Sports-And One Thing or Another

By FRANK MANN HARRIS

Along about this time of year it is customary, in sports-writing circles, to turn the thoughts backward and recall the most outstanding events of the twelve months just past. This custom has twin advantages. First, it permits a writer to cooper together a column with the least possible amount of brain-fag and toil. Second—if he happened to call the results of any such events correctly in advance—it allows him to give himself a few friendly pats on the back and insert a few, "Didn't we tell you so's."

* * *

We might say, however, that this latter feature will be largely missing from the present mess of random recollections. About the only winners we remember calling were The Toronto Argonauts and Joe Louis—and when we think of what narrow squeaks both of them had, we aren't exactly taking any deep bows. Oh, yes, we also said, before the King's Plate, that horses who had wintered in the South would have a great advantage over those that hadn't—but that's a prediction good for almost any year, although few of us think of it till too late.

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So,to get into it without further ado, the 1946-47 professional hockey season ended with the Canadians proving themselves the best team over a five-month period, and the Maple Leafs showing they were superior over a two-week stretch. That the Toronto team got far greater glory and acclaim for their brief burst of speed than the Montrealers did for their all-season superiority just goes to show, once again, that virtue is its own best reward, or some such. At the height of the excitement some of the Big League managers and coaches also distinguished themselves by acting in a fashion that would get them stood in a corner at any well-run kindergarten.

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The horse-racing picture was chiefly notable for the severe shock to the feelings of various race-track owners and managements on realizing that horse-owners actually think that money should be a consideration in the Sport of Kings—money for the horse-owners, not the tracks, that is. For a while there was even a threat that some tracks would refuse to operate; but wiser counsel (and perhaps a quick look at previous years' profit sheets) finally prevailed, and the Canadian racing season went on. And on. And on.

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That such was the case undoubtedly proved a great thing for the Improvement of the Breed of Thoroughbreds, which is the sole purpose of horseracing. What strides have been made in this direction is shown by the fact that if you can name three outstanding—or even half-outstanding — Canadian Thoroughbreds uncovered during the past twelve months, it is two more than we can.

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The baseball season is mainly to be remembered for the meeting, in the World's Series Classic, of two of the most determined teams since Abner Doubleday first invented the sport. The Brooklyn Dodgers and New York Yankees both apparently went into the series firmly determined to let the other fellow win; and their efforts toward this end will not soon be forgotten. All kinds of new records were established in this series including one for the number of commercial announcements the sponsors were able to get in during a single game.

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Lacrosse, the best sport of them all, continued to prove that it is very hard to kill, in spite of the efforts of big-city promoters, and sports-writers to give it the go-by. Possibly the best comment we heard on the question of why modern young athletes fail to take to lacrosse in large numbers, was the rather bitter one of an old-timer. "All these kids nowadays keep thinking of the time when they'll be great moving-picture stars," he said, "and they just won't take a chance on getting that photogenic beauty scarred up with a lacrosse stick."

* * *

The football season is too recent to require recalling in detail. After the Toronto Argonauts-Winnipeg Bombers game was over practically every sports writer and not a few Editorial Pages made lengthy comments about how much good the Westerners' surprisingly fine showing would do for the sport. While heartily agreeing, we would merely add that it didn't do the blood-pressure of those sportsmen who had wagered liberally on the Argos a tiny bit of good—and you may take that from one in a position to know.

Just A Reminder Of The "Good Old Summer Time" is this picture of young Canadians having fun and at the same time building strength in one of our many supervised playgrounds—a scene from the National Film Board picture "Small Fry" now showing in many rural communities.

Pity The Poor Stork

Maybe you just aren't interested in statistics—or have become rather tired of the masses of facts and figures, surveys and polls that occupy so much space in our papers and magazines today.

Still, there's something awe-inspiring in the statement that 200,000—that's right, two hundred thousand—new babies arrive in this weary old world every 24 hours. And while we haven't had the time to make a personal check, we believe that the figure given is so nearly correct as "makes no matter."

Canada's share in the two hundred thousand daily arrivals is surveyed in a new film produced by the National Film Board which is at present being shown in many rural Ontario communities. After much furrowing of the brow it was decided to entitle the film, "Small Fry," for it deals with Canadian children up to the ages of nine and ten, as well as with new-born babies

One factor that is brought out is the increasing amount of assistance given our children from sources outside the family. Family Allowances is a recent example, and in the film you see the various forms this takes. To most people it is a cash proposition, but to the Indians and Eskimos of our far north, it comes in the form of pablum and powdered milk, clothing and canned tomatoes.

Nursery schools are spreading across Canada, and today kiddies too young for kindergarten are encouraged to attend these special schools. In the film we see the Sunny-lea School, near Toronto, where modern architecture has provided scores of healthful and helpful designs. The classrooms of this one-story structure are each in a wing by itself with a door to the outdoors, a "project" nook where art, drama and games groups may work unhindered—and unhindering. Three walls of each classroom are mostly window. The "blackboards" are not black, but light in color and easier on the pupil's eyes. Children are taught to express themselves—and who will object if this expression takes the form of paint on paper instead of jam on the wall paper and paint?

"Small Fry" also illustrates new methods of teaching. Taking the audience to a Montreal school, it shows a junior class being taught languages by actual use rather than by study or rote. In French, to take an example, the pupils themselves construct a tiny grocery store right in the classroom. Actual products are on the shelves and the kiddi s print placards in French for advertising, telephone their orders to the grocer in French and order in person at the counter, also in French. It makes the language a function at once, rather than just another study.

Health, of course, is not overlooked. Despite the general state of good health among our children, the fact remains that epidemics, light ones like whooping cough, and severe ones like scarlet fever and polio — are still taking many lives every year. "Small Fry" attempts to show what has been done, and to indicate what still remains to be done, by parents schools and community organizations, to make our children fit for the future they will inherit.

Russians Buying Livestock in Britain

Russian Agricultural experts now in Britain are buying livestock on a large scale for replenishing herds in the Soviet Union. Accompanied by their London agent, they are paying visits to many different parts of the country to inspect representative animals. Their purchases so far include cattle, sheep and pigs. Dairy Shorthorn and Hereford heifers have been chosen while a special journey was made to Scotland to see Shorthorn bulls of which a big selection was made. Breeds of sheep favored have been the Lincoln Longwool and Romney Marsh. As far as pigs are concerned, the choice has fallen on Large White.

TEEN-TOWN TOPICS

By BARRY MURKAR

As I stand here looking out my window on the threshold of a new year, the scene is hardly what one would call pleasant to the eye. Canada is hard hit financially. Prices are keeping the middle man down. In Europe it is much worse. No one welcomes in a new year without hoping that things may be different. I suppose that during the past year, few of us as individuals have suffered very much, but taking the country as a whole it hasn't been so good. If we stick together and fight high prices, help our fellow man and try to make Canada an even better place to live in — well, who knows, this year may be different.

A Pleasant Call

We had a very pleasant caller recently, in the person of Beverlie Wilson, our Teen-Town Reporter from Colbourne. Bev is a very pleasant girl to talk to and is right on her toes with the teen-age activities of Colbourne. It's a pleasure to meet our correspondents, and if any of you happen to be in the vicinity, be sure to drop in. However, the next time we meet Beverlie Wilson in Colbourne, we hope to catch her with her hair in curlers and no make-up on—then we'll be even.

In Appreciation

We would like to take this opportunity of thanking Manly F. Miner for his very nice letter and the autographed copy of the memorial edition of his late father's book, "Jack Miner and the Birds". This was received following our recent story on the visit we made to the sanctuary, with a warm invitation to come back again—and we hope to.

Teen-Town Reporters

Milverton — Eva Loney — Hello folks! How is the weather in your town for sleigh-riding this year? It seems early to have the amount of snow in Milverton that we have but I think the sooner winter comes the better. I am sure that the Keen-Teens" agree with me after the enjoyable sleigh-riding party we had at our last meeting. We obtained a team and sleigh from a local farmer who drove us. About twenty-five members left town at 8 o'clock for the country. One sleigh was sufficient for us, since everyone was not on it at the same time. There were always some who were running behind, trying to catch up to to the sleigh, while others were having a battle to get themselves out of the snow-filled ditches. When we arrived back at the High School, we looked like a group of snowmen—and women, too. The program committee did not conclude with a sleigh-ride, but arranged an in-door program as well. Five groups were organized, each choosing a song-title and acting it. The other groups had to guess the titles. Sorry you couldn't have heard them or seen the actions. The two chosen teams tied in the spelling contest which was followed by square dancing—although everyone did not know how to square dance—they all enjoyed the attempt. Everyone worked up an appetite for lunch which consisted of sandwiches, cake and hot cocoa. If you haven't planned a sleigh-riding party yet, now is the time. I wouldn't miss them because they're really fun. — Cheerio

In Conclusion

With this column we end our first year of writing Teen-Town Topics. It's been a lot of fun, and we hope that you have enjoyed reading it as much as we have enjoyed writing it. Until next week then—

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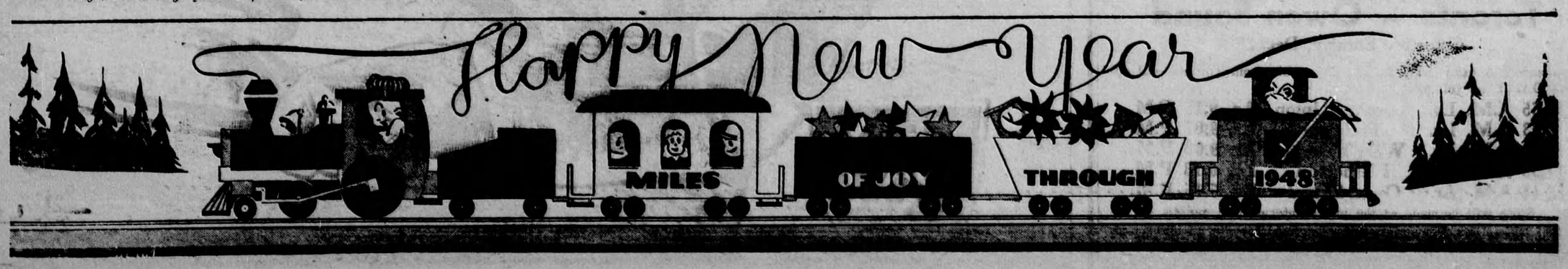
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