

Legion Bowling - cont'd

Games over 200: Y. Leclair 215; M. Milks 207; H. Duriez 219; G. Churney 211, 228; S. Gusul 206; L. MacRae 205; Pat Jones 245; N. Chopty 202; Paulette Coupal 211; E. Hamann 247; E. Beddard 213, 236.

Standings to March 23rd - Irish Regiment 88½; Spitfires 72; Corvettes 64; Bombardiers 58½; Cameron Highlanders 53.

SPORTS SLANTS

- By Ray Shank

By the time you read this, Montreal Canadiens will have clinched first place in the NHL's east division, Chicago will probably have done the same in the west and in another week, the 1972-73 edition of the Stanley Cup playoffs will be under way.

At this writing, the Habs had a very comfortable II-point cushion on top spot and needed only one more win to clinch it. Meanwhile, Boston and New York were in a hot battle for second and third spots and, more important, Detroit and Buffalo were neck and neck for that all-important fourth position -- the difference between packing your uniforms in mothballs for another season or pocketing a few extra thousand bucks.

Instead of raving on about my pre-season predictions on the final standings and making excuses why this and that team didn't make it, and boring you with more predictions for the playoffs, think I'll take a rest from NHL talk this week and write about something else.

However, you can expect lots of NHL talk next week, after the regular season is over and the playoffs are about to start.

There's an interesting sports article in the April issue of *Oui*, a magazine very similar to *Playboy* and also published by the luckiest bachelor in the world, Hugh Hefner. It's titled *The Big Game is Over* and is about the big changes coming about in most pro sports -- in profitability and popularity.

Football, baseball and basketball are approaching an identity crisis, the article says, the same one that all but destroyed boxing when it ran out of white boxers for the white ticket buyer to identify with.

In short, the story talks about how black athletes have shone in baseball, basketball and football, but have been denied the right to hold executive positions with the teams they've given so much to.

It also asks the question, how long will the white American psyche tolerate most spectators being asked to identify with a racial

minority? American whites, it seems, have deserted their homes, neighborhoods, schools etc. not to associate with black Americans.

It works the same in sports. Black and white athletes, be they basketball or football players, rarely associate with each other.

"We are, in fact, at the point where many people think of sports in terms of race," the story goes, "white sports and black sports, the black sports being basketball first, then football and baseball."

There is apparently proof that this division of athletes is widening -- some good, young athletes are already turning away from the Big 3 sports because of the competition they fear from blacks.

Several of the top young golfers on the circuit -- Bob Goalby, Hale Irwin, DeWitt Weaver to name a few -- were once football stars; Ray Floyd, Bob Murphy and Fred Marti were once top football prospects before turning to golf; and Ken Harrelson is another major league baseball player who left the parks to go on the links.

Let's face it, a white athlete hardly has a chance to make it anymore in those three big sports.

In 1971, the pro football draft was no different than basketball. In the first ten rounds of the NFL selections, 214 of the 260 players were black.

Over-all, the National Basketball Association is two-thirds black, while major league football and baseball are approaching a 50 per cent black population. And most of your super stars are black.

But the story points out that, should the black athlete completely take over dominance of any of the sports, the white ticket buyer will stop going to the games because of racial bias.

"There is no reason to expect that the white sports fan will pay money indefinitely for a chance to watch somebody else beat him at his own game," the article says.

Hockey, the story says, has the brightest future, "at least so long as ticket-buying Americans identify more closely with white Americans than they do with black Americans."

Hockey outsells pro basketball in almost every town where the two sports compete - except Los Angeles and Oakland. On the other hand, the very first season they were in existence, Philadelphia Flyers of the NHL, dull but all white, outdrew the predominately black basketball 76ers, who still had Wilt Chamberlain at that time.

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