

Sports

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A sports editorial

What is sports, and why is it here anyway?

By PAUL KELLOGG

One year of sports spatters to an end, Excalibur's sports page catching the remnants of a year's athletics. And after three months as sports editor, one nagging problem persists after all the sports copy has been cleared from my desk.

Why does Excalibur have a sports section and what purpose does it serve?

That is the most important and most evaded question, not only in the sports community at York, but wherever there is a community newspaper covering games and reporting scores.

News is justified through the necessity of raising social and political consciousness. Entertainment supposedly adds to the cultural refinement of civilized humankind.

But sports?

One approach to this question is to examine the basic ingredients of sportswriting. First in importance is emphasizing for readers the doings of the home team.

If they win, you make them look good. If they lose once, you reprimand them but make excuses. If they lose consistently and badly, the glowering intensity of an angry pen demands reasons, investigations and punishment.

The standard rationale for this approach is that identification with the home team perpetuates and strengthens a feeling of community spirit for the audience served. This is reinforced with the build-up given to local heroes and team-members.

The second ingredient of

sportswriting is its mindlessness. Pat phraseology and easily acquired formulae for stringing together a series of facts turn much of the writing into uncreative assembly-line production.

Humour of a sort is sprinkled liberally to keep the reader reading. "In-depth" investigation goes no further than a technical examination of the refinement of a particular technique and examining how it affects a team's performance.

No justification is given for this ingredient as it is usually denied existence.

But what *is* this thing called sports, and by extension, what is the community spirit it engenders?

Sports is not the ancient Greek ideal of perfecting an art from the uses of the human body. Sports is not an open community institution available to any individual.

Sports in our society—and here I'm speaking generally; there are numerous physical activities which do not fall under this definition—is a closed circle of professional gladiators performing in order to provide an escape and diversion for "the masses".

The masses, or spectators, are not involved in sports. Their enthusiastic devotion to sporting activities usually does not go hand-in-hand with their own athletic development. A spectator simply watches, identifies emotionally with his home team, works up hatred and bile for any opposition, and remains personally uninvolved.

The community spirit that sports engenders is one based on blind

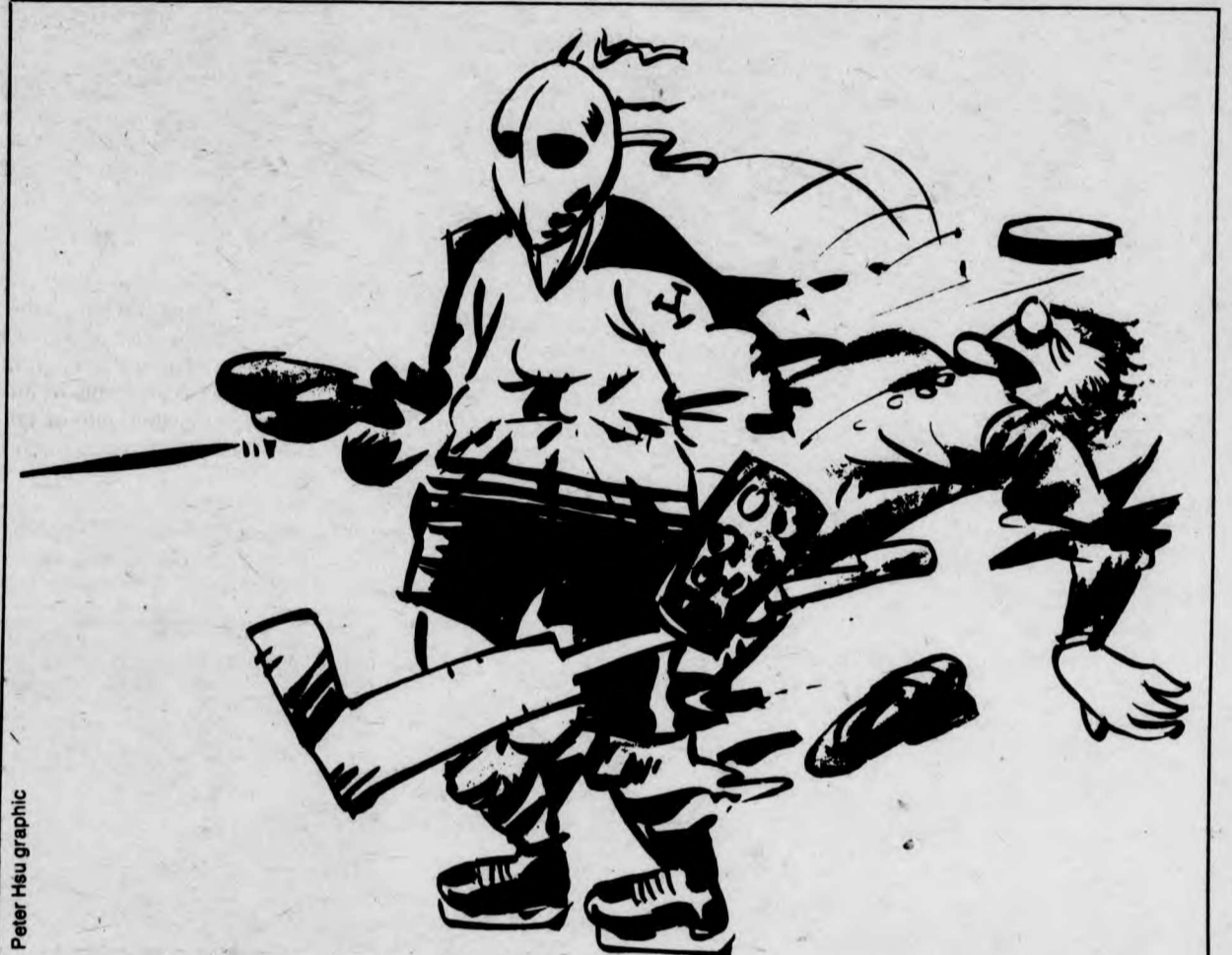
devotion or patriotism for the home community, blind antipathy for any opposition, and hero-worship of an elitist corps of professionals. The blindness of this community spirit complements nicely the mindlessness of its newspaper coverage.

Maybe sports should attempt to live up to the ideal of physical self-improvement. Maybe it should change its emphasis from professionalism to mass participation.

Maybe the only way sports can contribute to a real and dynamic

community is by getting amateur individuals personally involved in sporting activities, rather than passively watching the big game.

And maybe sports reporting can stop listing names and scores and begin examining the very nature of athletics.



Peter Heu graphic

Summer sports programme has wide variety, low cost

This summer the department of physical education and athletics is again offering an organized physical recreational programme for the York community and the North York public.

An aquatics programme offers morning classes in **swimnastics** (a swim and gym programme for women), **beginner's diving**, **adult learn to swim** and a **moms and tots** course. Red Cross qualifying courses for **junior, intermediate, senior** and **bronze medallion** are offered in the afternoon and in the evening a **skin diving** course for beginners, as well as experienced skin divers seeking the proficiency necessary to pursue scuba diving.

The racquet sports programme has been expanded from last year to

include intermediate as well as beginner courses for both **squash** and **tennis**. These courses are offered over lunch hour and in the early evening and will feature **Dale Power**, a Davis Cup calibre player, as one of the tennis instructors.

A new dimension to the programme this summer is the inclusion of **judo** courses in the early evening and **karate** and **tai chi** (a Chinese programme described as combining yoga and self defence - literally "grand ultimate") over lunch hour.

Rounding out the programme will be an **archery** course for beginners in the evening and the popular **aerobics fitness** course to be offered at lunch hour.

There is limited enrolment in all courses to maintain as desirable a class size as possible. All equipment will be supplied where necessary and the cost is only \$15 per course.

Information about registration times may be obtained by calling Sharon Bryson at 667-2351 or Eric Willis at 667-3692.

Basketball league forms in Ontario

Basketball Ontario, in conjunction with the Canadian Amateur Basketball Association, announces the formation of a Canadian junior basketball team.

Try-outs for the team will be held in Ontario between April 19 and May 10. Players under 21 years of age as of January 1 1975 are eligible. Preliminary trials will be held at all participating universities on April 19. Finals are in Toronto on May 10.

At the final trials, an Ontario junior basketball team will be selected to represent the province in a series of exhibition games to be played during the summer.

For further information, contact Basketball Ontario, Ruby Richman President, 4824 Yonge Street, Willowdale, Ontario. (phone 222-5474).

York ski team can only go up

The 1974-75 edition of the York ski team fared...well, rather poorly.

The alpine team finished in fifth position, while the Nordic squad managed a sixth in Ontario university ski competitions.

However, things augur well for the 1975-76 season. Most of the team is returning, and two excellent racers are transferring from Ottawa (what a change!) — Nordic skier W. Schepeci and slalom specialist Pierre L'atomic.

Dunsmuir named All-Canadian

Doug Dunsmuir, high-scoring forward of the Yeomen hockey team, was named last week to the All-Canadian College hockey team.

In a year that included many honours for Dunsmuir, including the OUA scoring championship, the announcement comes as no surprise to watchers of college hockey. Partisan Yeomen fans, however, failed to understand how Dunsmuir's linemates Tim Ampleford and Al Avery were overlooked in the selection.

The rest of the team is composed of Manitoba's

Frank Turnball in goal, Ross Barros of Alberta and Scott Frady of St. Mary's on defence, and Ron Hawkshaw of Waterloo and Dave Wilson of Loyola as the other two forwards. Dunsmuir, in addition to his all-star status, was voted male athlete of the year at York University.

The final and official rankings for university hockey teams were also announced last week. After being consistently overlooked all season, York finally made the top five, garnering fifth spot. Canadian champions Alberta were naturally ranked first followed by Toronto, Loyola, St. Mary's, and York.

This is not a sports story

Lost and found is lonely ground

By LORNE WASSER

"I guess somewhere in this world, there walks a person with his upper set of false teeth missing," says Gerry Wilson.

Wilson is the co-ordinator of the central lost and found office located in room number A7 of the temporary office building, and he should know, since he has had the denture palate suspended in mid-air in his office ever since it was turned in, in 1972.

"Articles are kept for a year and are then turned over to the CYSF. They, in turn, distribute them to lesser known charities, or so they tell me," said Wilson.

And books are turned over to the student libraries located in Founders and Stong Colleges.

"I kept them (the teeth) because they're unique. After all, what could I do with a pair of false teeth — the libraries won't take them and neither will the charities, not unless they're an entire set."

Not that many articles are unique. They include exotic items such as bras and panties, a single ski pole, a big electric typewriter, a

portable TV and a tape recorder.

But most of the articles are the usual things — texts, notebooks, clothing of every shape and form, umbrellas...

Wilson emphasized that "people finding wallets, keys, eyeglasses or credit cards should turn them in to the central lost and found immediately". This way people can more easily find their property when they come looking for it, and they are not forced to bear the expense of replacing the lost item.

DAMN COFFEE SHOPS

"I have a problem in this respect with the coffee shops. They hold on to the damned articles forever hoping the owners will return for them.

"But they won't, because they can't remember where they left their stuff. If they did, it wouldn't still be lost."

Students rarely bring lost articles in, points out Wilson.

"I'd estimate 95 per cent of the lost articles come in through the 'drop boxes' in the various colleges and buildings which the cleaning

staff fill."

The only thing worse than students not taking the time to bring in lost articles is the reluctance of the students to come in to claim their lost property.

Wilson speculated that "students don't like to come down here because we aren't in a central location, and they can't be bothered to go out of their way".

And students should come in rather than phone. If they must phone, it should be with a detailed description of the lost article. But remember that identification is always easier in person.

"We have some valuable items too," said Wilson. Besides the typewriter, TV and tape recorder, there is also a man's diamond ring and a gold wedding band.

"If only some people would come down and claim something!" he said in exasperation.

If worse comes to worst next year, CYSF can always open up a stand in Central Square and sell the stuff.

Who knows? They might even be able to sell that half-pair of unwanted false teeth for a quick fiver.