

Francie Is Going To Munich

Olympic Hopeful Eyes 1,500 Meter Race

By Bill Anderson
(News Sports Writer)

Francie Kraker Johnson has made a wise investment of her time in the past four years.

After finishing fourth in a preliminary heat of the 800-meter run in the 1968 Olympic Games at Mexico City, Mrs. Johnson was already thinking of 1972 and Munich.

Even before she could start thinking of spending the late summer in the southern part of West Germany, she had to become a member of the

United States Women's Olympic Track Team.

No mean feat in itself. One has to be in the pink of condition on just one day in the summer for the team trials, sort of a mini-Olympiad in itself.

Staying in the peak of condition, avoiding injury and using the proper technique for just a day or two competition in the far distant future posed no small problem for Mrs. Johnson.

Just how well she carried off this feat can be deter-

mined by her performance in the team trials at Frederick, Md., last weekend.

The former Ann Arborite now residing in the Boston area qualified for the Olympic team with a second place finish in the trials. She had a 4:15 clocking in the 1,500 meters.

Only one thing kept her from winning the race and that was a record shattering performance by another Francie, Francie Larrieu. She won the 1,500 meters with a 4:10.4 clocking, a new American record.

Another little aside to point up the quality of Mrs. Johnson's performance. Over the years, she has specialized in the 800 meters and this 1,500 race was one of her very few attempts at this distance.

Her decision to run in the 1,500 event instead of the 800 was a most crucial one.

Make no mistake about it, Mrs. Johnson has enough speed to be considered a "world class" competitor in the 800. But she didn't quite possess enough speed to be a winner.

Combining her speed with her determination to train hard has made Mrs. Johnson a definite contender for a medal in the Munich race.

She discovered her ability in the longer race quite by accident during a 1970 European tour.

"Our 1,500 meters wasn't the strongest event," she said. "Our regular runner was injured and our back-up runner wasn't doing too good either."

"The coach of the team decided to let everyone run in the event that they wanted to during a meet in Rumania. I decided to run in the 1,500."

"I had never run in the 1,500 before. But I ran a real good time. At that time, it was one of the best in the world. So I decided to concentrate on the 1,500."

Running is still pretty much running, but training for the two different events requires an entirely different regimen.

The 800 requires a lot of short interval work aimed at bringing one's speed to the highest level. As track training goes, this isn't the most difficult work.

Stretching one's endurance twice as far as in the 1,500, requires plenty of "old fashioned hard work." Literally miles and miles of running.

Mrs. Johnson approached the decision with her eyes wide open and well aware of the amount of work that it was going to entail.

"Living in the New England area, there is a great emphasis of distance running," she said. "I was exposed to a lot of marathon running training methods."

"Most of the people in New England do their running on the country roads. It is quite hilly in that part of the country and it really builds up your endurance. In Michigan, the terrain is pretty flat and I don't think you would get the same benefit from the work."

"Normally, I would just try to run five or six miles a day. The most I would ever do on one day would be 17 miles. Just before the trials I concentrated on bringing up my speed. I would sprint up the hills and that helped quite a bit."

Mrs. Johnson is visiting her family in Ann Arbor for a few days before going on the United States training camp in Champaign, Ill.

She's also taking advantage of her stay in Ann Arbor to work out with her former mentor, Ken "Red" Simmons, the coach of the Michigan girls track team.

Simmons and his wife Betty, played an instrumental role in Mrs. Johnson's track career when she competed under the Ann Arbor girls' team banner in the 1960s. Mrs. Johnson is now a resident of the Michigammas. Simmons and his wife,

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FRANCIE KRAKER JOHNSON

Fittipaldi Captures British Grand Prix

BRANDS HATCH, England (AP) — Emerson Fittipaldi of Brazil drove a JPS-Lotus to a narrow victory over Jackie Stewart of Scotland in the British Grand Prix Saturday and increased his lead in the World Drivers Championship.

Fittipaldi covered the 76 laps in one hour, 47 minutes, 50.2 seconds—an average speed of 112.06 miles per hour—and crossed the finish line about five seconds ahead of Stewart, who was in a Tyrrell.

Peter Revson of New York was third in a McLaren, followed by Chris Amon of New Zealand in a Matra and Denis Hulme of New Zealand in a McLaren.

The victory was Fittipaldi's

third of the season and gave him a total of 43 points, 16 more than Stewart. His other triumphs were in the Spanish and Belgium Grand Prix.

Jack Ickx of Belgium took the early lead and held it through the first 50 laps. Then he was forced into the pits with oil spewing from the gearbox, and was out of the race.

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Mortimer On Sports Teddy Ballgame Talks Baseball

By Jeff Mortimer
(News Sports Writer)

Ted Williams' antipathy towards reporters is a cliché by now, as is his insatiable appetite for discussions about hitting.

So when a reporter asks Teddy Ballgame about his favorite subject (or maybe second favorite, next to fishing), what he does is to answer in short bursts, subtly sashay away from the reporter and try to interest one of his players in the conversation.

That's how an interview with Williams can turn into an interview with another Ted—one whose last name is Kubiak. Or, at least, that appeared to be the intention of the Texas Rangers' manager on a recent sultry night around the batting cage at Tiger Stadium.

"What's happened to all the hitters, Ted?"

"I don't know what the story is. I keep thinking it's going to pick up. Now here's a guy (grabbing Kubiak by the arm) . . . what do you think has happened to the hitters?"

The absurdity of Williams, a .344 lifetime hitter, asking Kubiak, a .229 lifetime hitter, such a question slashes around in the air like the humidity.

"The pitchers are no better," says Kubiak. "The guys aren't working hard enough, I guess." An answer to please a manager but hardly a profound analysis.

By now, Williams had warmed to his subject, which is what one always hopes for. Trying to capture a Splendid Splinter lecture on the art of putting bat against ball by simply recording his words is like trying to hear a Beethoven symphony by reading the liner notes.

A puzzled, almost hurt, scowl appears on the face, still movie-star handsome at going-on-54. "Our hitters in batting practice—they see the ball go right by. They're not gutty enough up there."

A blast from the past. "I'd like to know how many times in my career, I just missed the first pitch. Then I'd do the same thing again. Strike two. Okay, now I choke up a little bit. WHAM! (Kubiak's eyes glass over). Into rightfield."

He's talking to Kubiak, about Kubiak-type hitters. He knows the reporter can hear but he won't look at him. "I've talked about it before. I talk about hitting from the neck up. That's all I'm doing. I'm not talking about style."

"Don't forget one thing. Every kid has his own style but there are still certain things you look for—how he gets the bat on the ball, how quick his swing is (Kubiak is nodding furiously) and, if it's not quick, why not?"

Kubiak doesn't know. The reporter doesn't know. Williams tries another opening.

"CONTACT, now, BY GOD, getting contact into it is a tough thing."

Kubiak smiles uncertainly. Williams grabs a bat, demonstrates. "You're 1,000 per cent into it. Not 100 per cent. 1,000 per cent. UNGH! Like that. UNGH! 1,000 per cent UNGH! Here (grabs his own wrist). And here (slaps his thigh)."

With each "UNGH!", Williams sheds 10 years. The wrist snaps, the thigh pistons the powerful stride of the leg and is precisely co-ordinated with the wrist.

The grounds crew has come out to remove the cage. Williams is oblivious, still demonstrating his stride to the awe-struck Kubiak.

"A helluva hitter," one of them mutters.

Mickey Stanley on his three home runs in four games a week ago: "I got three mistakes. One was a high slider, one was a high knuckler with the wind blowing out and one was a high curve. If the pitchers don't make any mistakes, I've had it."

Orlino pitcher Pat Dobson figures he helped both himself and the Tigers when he sounded off about the left side of the Detroit infield after the 1969 season.

You may recall that Dobson was traded by Detroit to San Diego after he explained that his record might have been better with someone other than Don Wert at third and Tom Tresh at shortstop. A year later, the Padres dealt Dobson to Baltimore, where he became a 20-game winner. The Tigers peddled Denny McLain to Washington for Ed Brinkman and Aurelio Rodriguez.

I expressed my opinion in 1969 and got canned," Dobson says. "It was the best thing that ever happened to me. And why do you think they (the Tigers) traded for Brinkman and Rodriguez? They're no dummies but I think I woke them up."

It seems it is only possible to get one brand of baseball scorebook now in Ann Arbor. This is unfortunate because the one brand available is (a) the most expensive, (b) the one with the least room for players' names and (c) the one that is least favored by experienced scorers.

We have been unable to get a satisfactory explanation for this unhappy state of affairs. Whatever it is, it isn't free enterprise.

The inquiry into nicknames of high school athletic teams a few months back has produced another example of engaging nomenclature. The athletes at Maryville (Mo.) High go by the name of Spoothounds and a letter to Athletic Director Larry Wieland has yielded the following explanation, taken from the pages of the school's student manual. The Maryville mascot is speaking:

"I guess you would say I originated from a combination joke and scolding. One evening a bunch of MHS gridsters had flubbed their workout, Coach L. E. Ziegler, having



Back For A Visit

Before reporting to the Olympic training camp in Champaign, Ill., Francie Kraker Johnson is taking a few days to train with her former coach, Ken "Red" Simmons of the Michigammas. Simmons and his wife,

Betty, played an instrumental role in Mrs. Johnson's track career when she competed under the Ann Arbor girls' team banner in the 1960s. Mrs. Johnson is now a resident of the Michigammas. Simmons and his wife,

ASA Regional Tournament Lightcrete Strong Softball Contender

By Jeff Mortimer
(News Sports Writer)

The American Softball Association's state qualifying tournament for the world regional could wind up with Jack Greenwood trying to subdue a lineup that includes Jack Starling, Jerry Ahrens and Gary Dresch.

And haven't we been here before?

For the second year in a row, the tournament will be held at Veterans Park, where former Michigan quarterback Greenwood won the hearts of local fans last summer by pitching Lansing Strobe's Viking out of the losers' bracket to the title.

Greenwood pitched 10 games in the three-day tournament, five of them the last day as he hurled consecutive wins over Fel-Kran Plumbing, the winners' bracket survivor which features Starling, Ahrens and Dresch as its heavy hitters.

Greenwood will be back this year and so will the trio of big sticks, although this time around they're wearing the colors of Lightcrete, the local team given the best chance of

Under the banner of the Lansing Bombers, this club played host to the regional last year and was not required to compete in the state event. They went all the way to the finals of the regional before losing to Detroit Northdurts Tool.

In a game where pitching is all-important, Drop Forge features two of the state's finest in Lyn Ackerman and Jim Sober.

The effect of the state's ruling on where the non-winners must compete has been to make the field stronger as well as smaller. In the past, a number of clubs with little hope of victory would compete just to get a few games and, perhaps, on the off chance that lightning would strike.

But a victory by any of this year's combatants wouldn't be too much of a surprise.

Other local entries are Lupi and Sons, Clark's Super 100 and Tomaji's Lounge.

Lupi features Ron Gallaher, whose 480 average tops the city's Major League, and Bud Corwin, the 42-year-old pitcher who is making a strong comeback after an off-season in 1971. Corwin's record is only 3-4 but his earned run average is a sparkling 1.91.

Clark's hopes will rest on the stickwork of Dennis White (.370) and Gary White (.323) and the pitching of Bud Fox (11-3, 1.67 ERA).

Whalers To Play In Boston Arena

BOSTON (AP) — The New

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101 to 200 — 2c
Two Machines—No Waiting
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