



sports roundup

By MARK QUEEN

Trotters Still Supreme?

JUST HOW GOOD is the present Harlem Globetrotter basketball team?

Year in and year out, this great collection of colored cage stars continues to be the game's biggest attraction every place it appears. Its comedy routines are still marvelous to behold. But does the current crop of 'Trotters possess the same skills that gave Goose Tatum, Marquess Haynes, Sweetwater Clifton and their colleagues of another era the reputation of being virtually unbeatable in actual competition.

For instance, how would the latest edition of the 'Trotters shape up against the Boston Celtics, undisputed rulers of the National Basketball League? Or even against the Los Angeles Lakers, possibly today's second-best pro squad? Not too well according to veteran sportscaster Sam Balter, a frequent visitor to Las Vegas for our more important sports events.

Balter, who has taken a year's leave from his broadcasting duties to serve as emcee for the 'Trotter road show, told Sid Ziff of the Los Angeles Times that too many games against teams with "cooperative defenses", as Sam put it, have resulted in an accumulation of bad habits that would prevent the 'Trotters from holding their own with clubs like the Celtics or Lakers.

He thinks the 'Trotters do have many players who could help NBA teams and points to Connie Hawkins, in particular, as a probable superstar in any company. "It's my guess," says Sam, "that if the Lakers had Hawkins, they would put an end to the Celt dynasty." But by and large, Balter believes today's 'Trotters would not be contenders in the NBA.

If this comes to the attention of Abe Saperstein, diminutive major-domo of the 'Trotters, Abe may be just mad enough to fire Sam on the spot. Abe has always claimed his boys could make mincemeat of the NBA teams. We wonder?

All-Star Revolt Justified

A MOST INTERESTING behind-the-scenes story about the "Great Rebellion" among the Negro players selected to compete in the American Football League All-Star game appeared in last week's edition of SPORTS ILLUSTRATED.

Under the title, "Was This Their Freedom Ride?", Ron Mix, the fine white tackle for the San Diego Chargers, tells how he tried to dissuade the 22 colored stars from pulling out of the originally scheduled New Orleans game because of the rank discrimination and discourtesy they encountered in the Louisiana city.

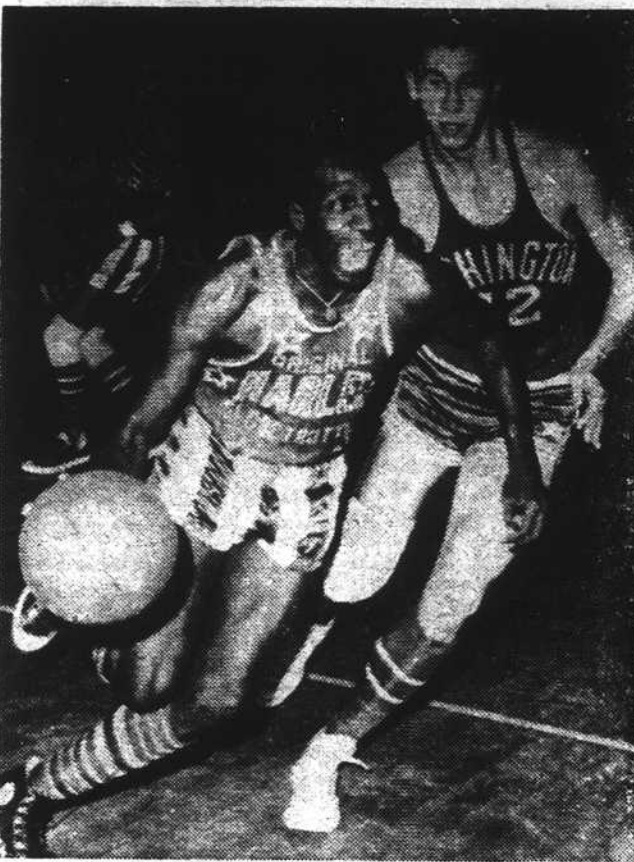
Mix explained to the Negro gridders that he thought they were playing into the hands of the bigots by boycotting the New Orleans game. He said he thought they should play in New Orleans and thus focus national attention on "this whole rotten mess." Admitting that "some" action was necessary, he questioned whether a boycott would do "our cause" any good. (Mix, who is Jewish, had previously explained in the article how uncomfortable he had felt on a recent visit to Germany, even 30 years after the Nazi persecutions, thus identifying himself with the Negro "cause.")

One by one the Negro players quietly refuted every argument presented by Mix. Ernie War-

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TOP CAGE ATTRACTION



TROTTERING GLOBETROTTER--Meadowlark Lemon, ace dribbler of sensational Harlem Globetrotters, wheels and deals around Washington Generals guard during recent exhibition game in University of Nevada gym at Reno. Overflow crowd of about 5,000 saw colored stars clown and canter to 86-75 victory.

Hick, Art Powell, Clem Daniels, Earl Faison--they all had their say. "Ron," said Faison, "I wonder if you are really aware of all that has happened here." He then began to relate the facts. Others followed suit. When they finished, Mix knew that no matter what he said, he would fail to convince them.

HERE ARE SOME of the things that had happened: All the Negroes had trouble securing cabs from the airport to their hotels; one group was stranded there for more than three hours. Another group had been dropped off eight blocks from their destination. Once in the city the cab problem continued.

Abner Haynes asked to go to a certain nightclub and instead was taken to another one a mile away that is a hangout for perverts.

Many players were refused admittance to nightspots.

Ernie Ladd, Dick Westmoreland and a couple of others had been turned away from one Bourbon Street club by a man who indicated he had a gun.

Warlick was tongue-lashed by a lady who objected when he hung his coat near hers in a restaurant.

ALL THE PLAYERS, it seemed, had been exposed to varying degrees of indignity.

"No matter how frequently these occurred," Mix persisted, "they are still isolated acts and the whole city cannot be held responsible. What you plan will do harm to yourselves, a great number of innocent people, and to the rights

movement in this area. Give us some time to resolve this."

The colored players remained adamant and when a subsequent conference with the game promoters also failed to change their minds, they started to leave New Orleans and the contest subsequently was switched to Houston, Texas.

Mix ended the article by relating that when he heard that the final meeting between the Negroes and the promoters had failed, "I made a decision then that if the game were to go on (in New Orleans) despite the absence of the Negro players, I would not play. I felt I would be wrong in not playing but that it was important for at least one white player . . . to join the Negroes, to say we're with you. Dammit, I thought again, this time you're wrong. But your cause is just and we're with you."

Amen.

KAPPAS AID PROGRAM



WORTH WINNING--Kermit Booker (center), president of Las Vegas Alumni Chapter of Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, presents revolving trophy to Las Vegas Recreation Supt. Keith Macdonald (left) that will go to champion team in Rec. Dept.'s Class A (high school age) basketball league. At right is Joe Haynes, Doolittle Center director and secretary of donating organization. Trophy was first donated by any local group to city basketball program and Kappas hope it will inspire more boys of high school age to participate in league play.



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