

## He Developed Eight National Champs

# Simmons Retires; Michigammas Look For A Coach

BY DAVE RIGAN  
News Sports Writer

Is Ken Simmons irreplaceable? Considering the job he has done for the last 16 years as coach of the Michigammas, it's hard to believe that anyone can fill his shoes. The team won the state championship this year, yet he has decided to give up coaching after the many successful years he and his wife, Betty, spent building a track and field program for girls in the Ann Arbor area. The major reason he has decided to quit is that Betty recently died of cancer.

It was a big loss for all the girls as well as for "Red," as Simmons is known by most of his friends because of the red hair he still has after 66 years. As Simmons said, "Coaching these girls takes up a lot of time, and Betty was indispensable for many reasons. These past few months I've had to do everything myself and it has taken up most of my time."

"Betty used to take care of all the problems, writing letters, making phone calls and organizing things in general. The girls loved her personality as well. I can't do all the work and coach too."

The whole idea of a girls track team started after the Simmons saw the 1960 Olympics in Rome and were impressed with the women competing for the United States. "I was too old and didn't have the experience to coach anything else, so Betty and I decided to start a team for girls in Ann Arbor. We went to the public schools and looked for girls we felt

had some potential. We started out with only one girl."

But what a girl it was. Her name was Francie Kraker. She eventually became a three-time national champ and competed in the Olympics at Mexico City in 1968 and at Munich in 1972. She now is assistant athletic director for women at the University of Wisconsin at Milwaukee and works with her husband John Goodridge who is track coach there.

Simmons recalls that his greatest thrill as a coach was seeing Francie walk down the runway at the Olympics in Mexico City, knowing that she was going to compete against the best in the world.

"Francie was the hardest girl to coach I ever had," said Simmons. "She was so intense and competitive. Yet, that is what made her a champion."

She wasn't the only champion he coached. There have been eight national champs and some 50 or 60 state champs. He mentioned some that stood out in his memory. Carol Frederick won two national championships in one year. During the summer of 1970 she won the 1500 meters and in the fall was the national cross country champion.

He also mentioned Sperry Jones, a national champ back in the 1960s. Janice Brown was a 100-meter hurdles champ as well as finishing second in two other events. Louise Garrish was national champion in the javelin.

Cindy Jones was a national champion in the shot put. "Cindy was like a lot of girls," said Simmons. "She weighed 200 pounds when we first saw her, but we put her on a training program and she got down to 175 and became a great athlete. There are a lot of girls around that are good natural athletes and only need a little coaching and work to develop their ability."

"The main thing I try to teach the girls is an attitude about training and about life that will carry on into other activities as they get older. You have to bring them along gradually because they don't understand a lot of the time what it takes to become a well-trained athlete, but they do learn about themselves, both physically and emotionally."

"Anything can happen when a girl hits puberty. The girls are starting to mature then, and they have more complicated problems to deal with emotionally. Betty was able to talk to the girls about the more personal things and that helped immensely."

Simmons figures that Ellen Dempsey and Molly Brennan are the most promising girls he has coached recently and feels that if they keep at it they may end up in the 1980 Olympics.

One of his most memorable experiences in the 1964 Olympics at Tokyo was his efforts in helping Andy Toro, a member of the Hungarian Olympic team, escape and defect to the United States. "It was all planned in advance and I provided the getaway car. I also helped Andy when he got back to Ann Arbor because the only possessions he had were his track clothes."

Andy later married a former member of the Michigammas, Jane Babcock. They live in California and she was a member of the rowing team at the University of California at Berkeley. "Jane was one of the most mature girls I ever coached, as well as being a good runner, she has a chance of making the U.S. Olympic team next year," said Simmons.

Simmons himself was a good all-around athlete. He once won seven events in a high school track meet. He continued his athletic career at Michigan Normal College, which is now Eastern Michigan, where he was a member of a national champion mile relay team.

After graduation, he joined the Detroit Police Department and spent much of his time training for the police track team and competed on a number of field days. "There were times when I felt like a paid athlete," he admits.

He left Detroit in 1968 to become a staff member of the physical education department at Michigan where he served until 1972.

As for the future of the Michigammas, he isn't sure. "I've tried to find someone to take over the job, but there doesn't seem to be anyone who wants the responsibility. It's a big job. I spent a lot of money out of my own pocket to help the girls, and not many people can do that."

It isn't likely that anyone ever will be able to do the job of coaching the Michigammas like Ken and Betty Simmons.

Maybe someone may care enough about young girls and track to help them keep things going. Without a coach the team might just fold altogether.

## Hayes Trying To Stay Out Of Controversy

COLUMBUS, Ohio (AP) — Woody Hayes neither confirms nor denies allegations he turned in the Michigan State Spartans for alleged football recruiting violations.

"I don't have to. I'm not the one on trial, you know," snapped the controversial Ohio State coach Monday during his first press luncheon of the 1975 season.

Any National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) decision has been postponed indefinitely regarding the Spartans, the hosts to Ohio State in an important Big Ten Conference opener Saturday.

Hayes refers newsmen to a statement last week from executive director Walter Byers of the NCAA.

Byers said Ohio State did not bring the Michigan State case to his attention. The Big Ten also probed the allegations MSU broke the rules in recruiting new players.

"Allegations came from four other sources. This information was at hand before we contacted Ohio State. The information which prompted the inquiry came from a newspaper source and three other members of our association," said Byers.

Earlier last week, a news release from Michigan State blamed Hayes for bringing the charges against the school. "These charges he has not denied," the release said.

Responded Hayes, "If they (Michigan State) want to talk, they're privileged to do so. It would serve no good purpose for me to talk about this game."

Quarterback Charlie Baggett, who engineered the Spartans' 16-13 home upset of the Buckeyes last season, contends Michigan State will have the advantages of a capacity home crowd and more experience for the tense rematch.

"They've (the Buckeyes) got to come to Spartan Stadium," said Baggett. "They're going to be scared. They've got new people and they're human. I'd be scared if I were them."

Told of Baggett's comments, Hayes said, "He summed up things pretty well. That's more talk than Arch (Griffin, Ohio State's All-American tailback) has done in four years."

## This Week's Drills Vital, Says Stolz

EAST LANSING, Mich. (AP) — Michigan State is "not anywhere near ready to play Ohio State," Spartan coach Denny Stolz says.

But Stolz is confident he can remedy the situation by Saturday, when MSU collides with the Buckeyes in what Stolz called the "biggest ballgame that's ever opened the Big Ten season."

"We have a week to go — a week of hard practice to get mentally and physically ready," Stolz said at a news conference Monday. "We'll follow the same procedure we would for a game later in the season."

Stolz said the game would be won or lost in a series of hard practices between now and Saturday.

The Spartans have been pointing for the OSU opener ever since spring practice, because the contest should reveal just how much of a contender MSU is going to be in the Big Ten.

The Buckeyes probably have been aiming at the game ever since the stunning 16-13 upset loss handed to them late last season by the Spartans. The defeat cost Ohio State a perfect season and perhaps a national championship.

Ohio State is ranked fourth in the preseason poll, while MSU, 7-3-1 last year, is rated 12th.

"We're coming out of two weeks of hard practice," Stolz said Monday. "We have bumps and bruises. If we lose two kids at any one spot, we're in trouble."

Stolz expressed satisfaction with his offense, the weak spot in the Spartans' game the past two years. He is especially smug about the matured abilities of standout quarterback Charlie Baggett and sparring fullback Levi Jackson.

"We have to upgrade the production at tailback," he said, referring to Rich Bess and Ted Bell.

Stolz also praised his young wide receivers, who are filling spots hurt by graduation losses, noting they "caught the ball pretty well" in a scrimmage last Saturday.



## Most Likely To Succeed

Dennis Lick demonstrates his strength, a reason Big Ten sportswriters have voted the Wisconsin offensive tackle likely to be the Big Ten's lineman of the year. Lick is carrying Mike and Pat, sons of Badger offensive backfield coach Mike Stock.

## Badger Aide Insists Dennis Lick Is Best

MADISON, Wis. (AP) — That offensive linemen seldom receive due recognition understandably ruffles Chuck McBride.

For one thing, McBride is offensive line coach at the University of Wisconsin. For another, he insists his prize protégé, Dennis Lick, is the best tackle in college football. Moreover, McBride believes those who dole post-season honors aren't fully appreciative of Lick's talents.

"It really upsets me," McBride said. "We beat Nebraska here last year, and they had a kid who was supposed to be an All-American. Well, one of our defensive tackles beat him again and again. Then Lick had his guy on his back all day, but Dennis didn't make All-American."

Not that the 6-foot-3, 262-pound Lick was totally overlooked. A three-year starter, he was acknowledged to be the best blocker in a line which helped tailback Billy Marek rush for 1,215 yards, third best in the nation last year.

Despite missing the last three games with a knee injury that required surgery, Lick was a first team All-Big Ten choice and was named honorable mention All-American.

McBride believes Lick will receive much more recognition in 1975—especially if the Badgers, as predicted, contend for the Big Ten championship.

Sports writers who completed a tour of Big Ten training camps last week voted Lick most likely to be named the conference's lineman of the year. He will get his first chance to prove he deserves it when the Badgers host Michigan Saturday in one of the season's most important games.

"If there's a better tackle in the country, I want to see him," McBride said. "The big thing is his ability to stay on a block. He has exceptional balance and picks up assignments right away. You don't have to tell him something 50 times. He adjusts well."

"Pro scouts come in here and I tell them to look at the films. They come out drooling," he said. "He's got to be a first-round draft pick. I'm not saying he'll go No. 1, but if anybody is looking for an offensive lineman, he'll have to be picked among the first 26 players."

A lucrative pro contract would suit Lick just fine. First, however, is the matter of helping Wisconsin win what would be its first conference title since 1962. And he would like to help Marek, his teammate since high school days at Chicago St. Rita, rush for another 1,500 yards or so.

"Playing in front of Bill and the other excellent backs (Ken Starch, Larry Canada, Mike Morgan) we have really gives a lineman incentive," Lick said.

## Prep Sports

**GIRLS**  
TENNIS AT HUDON HIGH: Pioneer 4, Huron 3, SINGLES: Cathy Chess (H) def. Sue Burtz, 6-1, 6-1; Christy Collins (H) def. Polly White, 6-4, 6-1; Michelle Bowers (P) def. Sara Unruh, 6-4, 6-1; Rhonda Graham (H) def. Laura Leuchner, 7-4, 3-6, 6-1; DOUBLES: Amy Frederick-Kenya Sinner (P) def. Janet Marks-Lari Stebbins, 6-4, 6-4, 6-3; Mary Probst-Carol Rosenbinder (P) def. Cindy Farnell-Mercedys Hiers, 6-2, 6-2; Joanne Eckstacy-Lenka (P) def. Sarah Calder-Wendy Thoren, 6-4, 6-0.  
HIGHLIGHTS: The first doubles match was the last to be completed and proved decisive.  
RECORDS: Pioneer 1-0 South Central Conference, 1-0 overall; Huron 8-1 South Central Conference, 9-1 overall.

**BOYS**  
GOLF AT CLINTON (MEADOW LAKE COURSE): Clinton 179, St. Thomas 211.  
SCORES: Clinton (Barry Clark 37, Dave Mewarv 42, Al Wink 50, John Wink 50); St. Thomas (Lindy Jullianus 51, Ben Simon 56, Ken Mize 51, Bill Paul 54).

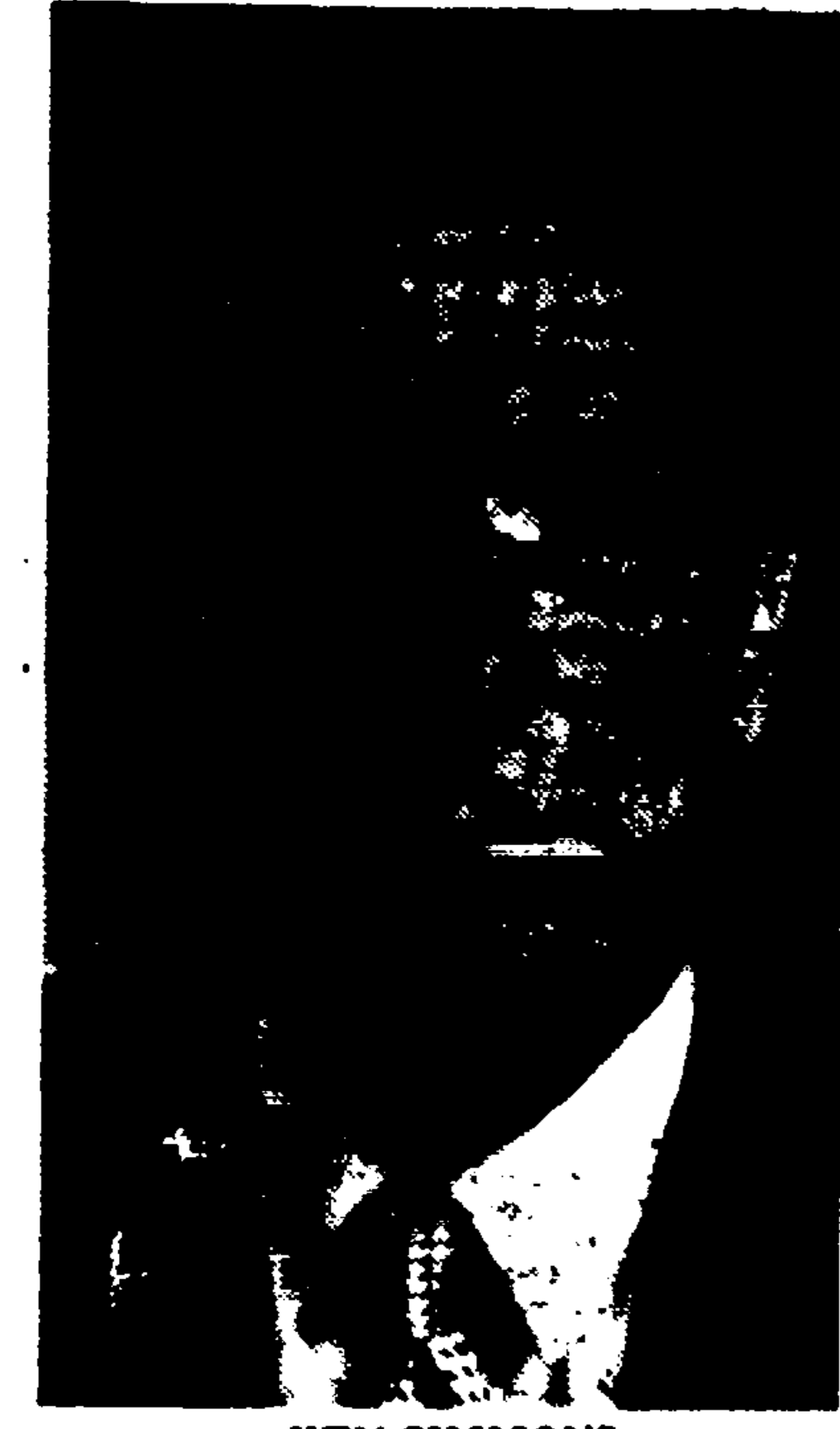
## Injured M Co-Captain To Continue Duties

BY WAYNE DENEFF  
News Sports Editor

Michigan senior guard Kirk Lewis, injured and out for the season, nevertheless

Michigan will have its defensive backfield intact for about the first time since the start of drills.

Other players scheduled to return to



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