

SPORTSPEOPLE

Odds & **INS**



By Skip Myslenski & Linda Kay

Close-mouthed: All through training camp, Sugar Ray Leonard refused to talk to reporters except at a weekly press conference. Marvin Hagler, meanwhile, frequently met with the press and also granted telephone interviews, something Leonard refused to do. Why the reticence? Here's one reason: There's no love lost between Leonard's attorney, Mike Trainer, and Bob Arum, who is promoting Monday night's fight.

Jealousy

Trainer tried to get the promotional rights to the fight, but Hagler insisted they be granted to Arum, whom Trainer despises. The deal finally hammered out by the two camps guarantees Leonard \$11 million and Hagler \$12 million plus a percentage of the closed-circuit TV revenue. Those close to Leonard felt that if he went out and actively hyped the fight, it would only help boost the closed-circuit sales and, in effect, line the pockets of his opponent.

Out of bounds

Not only did Leonard limit his media output, but he also limited the media input. Reporters arriving at his camp on Hilton Head Island in South Carolina were handed a document entitled: "The Four Most Often Asked Questions of Sugar Ray Leonard ... And His Answers."

The Four Questions

- Why do you want to fight again?
- Do you need the money? Is that why you're fighting?
- In 1982 you underwent surgery to repair a detached retina. Aren't you concerned about losing your sight?
- What does your wife think about you fighting again?

The answers ...

... occupied three typewritten pages and need not be repeated here, since they've been amply documented elsewhere. If, per chance, a reporter happened to ask one of those queries despite the admonition not to, Leonard would make a sarcastic remark or simply walk away. Touchy, touchy.

He's no Sinatra, but ...

... Al Bernstein of Wheeling likes to croon a tune or two or 10. The host of ESPN's "Top Rank Boxing," Bernstein is nothing if not versatile. He's booked for a three-night engagement at the Olympic Lounge in Caesars Palace beginning Friday and wrapping up just in time to get him ringside for the fight. "You do things when the opportunity is there," says Bernstein, "and I've been really edging towards this entertainment stuff in the last eight months. All of a sudden, here was Leonard-Hagler looming in front of me, and I thought, 'What better time?' Sure enough, Caesars was quite interested."

On stage ...

... with Bernstein will be Jill Eisenberg, a Chicago singer now working in New York. They'll do two shows each night. They've performed together in the past and intend to sing mostly standards, some contemporary tunes and a few jazz numbers. "One of the cornerstones of the act will be some special material written by Cheryl Coons of The Pumps," says Bernstein. "Even though she didn't know much about boxing, she came up with some wonderful parodies." The one Bernstein likes the best is called "Idler by the Ring." It is, of course, a takeoff on the Broadway musical "Fiddler on the Roof," and in it, Coons uses music from the show to tell the entire story of the Big Fight.

Where to go?

Only closed-circuit outlets are carrying the Hagler-Leonard fight, and that means there is no live radio, nor live network or cable TV. The viewing spots? The Horizon, Chicago Stadium, Chicago Theatre, Ditka's, The Vic, Auditorium Theatre, Aragon Ballroom, P.J. Flaherty's, Rialto Square Theatre in Joliet and Park West.

News, notes and nonsense

Noted golf buff Michael Jordan finally has his heart's desire: His own tournament. The Michael Jordan-McDonald's Charity Golf Classic debuts at Cog Hill in Lemont on June 30. Jordan will play both the morning and afternoon sessions, which hardly surprises those who know Jordan's work habits. ... Tom Thayer and Mike Tomczak changed places with the bouncers at the Limelight recently and spent about an hour checking IDs. We're told that only a few people gave the duo a second glance. [How soon they forget]. ... Thayer, Jay Hilgenberg, Steve Fuller and Dave Duerson are guests at a Casino Night fundraiser for the Northern Illinois Council on Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Friday at Chevy Chase Country Club in Wheeling. At the event, Lt. Gov. George Ryan will honor Duerson as an exemplary model for youth. ... When five-time Olympian Willye White was part of the Games, bowling wasn't. But now it has been approved as an exhibition sport, so White wants to learn the game's finer points. She takes a private lesson Thursday from Joy Abel, a member of the Women's International Bowling Congress Hall of Fame, who'll help her prep for a bowling pro-am to benefit the Special Olympics in Atlantic City.

And finally: In print ads for the Chicago Symphony Orchestra that debut Friday, Walter Payton wears a tuxedo and holds a baton, while CSO director Sir Georg Solti wears a football jersey and carries a football. Says the ad: "We both know a winning score."



Reuters photo

Yiannis Kouros breaks the tape in the 662½-mile Sydney to Melbourne ultra marathon. His time was 5 days 14 hours and 47 minutes.

At \$20 a mile, quite a feat for the feet

It would be interesting to know what Yiannis Kouros considered the turning point in his victory in the \$40,000 Sydney to Melbourne ultra marathon in Australia.

Kouros crossed the finish line of the 662½-mile event just past midnight Wednesday—a scant 93¼ miles ahead of second-place Dick Tout, who was

expected to finish later in the week. Tout probably was hearing footsteps, because he led third-place Patrick Macke by the razor-thin margin of 18¼ miles.

The 31-year-old Kouros received \$13,660 for the victory, which was his second in what is billed the world's longest run.

Horrors, he's afraid to bet on Red Sox

Horror writer Stephen King, who won a notorious bet last year with a Maine sportswriter over the fortunes of the author's beloved Boston Red Sox, isn't so confident this year.

Last year, Bangor Daily News sportswriter Bob Haskell had to eat a chicken dinner in his underwear on the newspaper's lawn after betting against the Red Sox.

The Red Sox captured the American League pennant last year, but have been hit with contract squabbles this spring, including a holdout by star pitcher Roger Clemens.

"I jump every time the phone rings, thinking it has to be [Haskell or a friend], asking me if I want to bet my pants against a chicken dinner again this year," King wrote in the Bangor newspaper.

"I think they're playing with me," he said. "Like a cat with a crippled mouse."

King said the Red Sox are "coming into the new season with the word LOSER pasted all over it," and he compared this year's squad to "Charlie



Stephen King

Brown's hapless team in the 'Peanuts' comic strip."

After careful consideration, the Bangor resident says all bets are off this year.

"No, I do not want to bet my pants that the Sox will be in first place on July 4th of 1987," wrote the prolific master of mayhem.

"I have knobby knees, and, unfortunately, love handles ... which are just the beginning of the middle-aged spread which the cursed Haskell has somehow managed to avoid, thus far. In short, I just don't look that good in my undies."

'Hawk' talk in Yank booth

Former Sox executive Ken Harrelson signed Wednesday with SportsChannel in New York to broadcast Yankee games.

There is no word on who his partner will be, which really isn't a surprise because SportsChannel has been mired in court, settling a contract dispute involving them, WPXI-TV and the Yankees.

The upshot? SportsChannel got to telecast 100 games, WPXI got 50 and the "Hawk" probably will get in a little a golf on the side.

Competitors benefit 2 ways

Illinois-Chicago Running Club officials have received about 40 entries for Sunday's 5-kilometer race, and 3 are for the 70-80 age group, an unusually high percentage.

The race, which starts at 10:45 a.m. at Morgan and Taylor Streets, benefits geriatric research.

Drafting Robinson could leave team cold

Bulls' coaches have discussed the possibility of Navy center David Robinson playing for the team of his choice.

According to coach Doug Collins, if Robinson doesn't sign with a National Basketball Association team after being drafted twice, he is free to sign with whomever he wants.

Here's the scenario: Robinson gets drafted in June by a team such as the Los Angeles Clippers, doesn't sign and retains his amateur status for the 1988 Olympics.

He then begins his two-year limited Navy obligation. If he remains in the Navy and doesn't sign after getting selected in the 1989 draft, he can finish out his commitment and in 1990 be free to sign with the highest bidder.

What if Los Angeles Lakers' owner Jerry Buss empties the bank for Robinson? Could center Kareem Abdul-Jabbar hang on for two more years? How big of a bidding war will there be for Robinson's services if he goes that route?

The winner of the draft lottery in May could wind up wasting the No. 1 pick if Robinson decides to sit out two seasons.

By the numbers



Will 30-year old outfielder Gary Redus make a difference for the White Sox? If nothing else, he's a base-stealing threat. He led two leagues in SBs working his way through the minors and has 171 in the 459 major league games in which he's appeared.

Of course, no one can steal first base. Here are some three-year totals on the probability of Redus reaching base:

- Hits: 246 ■ BA: .251
- 2Bs: 57 ■ BA at home: .278
- 3Bs: 11 ■ BA on road: .222
- HRs: 24 ■ BA in May: .328
- RBIs: 83 ■ BA in Sept./Oct.: .228

Jordan's joke a jolt to listeners

What's an April Fool's Day without a radio announcer pulling a prank?

Sportscaster Pat Benkowski of WKQX-FM played on what would be a Chicago fan's worst nightmare, Michael Jordan's retirement, to jolt several thousand listeners Wednesday morning.

Imagine tooling down Lake Shore Drive and hearing Jordan say this on your car radio: "Right now, with the injuries I have, I feel mentally and physically strained. My body is tired, and I'm just ready to quit playing basketball."

Then, Jordan added: "This is my third year in the NBA, and I feel I have enough financial security that I can leave. I'm ready to start my golf game."

"I went through a lot of nicks and knacks of injuries, and any one of them could've been a career-ending injury. It woke me up and let me

know I should start doing things not as physical."

Well, if that wasn't enough to make fans smash into the car in front of them, there was a clincher from Jordan: "I had a meeting with the other guys a few days ago, and they accepted the decision. It seems like they've dedicated this [season] to me."

It was Jordan speaking, but he agreed to be part of Benkowski's hoax when the sportscaster approached him with the idea after the Washington Bullets' game Tuesday at the Stadium.

The station was bombarded with 150 calls by 9 a.m. Other stations, as well as newspapers, also were flooded.

But Jordan paid for his part, too. The Bulls' superstar, who said he was astounded at the response, had his phone ringing all day with anxious friends and business associates.

Sharing the wealth, cutting the quality

Mark McCormack is a pioneer in sports marketing. He started International Management Group 23 years ago on \$500, and today it generates \$300 million in revenue. One of his first big clients was Arnold Palmer.

"In the old days, Arnold Palmer, Jack Nicklaus ... these guys wanted to win," McCormack said. "Today, you ask somebody how they did last week and they say: 'Well, I finished fifth at Greensboro,' as if that's a big accomplishment. You'd ask Arnold Palmer how he did, and he'd say, 'I lost.'"

"The big problem is that the

American tour is run by a commissioner who is employed by 200 American tour professionals on a one-man, one-vote basis. Of the 200 players, you've got maybe 5 superstars, 10 that might become superstars, 100 that are never going to make it but are pretty good players and 85 that ought to get another job.

"And of the 85 who ought to get another job, each has a vote. And what do they vote for? They vote for a \$400,000 prize pool to have more money between 50th and 100th place to give them an opportunity to make a living and avoid going to work."

BRIEFS

■ Iowa football coach Hayden Fry refused to comment Wednesday on an investigation of one of his ex-players, but said he expects some "unbelievable" revelations about a sports agent paying college athletes. Fry said he had been advised not to discuss the investigation by a special Iowa committee, which is looking into allegations that running back Ronnie Harmon received money from an agent. Such payments violate NCAA rules.

"I will say this," Fry said. "The whole smear of agent wheeling and dealing and all this, by the time the smoke clears whenever—next week, in two months, two years from now or whenever—I think it will be unbelievable. I'm talking about nationwide. When the NFL, the FBI, the individual investigative committees on various campuses across the nation, etc.—by the time the whole thing is over with, it will give you all copy for a long time to come."

Agent Norby Walters has admitted that he signed players while they were in school and, in some cases, gave them money. Walters has said he gave Harmon more than \$54,000.

■ Two Minnesota seniors say they didn't complete a course during the fall quarter but still played in the Liberty Bowl Dec. 29. In addition to fullback Kevin Wilson and safety Donovan Small, team and university sources said senior cornerback Duane Dutrieuille and senior linebacker Bruce Holmes also stopped going to classes during the fall quarter, according to the Minneapolis Star and Tribune. Dutrieuille refused to comment. Holmes said he got "about a 2.0" grade-point average for the quarter. According to university records, Holmes dropped out after the quarter. Holmes, a fifth-year student, said he left because his scholarship expired. However, Elayne Donahue, assistant athletic director for academic counseling, said Holmes' grant-in-aid was good through the end of the school year. Under NCAA rules, players must make progress toward a degree before the start of the fall term and must carry 12 credits. The NCAA doesn't demand class attendance.

■ Ernie Sella, who created the Orange Bowl Festival, died Tuesday at his home after a long illness. He was 86.

■ Heisman Trophy winner Vinny Testaverde has agreed to a six-year deal worth more than \$8 million, a record for a National Football League rookie. He is expected to sign with the Tampa Bay Buccaneers within a week. ... Former Indianapolis Colts' quarterback Art Schlichter has pleaded guilty to an illegal gambling charge in Marion [Ind.] Municipal Court. Under terms of a plea agreement, Schlichter will be on probation six months and will pay a \$10 fine and \$74 in restitution. Schlichter was among seven people arrested in January in an undercover investigation of sports gambling in Indianapolis. ... Court officials said the trial of Colts' quarterback Jack Trudeau on battery charges and disorderly conduct has been postponed. The trial had been scheduled for Thursday, but the state received a continuance. The trial has been rescheduled for May 21. Trudeau and a friend were arrested after a fight Feb. 13. ... Dallas Cowboys' quarterback Danny White, who suffered a broken right wrist last season against the New York Giants, won't have surgery unless he can't throw. "I'll be ready when the season begins," he said. ... The New York Jets have traded safety Kirk Springs to the Colts for a 1988 draft pick.

■ Kenneth Gould, a 147-pounder from Rockford, beat James Leak 5-0 in the quarterfinals of the U.S. Boxing Championships in Buffalo. At 165, Joe Lipsey of Springfield beat Marco Rios 5-0. In second-round action, 112-pounder Arthur Johnson of East St. Louis stopped Anthony Perez and Chicagoan Kelcie Banks beat Donald Stokes 3-2 at 125.

■ Chris Evert Lloyd has filed for divorce from John Lloyd, according to the New York Post. In papers filed in Broward County, Fla., Evert listed irreconcilable differences.

■ The U.S., Norway and Canada remained tied for first at the men's world curling championships in Vancouver, B.C. The U.S. beat Sweden 6-3. Norway topped Scotland 7-2. Canada downed Denmark 9-4.

Compiled by Mike Conklin, Rich Lorenz from staff, wire reports.

TANK McNAMARA



GIL THORP

