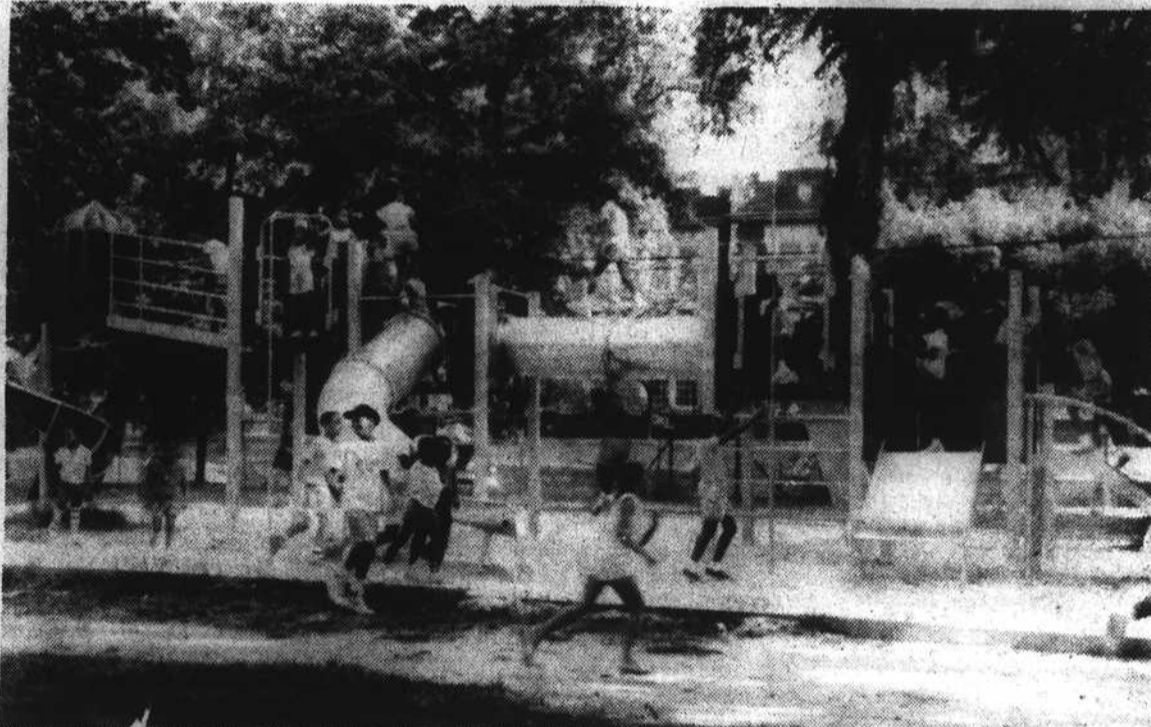
Q. I am a little surprised at how many top National Football League draft choices are able to go out and

buy luxury automobiles and expensive houses even before it is clear whether they are going to make the team. Do bankers open their arms to these guys or do the ball clubs front them some money? — T. M., Memphis, Tenn.

A. You're right on both fronts. Let's use Dallas Cowboys rookie wide receiver Michael Irvin as an example. The Cowboys recently signed him to a four-year deal worth about \$500,000 a season. In addition, he received a big bonus check — \$750,000 — as soon as he signed his contract. Instantly, Irvin became a wealthy man, able to afford the nicest automobiles and homes. And of course, with an annual salary of some half million dollars a year, Irvin's credit is good. For the most part, virtually all of the players taken in the first round received large signing bonuses, although Irvin's pretty much is at the top of the scale.

Q. Did Mike Tyson's mother-in-law really pick out the house that they are staying in? I hear she and Tyson's wife bought the house without the champ even knowing about it. — V. C., Quincy, Fla.

A. Tyson's mother-in-law Ruti Roper, did pick out the \$4 million mansion the Tysons now own in Northern New Jersey. Tyson and wife Robin Givens were away in Japan when Ms. Roper discovered the house. She called her daughter in Japan, who immediately returned to the U. S. and fell in love with the house. The champ was aware of what was going on, though, and fully was in favor of buying the property.



**NEW PLAYGROUND**—YWCA-Hargett Street Branch purchased from funds donated by Wake County Parks and Campers are seen here romping on a new playground. These Recreation, City of Raleigh, The Links, Inc., Alpha Kappa campers, a few of sixty participants are enjoying the new Alpha Sorority, Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority and The playground equipment installed in March. The equipment was Josephus Daniels Charitable Foundation.

## Hiking Offers Special Respite With Beauty And Scenic Trails

ASHEVILLE—For a special kind of respite truly off the beaten path, try hiking around the Asheville area this year. Scenic and peaceful trails abound for adventurous, experienced hikers as well as those out on casual strolls.

Often described as a "hiker's paradise," the Asheville area just off the Blue Ridge Parkway and situated at the foothills of the Great Smoky and Blue Ridge Mountains is recognized as one of the country's top hiking territories year-round. Without venturing too far from the comforts of fine hotels, restaurants and local attractions in Asheville, travelers can hit the dusty trails for a bird's-eye view of the Land of the Sky.

National forests in North Carolina

are used more for hiking than any other national forest land in the nation, according to data compiled by the U.S. Forest Service in Washington, D.C. Use of the North Carolina National Forests amounts to approximately 500,000 recreation visitor days annually.

"This is a mecca for hiking in the Southeast," said Melinda Waldrep, trail specialist and landscape architect for the U.S. Forest Service in Asheville. "Hiking is one of our key trail activities. And our area is unique because of our waterfalls, rock features and because the Southern Appalachians have the largest number of plant species in the world."

The highest percentage of the state's 1.2 million acres of national forests, and 1,400 miles of trails, are located in western North Carolina around Asheville. And the most rugged section of the 2,100-mile Appalachian Trail runs through North Carolina and the Great Smoky Mountain National Park.

With its abundance of national park land in the Great Smoky Mountains National Park, the Nantahala National Forest and the Pisgah National Forest, once part of George W. Vanderbilt's 250,000-acre Biltmore Estate, the area has a wide variety of trails. Many of the trails are easily accessible off the Blue Ridge Parkway, which runs through Asheville and western North Carolina.

Experts offer this advice to those striking out on hikes in the Blue Ridge and Great Smoky Mountains this year:

1. Never hike alone. Nature is always in control, and safety is preferable to solitude. In the event there is a mishap, you need a companion.
2. Never leave an established trail unless you are prepared for off-trail conditions.
3. Pack it in; pack it out. Be considerate of nature and fellow hikers by carrying items back instead of littering.
4. Remember most trails are on public land protected by law.

5. Always take drinking water for the trip. It is unsafe to drink out of an open body of water. If you must get water out of a natural source, boil it before drinking it.

6. Wear trousers and long sleeves for protection against insect bites, briars and poison ivy.

7. If you encounter animals or reptiles on the path, give them a wide berth and the benefit of the doubt. They will most likely want to avoid you as much as you want to avoid them.

Never tease or prod a wild animal or reptile. There are only two varieties of poisonous snakes in western North Carolina: the timber rattlesnake, identified by its rattles, and the copperhead, identified by its small size and saddle-shaped bands. Any snake that is a solid color without markings or which has a longitudinal stripe is harmless.

## Former Tennis Coach Fights Discrimination

LITTLE ROCK (AP) — The former Forrest City High School tennis coach who told a black girl she couldn't play tennis at the city's all-white country club now vows to risk to work to end discrimination at the private club.

Charles Bowlin apologized in a letter to Teresa Whitfield, a ninth-grader at Earle High School in April when the incident occurred.

He said that he and his family have decided, "at the risk of our careers, to cooperate with the youth black athlete denied the right to play on the country club tennis courts and/or her attorneys in seeing that this custom and practice is ended immediately."

Miss Whitfield's attorney, Ron Wilson of West Memphis, said a lawsuit would be filed on her behalf against Bowlin, the country club and the Forrest City School District. Wilson was not specific about the suit.

Told of Bowlin's statements, Wilson said, "I am glad to hear that he wants to cooperate with us. The customs and practices of the country club are well known."

## Hornets Begin Tryouts For NBA Roster Slots

Professional basketball (NBA) is coming to Charlotte and the jockeying for roster positions will start with a mini-camp starting at the end of the month. Charlotte Hornets' coach Dick Harter will evaluate the talent on hand and cut the field down after two days. The Hornets will invite as many as 30 players to the workouts.

The list of selected players features Atlantic Coast Conference stars Billy King (Duke), Ranzino Smith (UNC), and Bruce Dalrymple (Georgia Tech). Others included Don Plonde (UNCC) Scott Wilke (Colorado), Billy Martin (Georgetown), Leroy Combs (Oklahoma State). Both Martin and Combs played in the CBA last season. Also, former St. Augustine's College star Ken Bannister, who once played a significant role with the New York Knicks, is pondering whether to attend the Hornets' camp or another NBA team's tryout camp.

The player being listed as the sleeper before the sessions open is Duke's Billy King, a defensive ace with all the tools necessary to be a good defensive player in the NBA. When you think of King, the comparison between him and former Celtics' star Don Chaney is striking.

Chaney, who came out of the University of Houston, existed strictly on defense his first couple of years in the league before developing a total all-around game.

King could very possibly do the same. At 6'6", he has good height and long arms to play NBA-style defense. One of the things King has working in his favor is that he is a persistent and relentless defensive player.

He may be just what the Hornets need. Another puzzling question that has bothered some local folks is why Ken Bannister is out of the NBA. He's getting another shot. Look for him to be collecting an NBA paycheck when the 1988-89 season begins. Bannister can draw back on his experiences with the Knicks. It has been said that the Milwaukee Bucks under head coach Del Harris are also interested in Bannister. The big question is whether Kenny can regain the form of his playing days with the Falcons and the New York Knicks.

The door is ajar for his return. Also competing at the camp will be Hornets' rookie Rex Chapman (Kentucky), first-round pick; Jeff Moore (Auburn), and Tom Tolbert, a power forward out of the University of Arizona.