Winter Playground—More than 2,500 persons braved the wind-swept ice of Penetang Bay to attend Penetanguishene's first winter carnival, which featured dogsled races and scoot racing, the new Georgian Bay Sport. Holding the reins of his dogs is Ted Light, winner of the dog race for contestants under 16 years, and Mary Nicholson, Honey Harbor, a close second.

Sports – And One Thing or Another

By FRANK MANN HARRIS

("A Sixbit Critic")

"He gave me forty thousand dollars worth of baseball information—and a very small raise in pay." That was the crack made by Eddie Stanky right after his recent discussion of 1948 contract terms with the Brooklyn Dodger president; and evidently it got beneath the skin of Mr. Rickey, an astute gentleman noted for his intimate knowledge of two things—the intricacies of the game of baseball, and just exactly how many cents there are in a dollar.

Anyway, shortly after popping off in this manner, Mr. Stanky found himself traded to the Boston Braves in one of baseball's most surprising deals, as Eddie was looked upon as a fixture with the Dodgers—indeed, it was generally thought he was destined to succeed Leo Durocher when the former "Lip" moves from bench to the front office.

* * *

The trading of Stanky is bound to stir up a lot of things—and among them we wouldn't be surprised to find a revival of interest in the baseball players' union. The fans hear and read plenty about men like Bob Feller, Ted Williams and other stars who draw anywhere from forty to eighty thousand for a few months toil. But they know little or nothing of players forced to accept, year after year, just a fraction of what they would be worth—and what they could easily get—from some other club, yet unable to do a thing about it because of the jug-handled style of contracts that, in spite of all arguments to the contrary, give the managements about 80 per cent the best of it.

* * *

In his very interesting story of his life "Babe" Ruth tells of how Mayor Jimmy Walker made him "blubber" by reminding the Home Run King how much his conduct and example meant to the dirty-faced kids of America. That's just the kind of thing Jimmy Walker would be likely to get off, and not even with his tongue in his cheek when he said it.

* * *

Yet few men living should be in a better position to know than Walker that, baseball—boxing—hockey—any professional sport is, at bottom, a profit making business and nothing else. Even the general public should know that much by this time. Yet more pure slush and hooey is written and spoken about sport—Yes, and we eat it up—than about, well, even the private lives of our glamorous picture stars. If the day ever comes when newspapers put sport on the same basis—in the matter of free publicity—as they do, for instance, Automobile Factories or Department Stores, that will be a dark day indeed for a lot of promoters.

* * *

The "tie-up" which exists, in far too many instances, between sports writers and sports promoters, is deplorable, even dangerous. The writers, often poorly-paid even by newspaper standards, are expected to meet and travel, on terms of equality, with men making many times the money they do. The temptation to eke out those incomes by a seemingly harmless chore of boosting or press-agenting is always there, and is generally accepted. As one well-known Sports Editor—now dead—used to put it to his staff in moments of expansion, "I know you all are making a little on the side; and with things as they are I don't suppose there's anything we can do about it. But there's reason in all things, and I don't want any over-stepping of the bounds. That is, I won't stand for anybody pulling a gun and sticking anybody up!"

* * *

The results of this practice are, in nine cases out of ten, comparatively harmless. But there comes that tenth time. Suppose a promoter, to whom you are indebted for various favors, is putting on a boxing bout which you know never should have been made. Perhaps it's a broken down and punch drunk fighter, matched with an up-and-coming boy who can really punch. Are you, the writer, going to say what you really think, or are you going to pass it off with "well, the public will probably get its money's worth, so what the heck"?

* * *

We mention boxing particularly because right now in many sports because of recent ring fatalities—the fight "game" is decidedly under a cloud. Not so long ago Ray Robinson and Jimmy Doyle were scheduled to battle in the Windy City, until a Chicago sports writer had the intestinal fortitude to say that Doyle, in a previous bout, had almost died after a knockout. That ended the match, but just as far as Chicago was concerned. It took place, instead, in Cleveland, with the result that Doyle was killed.

* * *

One can't help wondering just what those Cleveland sports writers—who must have known all about Doyle's condition beforehand yet made no effective effort to stop the bout—thought of themselves when they learned he was dead. Or, for that matter, the promoters—Doyle's managers—or the folks who accepted rent or a percentage for the space in which to stage the match. Probably they all chipped in—along with a lot of fans— to make sure that the floral tributes at the funeral were both numerous and imposing. "You can always trust the sporting crowd to shell out for any worthy cause—they may talk hard-boiled but they're really the softest-hearted mugs on earth." The sentence just quoted is not, by the way, our own.

Not So Green

Two piles of apples lay on the ground. One contained a large-sized and rosy selection. The fruit in the other pile was green and small. "Large on top and small at the bottom?" inquired the new hired hand as he prepared to fill the barrel.

"Certainly not-" replied the farmer virtuously. "Honesty is always the best policy. Put the little apples at the top and the large ones at he bottom."

The hired hand did as he was told, commenting to himself that his employer was as green as his greenes fruit.

"Is the barrel full?" asked the farmer.

"Yep," replied the hand, "Filled and nailed down."

"Good," said the farmer. "Now turn it upside down and label it."

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Europe Foresees Bumper Harvests

A mild winter has tempered European misery and given promise of bumper crops in repayment for last year's suffering.

Nowhere has there been the intense hardship of last winter, the worst Europe experienced in this century.

Abundant rainfall accompanied abnormally high temperatures. The moisture raised prospect for harvests that in some countries may equal those of before the war. A survey shows:

Germany—Despite the food shortage, Germans experienced nothing like the suffering of last year. In mid-February of 1947, Berlin authorities reported more than 100 persons had died from exposure and malnutrition. No such conditions are reported this year.

France—One of the best harvests since before the war is expected. Spring wheat is past danger of frost damage.

Britain—London's mean temperature, representative of all Britain, has been the highest since 1943. Fields are green.

Italy—The weather man says winter may be just about over. Flowers are blooming in the northern provinces and winter wheat is six inches high. Fruit trees blossom in orchards outside Rome.

Scandinavia—Sweden had 40 per cent more snow, but temperatures three to five degrees above normal. Migratory birds are returning to Denmark, where crocuses are blooming.

Russia—Some areas report the warmest weather in 50 years.

May Re-fuel Planes In Air Over Ocean

Four weeks of tests over the Atlantic have led some British air experts to expect the refuelling of planes in the air to become regular routine.

Aviation ministry officials are cautiously optimistic. Much depends on the final results of the trials, which will continue at least through April when weather conditions are usually at their worst.

The refuelling service provides tanker aircraft which meet at rendevous with freight-carrying Liberator planes and pass to them the 1,000 gallons or more of fuel needed to complete the long non-stop crossing between London and Montreal.

It is argued thaat refuelling in flight has these advantages:

It enables an aircraft to take off from a shorter runway, because it need not carry its full load of fuel. It increases the possible payload and increases the range of an aircraft.

The increased payload is the main commercial argument. It is calculated that a passenger aircraft could save the weight and space needed to carry 2,000 gallons of fuel and so add to its passenger-carrying capacity by 16,000 pounds, or 50 persons.

The highest peak in the western hemisphere is Mount Aconcagua, in Argentine, 22,834 feet above sea level.

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ROCK COCKERELS 3c For March and April, our Barred Rocks are fast feathering and bred for livability and fast growth. Hanes Poultry Farm, Jerseyville, Ontario.

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