Chicago Tribune, Tuesday, January 19, 1988 \* Section 4

# Odds&

# By Linda Kay & Mike Conklin

Question: Who is Demetrios Synodinos? Answer: He's foot-in-mouth oddsmaker Jimmy "the Greek" Snyder, who was not born in Greece, but in Steubenville, Ohio.

We were also interested to learn that Snyder's most famous prediction was nearly 40 years ago and had nothing to do with sports. After polling 1,900 women to discover that most do not care for men with mustaches, the Greek bet-at 17-to-1 odds-that Harry Truman would upset mustachioed Thomas Dewey in the 1948 presidential election. That wager reportedly earned him \$170,000, as well as national recognition.

# **Brighter days**

Mike Ditka told him he'd be better off, but Stefan Humphries wasn't sure. Now that he's in his second Super Bowl in three years, Humphries has reason to praise the man who traded him last fall. "I'm starting to think it has been for my own good," the starting offensive lineman for the Broncos told us. "Finally I'm starting to feel like I'm a part of the team. I feel like maybe I've found a home in Denver. Contributing helps. I spent the majority of my time in Chicago on injured reserve, and that was frustrating. A lot of the success in this game is being in the right place at the right time."

# More than Denver is a mile high

Bob Juergens is a Denver Bronco Maniac.

When the Broncos won the AFC championship last year, Juergens turned his house into the world's largest pumpkin.

Juergens, a painting contractor, and seven of his men spent three days painting his 3,000square-foot home orange, complete with a blue Broncos logo, a Super Bowl logo and names of all the players.

Crazy? Sure. But then Juergens had painted a former home, a lovely natural brick, an ugly orange when the Broncos won their first AFC title in 1977.

And he plans to do it again now that they won the AFC title again.

This time, it will include a huge message, "Twice we've lost the big one. Now let's show 'em how to turn things around." And to turn it

"Everybody liked it. I only got it. one hate letter out of 40."

Of course, after six months, it did get a little old. The homeowners' association eventually complained, and Juergens agreed to end the eyesore. Well, mostly. He painted a black band around the house "in mourning" when the players went on strike.

"They would have had a hard time telling me to take down the Broncos' emblem. They could have had the governor involved."

Mania? Hysteria? Naaah. Bronco Mania passed those stages long ago. We're talking serious lunacy here.

Frank Jackson is a county judge. Proper, well-educated. But he wears an orange robe in his court room every Monday after a big victory. And every summer, he takes a two-week vacation to become a ballboy at training camp. He fetches water for the players. He runs errands for coach Dan Reeves.

least," insisted Juergens, 53. And he loves every minute of

Tim McKernan is a mechanic for United Airlines. Sundays he is The Barrel Man, attired in orange boots, orange suspenders, orange shorts, orange cowboy hat, orange barreland nothing else, even when it snows.

Linda Kirchner, 29, painted her body blue, and naked save for socks and sneaks, rode a chestnut horse around a mall last week when a radio station gave away AFC championship tickets to the most manic Bronco Maniacs.

Frank Silva, 29, lathered his entire body with shaving cream and rode a tricycle around the mall. And Jim Rudy, 33, won a pair of tickets after covering himself head to toe with feathers, donning Broncos boxer shorts and zipping down the mall on roller skates.

"How long did it take me to think of this?" Rudy asked. "Well, I know this much: I was in my second six-pack."

# It's over now

He sank into his chair Sunday as the game drew to a close and sadly watched the Redskins knock the Vikings out of the playoffs. "It didn't break my heart," said Ron Daugherty, "but I definitely could have used the money." Daugherty, a Hyde Park native who writes copy for Chicago's NW Ayer advertising, made \$9,000 in bonuses as a Viking replacement player. He could have made three times that much if Minnesota won the Super Bowl. The former receiver did earn a measure of fame. Advertising Age, the New York Times and "Good Morning America" have done pieces on the 29-year-old jock, maybe because, as he puts it, "They look at guys in advertising as pencil pushers." He'll be a guest at a Jan. 31 Super Bowl party at McCormick Inn benefiting Little City.

# **Stadium blackout**

Blackhawk fans will appreciate this. At the start of the season, the team had a special, isolated booth constructed at one end of the Stadium press box. It was erected for Hawk assistant coaches in the area where they radio their observations to the bench. Well, the club finally got around to installing a shatter-proof, two-way mirror to further isolate them from the media and general public. Darryl Sutter tried it out for the first time Sunday and made a startling discovery when he flipped out the lights to watch warmups. There, staring him in the face, was himself. It appears the glass was put in backward. Of course, Hawk fans might consider this a blessing the way things have gone this season.

**Reuters** photo

Bats right, signs right. The Montreal Expos' third baseman puts his Tim Wallach on the cast of Jonathan Gauditt, 8, while visiting an Ottawa hospital.

around, the message will be painted upside down.

Gaudy? Tawdry? "Not in the

# It's all downhill from here for Bronx luger-of-fortune

local clubs in national races.

SPORTSPEOPLE

For some firefighters in Engine Co. No. 45 on Tremont Avenue in the Bronx, N.Y., the daily routine provides enough excitement. The firehouse has been among the busiest in the city for years.

Others need a little more gusto, and that's why Raul Muniz will be careening down the luge course in Calgary next month, representing Puerto Rico in the Olympic Winter Games.

Muniz, 31, a New York native whose parents were born in Puerto Rico, has been lugeing for almost four years. He happened upon the sport in the summer of 1984 while training Muniz said, referring to Baron for a kayak race. He had been a

team.

Just spin rowdies in the air

The Detroit Tigers plan to use college students

At Lake Placid, N.Y., he bumped into a man named George Tucker, a native Puerto Rican and a resident of Albany, N.Y., who had represented Puerto Rico in luge in the 1984 winter Games in Sarajevo, Yugoslavia. Tucker was training on a sled with wheels.

That was hundreds of runs and thousands of dollars ago. Now, Muniz is ready to realize a dream: He qualified for Calgary, and with Tucker will be Puerto Rico's Olympic luge

"We're what the baron intended, amateurs in sports," Pierre de Coubertin of France, kayaker for years, representing the father of the modern Olym-



## pics. "We have no sponsorship. We have self-sponsorship."

The cost has been enormous, maybe \$10,000 over the last four years, he estimates. The Puerto Rican Olympic Committee, which sanctioned him after he fulfilled certain international requirements, does little more than help with partial payment of airline tickets. Otherwise, Muniz has to pay for travel and equipment, including his \$800 luge.

Muniz has no lofty expectations for Calgary; he merely wants to finish anywhere but last. Only under certain circumstances can he envision winning a medal: "If there's a blinding snowstorm and nobody else gets hold of the schedule."

# BRIEFS

**Roy Innis**, national chairman of the Congress of Racial Equality, said that Jimmy "the Greek" Snyder was simply telling the truth when he made the controversial racial remarks last weekend that cost him his job at CBS Sports. Among the remarks Snyder made was that blacks are better athletes than whites because of breeding techniques that originated during the Civil War. Innis defended those statements as accurate during an awards dinner Monday honoring the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr., and said black leaders, including Malcolm X, had made similar statements in the past. "Jimmy must have been reading Malcolm," Innis said. Speaking of the days of slavery, Innis said: "We were bred like chattel. It's wrong that they did that to usbut it's not wrong to talk about history." He said the meaning of equality between blacks and whites incorporates the idea that members of the two races should be able to exchange ideas "even when they're unpleasant."

Sports agent Lloyd Bloom said federal prosecutors have told him to expect to be indicted in the next few weeks, and the Atlanta Constitution reported that U.S. Atty. Howard Pearl in Chicago had offered Bloom a deal carrying a 16month prison term to testify against fellow agent Norby Walters. Bloom was told that the government will not pursue other possible charges against him if he testifies against Walters and pleads guilty to one count of mail fraud, the paper said. It also said Pearl told Bloom he could expect indictment on a more serious charge if he did not accept the bargain.

Wally Schreiber's third goal of the game, with 53 seconds remaining in the third period, gave Canada's Olympic hockey team a 6-5 exhibition victory over the U.S. squad at Maple Leaf Gardens in Toronto. The U.S. outshot Canada 48-37. Brian Leetch's goal at 2:54 of the final period had put the U.S. ahead 5-4 before Ken Berry tied it at 4:33.

Toronto Maple Leafs owner Harold Ballard, 84, hospitalized after suffering a heart attack, is improving and should be released from the Miami Heart Institute this week, a spokeswoman said. South African-born distance star Zola Budd, who took British citizenship to become eligible for international competition, is denying reports she competed last summer in a cross-country meet in South Africa. A London newspaper, quoting a report of the event in the June 27 Johannesburg Star, said that proof of her participation would be enough to put her out of international running. South Africa is barred from international sports because of its policy of apartheid, and Budd, 21, has pledged not to compete in her native land, although she trains there for much of the British winter. "There is absolutely no truth in that report," said Budd. "The idea that I would jeopardize my career by running in South Africa is ridiculous." Davey Allison posted the fastest Ford test speed— 188.877 miles an hour-at Daytona International Speedway, amid complaints that the Thunderbirds were not showing all their speed preparing for the Feb. 14 Daytona 500. Bill Elliott, who has won the last three Daytona 500 poles, prompted much of that talk with his best lap of 183.411 m.p.h. But Elliott said his team and the other 16 cars were struggling to adapt to NASCAR's latest ruling that calls for 1-inch carburetor-restrictor plates to cut speeds that soared to 210.364 in qualifying last year. "I think you're going to see pole speeds around 190 m.p.h.," said Elliott. Mickey Gibbs (186.994) and Kyle Petty (186.645) were the only drivers to break 186. ... Parnelli Jones, the semiretired winner of the 1963 Indianapolis 500, says he will drive a Mazda RX-7 in the GTO division of the IMSA Camel GT event Jan. 30-31 at Daytona. The Association of Tennis Professionals, governing body for the men's tennis tour, will move its headquarters from Arlington, Tex., to Ponte Vedra Beach, Fla., possibly as soon as a year from now, said ATP Executive Director Hamilton Jordan. Switzerland's Brigitte Oertli captured a women's special slalom in Saas Fee, Switzerland, for her first World Cup victory. Oertli, third after the first heat, had a superb second run and finished with a combined time of 1:26.57.

# Time to throw in the towel?

On the heels of Tim Brown's towel trouble in the Cotton Bowl comes this bit of bad news for the Irish: The van that served as a portable headquarters for Notre Dame's Alumni Association was destroyed by fire Jan. 4 as it returned from Dallas. The scene was a quiet spot along Int. Hwy. 70 near Booneville, Mo. According to a witness, "The engine started knocking and losing power. By the time they got it pulled over, clouds of black smoke were pouring out from under the mobile home. In less than two minutes, the entire vehicle was destroyed." All contents were lost-except a framed picture of coaching legend Knute Rockne.

# Maroon-ed

Attention, Earle Bruce. You weren't the first football coach to lose his job after a winning season, and you definitely won't be the last. The University of Chicago is not renewing the contract of Mick Ewing, and all he did was coach the 1985 Maroons to their first winning season since 1929. He led them to a 5-3 record last year and they're 18-26 overall in his five years. All this comes at a bad time, when the school begins recruiting for a new league it's joining. A school spokesman denies Ewing's age (65) is a factor. Of course if it was, we know a whipper-snapper who's available. Earle Bruce is 56.

# News, notes and nonsense

Arena Football Commissioner Jim Foster convenes two days of meetings in Chicago Thursday with five cities being considered for three franchises. They are New York, Indianapolis, Minneapolis, Los Angeles, and Providence, R.I. The league had four teams last year, and Detroit is a definite to make it five. Foster will announce a new ESPN "Game of the Week" pact. . . . Spalding introduces a line of tennis rackets this week and is using Chicago as a test market. Spalding, known for its line of tennis balls, spent five years of research and more than \$1 million to develop nine rackets varying in weight and size. ... You can see whether Michael Jordan has a future—in TV, that is—by watching the nine segments he hosted for "Greatest Sports Legends," which airs each weekend on Channel 2. Producer Berl Rotfeld says he was amazed at Jordan's competitiveness. Rotfeld said they were taping a segment with Nate Thurmond when the athletes started shooting baskets for fun. "Michael was trying like heck to win," said Rotfeld. "There was no way he wanted to get beat."

trained in crowd behavior as security officers in place of **Burns** International Security at Tiger Stadium this summer.

Team spokesman T.R. Minick said the change was made because of complaints of rudeness by Burns security officers. He said about 120 students majoring in criminal justice or related fields will make up

the new force.

The students will undergo training by Domino's Pizza security personnel in crowd psychology and courtesy in addition to the usual security subjects. The Tigers are owned by Thomas Monaghan, who also owns Domino's

Pizza. "We want to create a whole new

atmosphere,' Minick said. "They won't be Rambos."

Car thieves throw crimp into the Paris-Dakar Rally

F.L. Ferzacca, Association of Mid-Continent Universities commissioner, will retire June 30. He has held the job since the conference of eight small Division I schools-including Illinois-Chicago-was formed in 1982.

Sweeping can be fun, in curling. Members of the Chicago Curling Club's Heathers-Marilyn Boles (from left), Joyce Wildman and Rose Collins-keep a stone sliding in their 6-5 loss to Janesville, Wis., Monday in the National Senior Ladies Bonspiel. Competition will continue through Wednesday at Glencoe's Indian Hill Club.

Tribune photo by Bob Langer

And finally: Northwestern was all set for its big Wildcat Wrestling Classic, featuring Iowa and Illinois in a triple dual, until someome noticed it was on Super Bowl Sunday. It has been moved to Feb. 1.

The 18th stage of the Paris-Dakar Rally was delayed two hours Monday after rally leader Ari Vatanen's car was stolen and held for \$91,000 ransom, organizers said in Bamako, Mali.

Witnesses told Malian authorities they saw the Peugeot 405, a prototype car covered in bright advertising stickers, crossing a bridge over the Niger River about 6:15 a.m. Mechanics had worked on repairing the

car until 4 a.m. before parking it at the guarded rally bivouac near where they slept.

Jean Todt, director of the paid. Peugeot Talbot Sport team, said he received a phone call at his hotel room about 7:15 a.m. demanding the money.

"They asked me to come in a taxi with the ransom to a place that I did not understand the name of," Todt said.

Todt immediately contacted rally organizers, who in turn called local authorities for help. "I still can't believe it," Todt

said. The car was found shortly before noon. It was not clear navigational problems, I whether any money had been a third mishap."

Vatanen, winner of last year's rally, was in first place at the end of Sunday's stage, a 543mile off-road course between Timbuktu and Bamako. Rally organizers did not say whether Vatanen would be disgualified for not departing on time.

The Finnish driver was philosophical.

"In Finland we have a proverb that says, 'Never two without three.' After the problems we'd had with a motor fire and feared

Compiled by Bob Fischer and Bob Vanderberg from staff, wire reports.

# **Corrections and clarifications**

A story in the Sports section of the Jan. 17 Tribune contained some incorrect information on Cubs ticket availability. Group sales begin Feb. 15 at Wrigley Field, and individual sales begin Feb. 26 at the ballpark and through Ticketmaster. The Tribune regrets the error.

