

Mark Clairmont

Sports Editor



Meeting 'The Champ'

A busy week on the sports front, locally, nationally and internationally.

Let's start at the top with a few comments on the plight of "The Champ", one Muhammad Ali. His unprecedented bid to regain the world heavyweight boxing title for the fourth time, WBC style, failed.

As much as I and most others wished that he would, it was probably best that he didn't. For it would seem somewhat ironic that the man who rekindled the interest in the pugilistic art and brought back some respect and legitimacy to the "game" would, with a win, have cast more shadowy doubt on what many still claim is a fixed game.

I have followed "The Champ's" career from its beginning. Then he was Cassius Clay, and it was my beginning in the fights. My father, Hugh, introduced me to the sport and I have followed it avidly since, these past fifteen years.

The highlight came when I met the new Muhammad Ali at Maple Leafs Gardens one cold February morning eight years ago. My father and I were covering Clyde Gray's first attempt at the world welterweight title against Jose' Napolese, since retired.

ALI PROMOTER

Ali was the promoter of the card, which also included a few local bouts and some other lower ranked fighters. It was the weigh-in the morning of the fight. The centre-ring was packed with media men, Howard Cosell and cigar, provincial sports governing bodies, fighters new and old and their camps, groupies, entourages and a few stowaways from the previous evening's hockey match.

After the proceedings had been completed and the crowds were dispersing, the big man, wearing a long heavy black coat, black pants and shirt and black work boots, wandered aimlessly toward one of the far exits off the ice surface.

He was a quiet penetrating man I remember. Rather sombre as I recall. But, when my father stopped him to take a picture and nudged me up beside "The Champ" lit up like a Christmas tree. He began chiding me and sparring with me while I had a picture taken. Then I went behind the camera and snapped one of him with my father. Later we did the same with Cosell.

My father had met both before when they came to Toronto when George Chuvalo was pummeled but not knocked down by Cassius Clay in his prime. That was 1964 or '63.

It wasn't until after it was all over that I became nervous. To think of it today kind of makes my senses jump.

LOWEST MOMENT

Anyway, back to Thursday's fight, if that's what you want to call it. I had seen most of Ali's fights either live on closed circuit or TV replays. This definitely was his lowest moment in the ring. I'm sure he looked better in training camp. Even the recent film footage of his camp looked more impressive.

Larry Holmes deserved to retain his title. He is a huge specimen of a perfect human being. Tall, toned and tight. And can be hit. Ali's arms began to feel the constant pounding from the start. He just couldn't raise his arms in defense, they were so weak. His rope-a-dope days were gone.

"The Champ" hardly threw a punch through the 40 minute fight. The seventh round was his best when he went up on his toes and began floating like an old butterfly and stinging like one too. He put his feet back on the canvas last in that round and that was it. He never looked the same the next three rounds before it was over. He just waited for anything to happen. Unfortunately Holmes didn't quit.

The crowd at the Gardens, hard core Ali fans, were amazed. They thought it just couldn't be true. How could "The Greatest of All Time" go out without a fight. However, Ali claims he's not out, just back in semi-retirement.

The Leon Spinks fight was much better. The young rich man with the dial (face) like a 70 fight veteran but who only has a dozen bouts under his belt, including a championship win and a loss to Ali could be on a comeback. If so lookout Holmes.

Onto the other world championship, that of baseball. I caught the last home game of the Toronto Blue Jays of the American League. Manager Bobby Mattick told me that night that he was pleased with his team's season and his first as a manager. He said that the team had provided the fans with interesting and exciting baseball. He thinks his team is in the cards in the future. They finished the year with 67 wins out of 162 games.

Unfortunately the Expos weren't in the cards this year. Their bid for the National League's East Division title drew the attention of this whole country. I for one was rooting for them, like former Expo pitcher Bill Stoneman who lives in Georgetown. Next year for sure. Philadelphia deserves it. They've been knocking on the door for a long time.

Bob Ollivier's column pointed out something to me that I as a non-hunter was unaware of. I didn't realize that you can hunt Canada Geese. I thought that they were our national bird. After all they are on our silver dollar.

I saw a flock of 70 or more take off from some clearing on the weekend, while I was in Muskoka, and they formed up into a 100 yard wide V shape for their trip south. The sight above all the coloured trees made me wish I had a camera.

It is good to see the Gems and Raiders off to a good start. Both have different teams than last year. The Raiders are stronger and the Gems more experienced and healthier. Attending one of the team's games this year will impress you. Both are beginning to play the game the way it was originally intended. Gerry Inglis and Tom Daley are to be congratulated for the jobs they are doing in reviving a sport that is all too increasingly being watched from the comfort of the home via television. These two teams provide better entertainment live than the pro teams do on the tube. So get out and be a supporter. And don't forget the minor leagues.

GDHS grid iron team set

Despite losing all three first half season games, the GDHS Junior Rebel football team expects to clinch the fourth and final Peel-Halton league playoff spot with triumphs in their three remaining scheduled contests.

To do so, they will have to go to Milton Thursday and defeat them in the unofficial northern division title game, then return home for Tuesday's encounter with Perdue to do the same and carry on with a victory over White Oaks in Oakville the following week.

"We'll win two," referring to the first couple, vows head coach Fred Kotani. "If we can do that we'll have a pretty good chance of getting a playoff game."

Friday they lost a heart-breaker 6-0 in the final five minutes of a match with Oakville Trafalgar. The convert attempt was blocked by Terry Rottruff, a member of the outstanding Rebel defensive unit.

The Georgetown team came within scoring distance on several occasions but just couldn't push the ball over the goal line. On one play Duane Wilson ran a punt back 65 yards from inside his own 20 to inside their 20. Unfortunately the ball was turned over to the opposition on the next play when a substitute quarterback who had to be put in, because of an equipment malfunction suffered by regular pivot Mike Ash, fumbled the ball. Wilson also had an interception in the game, one of three turnovers his team picked up. The others came on fumbles. Rookie Gary Lockwood had the touchdown.

Three days before, though, the team was set back for its biggest defeat of the current campaign when Queen Elizabeth Park levelled them 49-7. "We weren't even in the contest," admitted Kotani.

"We're still in the running for a playoff spot" says Kotani.



Minor hockey league rep teams got started this week with league games. The house league will hold their draft this week and teams and schedules will be announced in the paper.

SHINNY CALENDAR

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 10
Owen Sound at Georgetown Raiders, 8:30 p.m.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 11
Minor midgets host Brampton, 7:00 p.m. Alcott

Minor atom at Milton, 4:00 p.m.

Atom at Streetsville, 6:50 p.m.

Minor bantam at Streetsville, 8:50 p.m.

Midget at Streetsville, 9:50 p.m.

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 12
Minor bantams host Burlington, 4:00 p.m. Alcott

Midgets host Burlington, 5:30 p.m. Alcott

Atom at Georgetown Gems, 7:30

Pee wees at Streetsville, 5:30 p.m.

Bantam at Streetsville, 6:30 p.m.

Minor Midgets at Brampton, 1:00 p.m.

MONDAY, OCTOBER 13
Minor pee wees at Brampton, 7:15 p.m.

Juveniles at Ancaster, 9:30 p.m.

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 14
Minor atoms - Exhibition game, 6:30 p.m. Memorial

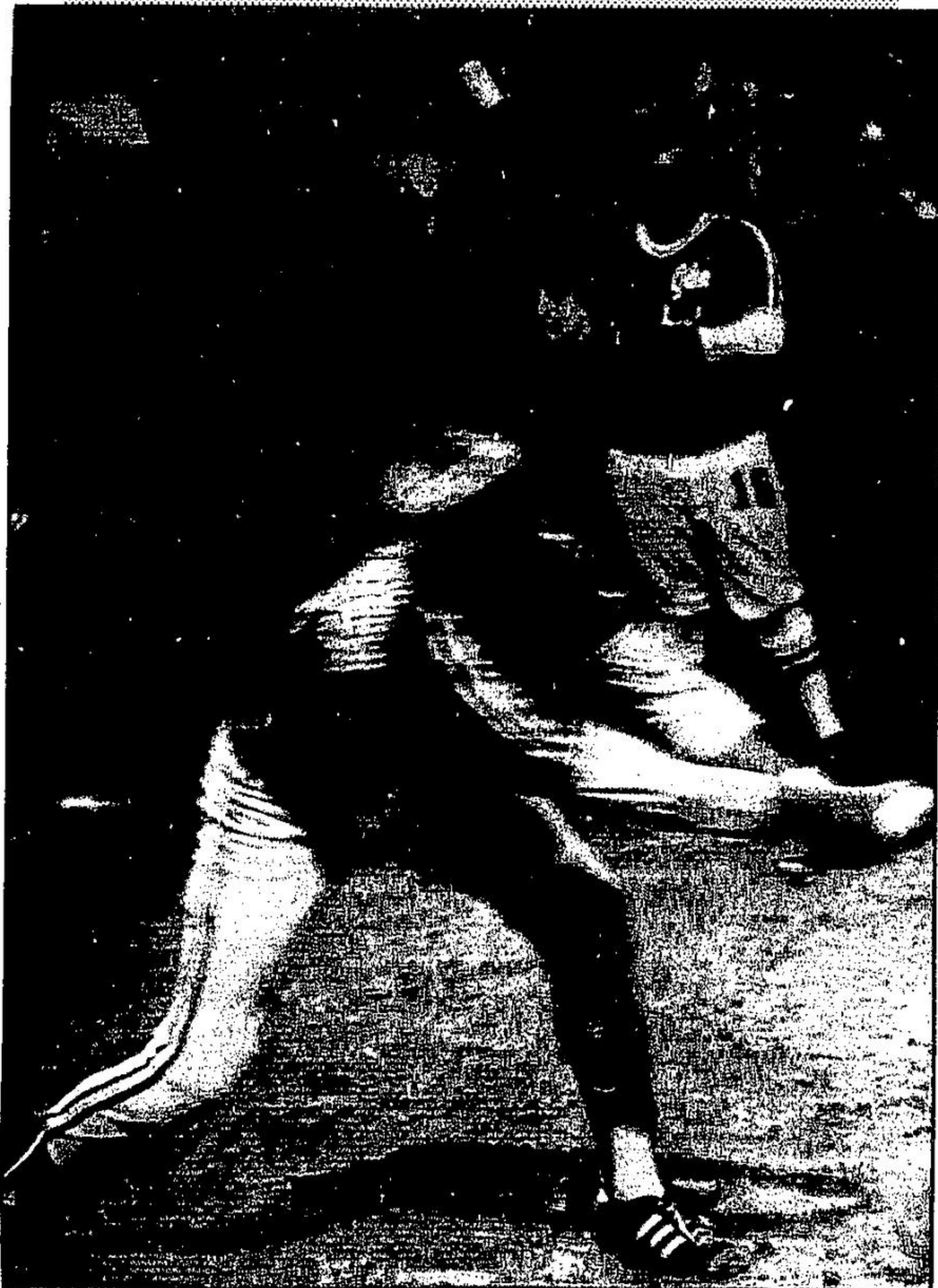
Minor Pee wees host Brampton, 7:45 p.m. Memorial

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 16
Atoms host Burlington, 6:30 p.m. Memorial

Pee wees host Burlington, 7:45 p.m. Memorial

Bantams host Burlington, 7:00 p.m. Alcott

Juveniles host Burlington, 8:30 p.m. Alcott



The Glen Merchants fastball team should still be alive in their best of seven series against Hespler. At stake is the Halton Rural title. Hespler leads the series three games to one. Here Glen Fendley waits on deck as the unidentified batter swings.

3 DAYS ONLY!
OCT. 11th to OCT. 13th



HOLIDAY WEEKEND SPECIALS!

On special occasions like Christmas, Easter & Thanksgiving, we like to have specials to offer to our customers as a way of showing our appreciation for their patronage.

<p>ALL TREES & SHRUBS</p> <p style="font-size: 2em; text-align: center;">1/3 OFF</p>	<p>ALL EVERGREENS</p> <p style="font-size: 2em; text-align: center;">20% OFF</p>
<p>ALL CONCRETE FOUNTAINS, PLANTERS, TABLES AND BENCHES</p> <p style="font-size: 2em; text-align: center;">20% OFF</p>	<p>ALL GRASS SEED</p> <p style="font-size: 2em; text-align: center;">10% OFF</p> <p style="font-size: 0.8em;">THERE'S STILL TIME TO PUT DOWN GRASS SEED. AT MEADOWLANDS YOU WILL FIND THE FINEST PROVEN MIXTURES FOR SUN & SHADE.</p>
<p>FREE 500 G. BOTTLE OF PLANT AIDE</p> <p style="font-size: 0.8em;">WITH THE PURCHASE OF ANY EVERGREENS VALUED AT \$30.00 OR MORE.</p>	<p>SPECIAL BUYS:</p> <p>PUMPKINS: YOUR CHOICE 50¢</p> <p>PEPPER SQUASH 4 for 99¢ 1500 A BUSHEL</p>
<p>ALL LAWN FERTILIZERS</p> <p style="font-size: 2em; text-align: center;">20% OFF</p>	<p>FREE COFFEE</p> <p style="font-size: 0.8em;">Come in to visit and enjoy a hot cup of coffee while you browse around our gift shop.</p>

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HOURS

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