

SPORTS SLANTS

- By Ray Shank

Now that Detroit Red Wings have Alex Delvecchio as their coach and the Wings appear to have turned over a new leaf under 'Fats', Detroit sportswriters have started praising the club instead of running them into the ground.

The writers in Detroit are terrible for knocking their sports teams if they lose a game or two, and it wasn't surprising a couple of weeks ago (and with good reason, I guess) to completely murder the Red Wings.

One writer wrote a column and led it off by saying: "Welcome, dear friends, to the City of Chumps!" Of course the writer led off knocking the Red Wings' dismal 2-8-1 record. But he wasn't only rapping the Red Wings. He was also referring to the city's other major league teams -- the Tigers in baseball, the Pistons in basketball and the Lions in football.

In a way, though, you can't blame the guy. Detroit teams haven't won much in the last 15 or 20 years.

Around 40 years ago, Detroit was nationally known as the City of Champs, not Chumps. The Tigers won the World Series, the Lions were Champions of the NFL and the Red Wings dominat-

ed the NHL and won the Stanley Cup every now and then. It was the same thing in the 1950s. From the late 40s to the mid 50s, the Red Wings won the Prince of Wales Trophy eight out of nine years. They managed four Stanley Cups in that span.

But, the last time the Wings won a Stanley Cup was 1954-55. They finished first twice after that, but never saw the Cup again.

Detroit's record in the four major league professional team sports in the 16-year period since the football Lions' last championship in 1957 is a dismal 1-62. The single winning year was in 1968 when the Tigers won the World Series.

Apparently, the only comparable major league city in either the U.S. or Canada with a worse championship record than Detroit is Atlanta.

But Atlanta didn't go major league in any sport before 1966.

According to a survey, Detroit ranks 25th in the past 16 years, in all sports standings.

Montreal, would you believe, ranks first, percentage-wise, in a list of 30-odd major league cities, with nine Stanley Cups in the last 16 years. The Expos, of course, haven't won anything yet, but they've only been base-

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