SPORTS

Sam Lacy

Meddler

I suppose I will be accused of stepping out of my league in this one . . . . In one sense, today's is not a sports column; in another it is because so many athletes in so many games are caught up in the madness.

And it is on this latter account that I am willing to become a meddler.

The sale and use of drugs should be legalized . . . . or as Baltimore Mayor Kurt Schmoke says "decriminalized."

Why not remove the heinous label from narcotics, license dealers, collect taxes and watch the demand — especially among our young — gradually decrease?

It is the opinion at this desk that such a move would be a substantial step toward solving what has become the country's — possibly the world's — most serious problem.

Everyone touched

Opinions here may mean little, but the occasion presents itself for discussion, so I meddle . . . . and offer mine.

Over the past five years, an estimated 6,200 young athletes — 4,000 professionals and 2,200 collegiates — have faced accusations stemming from drug abuse . . . . The number among college kids may be greater, since many schools for one reason or another, have a tendency to protect their chattels.

The curse of drugs hangs over the head of everyone, suppliers, users and non-users . . . . Here, then, is where the meddler attempts to explore the cause, the effect and the solution.

The cause?

Curiosity is the elixir for life, a large influence on the makeup of man . . . . Why else are we putting trillions of dollars into explorations in space?

As a toddler, didn't you sneak beyond the yard fence in defiance of parental warnings? . . . . Did you not as a teenager dare to play "hooky" from school despite knowing that your inventive powers for explaining would be tested later? . . . . As a young adult, didn't the other fellow's girlfriend always come off as a heady temptation?

It is human nature to want to try something new . . . . Once it is no longer new, the urge grows thin.

Any of these aforementioned adventures lose attractiveness if and when they are placed within reach.

The effect?

Whether it is admitted or not, the government's war is a losing one . . . . . New dealers crop every week, so competition becomes stronger — and more brutal.

The demand is so great that new and more powerful substances like "crack" are showing up everywhere, from schoolyards and low-rent tenements to Wall Street and highrises.

And drug enforcement agencies are helpless to control the illicit trade that grows by the day.

The remedy?

Wouldn't the removal of the enormous profits available produce revenue for all the many needs of cities, states, etc., through taxes (on the handling)?

Would not legalization put the modern Al Capones, Frank Nittis, etc., out of business, and take away the risk of having to send young people to other countries (like Colombia and Panama) to try to arrest kingpins of drug cartels.

There'd be no more drug lords and cartels . . . . I think.

Legalizing alcohol stopped a lot of crime, as did the okay on lottery . . . . So, why not meddle on drugs?

Notable quotable

New York News Sports Editor Jimmy Powers, answering Sam Lacy's poll (1945) seeking major media support for baseball desegregation:

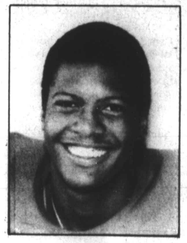
"Jackie Robinson will not make the grade in the major leagues. He is a 1,000-to-1 shot at best. The (Negro) players simply don't have the brains or the skills."

An AFRO commentary

Two sports stars leave their marks

Two men took the stand on the same day last week in what could turn out to be the final day of their respective professional athletic careers.

One of the two was quarterback Doug Williams of the Washington Redskins, out indefinitely after undergoing a back operation which may cost him the rest of his career.



TOP CAT — Scorned by NFL teams until Detroit picked him up in the 6th round of spring draft, former Southern California quarterback Rodney Peete was described as the "Number One" Lions quarterback Sunday by head coach Wayne Fontes.

He bore no malice against the fates which floored him. He declared lifelong commitment to the professional career that "made my life comfortable."

Also, he hoped the prophecy of doom would turn out to be premature, and that he might someday return to the Redskins or "become a coach somewhere."

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The other was former Cincinnati manager Peter Rose, banned for life from baseball because of gambling violations.

Like a feisty rooster, he accepted the edict of Commissioner A. Bartlett Giamatti with fire in his eyes.

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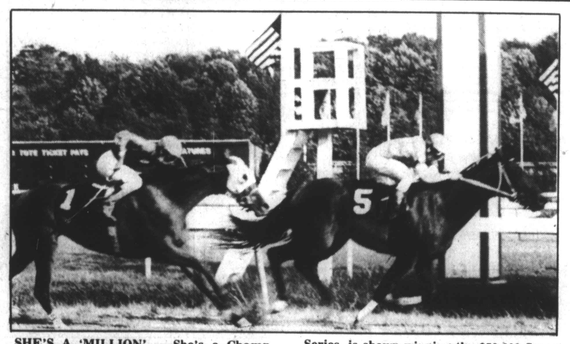
In the end, I suppose, it is fair to question: which of two men does one root for in their respective efforts to make a successful comeback?

Is it the fellow who openly expresses humility and declares that his endeavor will be motivated by a confidence that good will come to him if he deserves it?

Or is it he who refuses to be contrite and persists in claiming "the punishment is fair but I didn't do nothing?"



SHE'S A 'MILLION' — She's a Champ, which trainer Hank Allen hopes will take his stable for the first time to the $300,000 Selima and later to the prestigious Breeders' Cup Series, is shown winning the $50,000 Smart Angle Stakes. Next step toward those events will be taken Sept. 10 at Pimlico in the filly feature of the "Maryland Million."

Lewis, Johnson showdown possible in '90

WEST BERLIN (UPI) — The manager of sprinter Carl Lewis says the Olympic 100 meters champion could race against Canadian Ben Johnson — if the price is right.

Johnson finished ahead of Lewis at the Seoul Olympics only to be stripped of the Olympic title and world record after being positively tested for steroids. He will be eligible to compete again next year after serving his two-year suspension from the sport. His ban is due to end Sept. 27, 1990.

An official of the International Amateur Athletic Federation said Friday he knew nothing about a proposed race. "Perhaps it's good news, perhaps it's bad news. I don't know," he said.

Joe Douglas, Lewis' manager, said: "We have had offers from Japan, the U.S., Canada, Holland and Spain to race when Ben's ban is over.

"I'd love to do it if the package offered to us is the right one and so would Carl. But there are conditions. Ben would have to be clean and would have had to have been tested every week for the last three months of his ban.

"I have been approached by six people, including Larry Heiderbrecht, Johnson's former agent, and he offered $250,000. I refused to talk to him for that money.

"We are talking in terms of at least $1 million to run and Carl would obviously insist on more money for the race than Ben. He (Lewis) took it on the chin when he made his allegations about drugs two years ago," said Douglas.

Football

COLLEGE SCHEDULE
Saturday

Morgan vs. Bethune (Jacksonville, Fla.)
Howard vs. Grambling at N.J. Meadowlands
Hampton at Bowie State
UDC at Slippery Rock
E. Kentucky at Delaware St.
Va. Union at J.C. Smith (N)
Cheyney St. at Norfolk St.
W. Va. State at Va. State
A and T at W. Salem
Morris Brown at NC Central
Eliz. City vs. Fayetteville (Wilmington, N.C.)
Savannah State at Elon
Livingstone at Clark
Ft. Valley at Morehouse
Ala. A&M at Jacksonville
Tenn. State at Jackson St.
Central State at Illinois State
Ala. State vs. Southern (Mobile, Ala.)
Ky. State at W. Va. Tech
Albany State at Miles
Knoxville at Gardner-Webb
Texas Southern at Texas A&I
Langston at Mo. Lincoln
Ark-Pine Bluff at Miss. Valley
Prairie View at SW Texas

Zina seeded No. 5

Zina Garrison was seeded fifth in the U.S. Open women's tennis championships, which began Monday.

She follows Steffi Graf of West Germany, Martina Navratilova, Gabriela Sabatini and Natisha Savchenko.

Tony Rice still battling doubters

Champion QB again proving he 'belongs'

By Jim Slater

SOUTH BEND, Ind. (UPI) — Notre Dame quarterback Tony Rice still has something to prove, even though he led the Irish to a national championship and is a strong contender for the Heisman Trophy.

"They think I'm too little to be a quarterback," Rice said. "Size doesn't matter. People say a lot about me. It hurts a lot. There's nothing I can do about it."

Rice was knocked for poor passing statistics, but completed 7 of 11 attempts for a career-high 213 yards and two touchdowns to lead Notre Dame past West Virginia 34-21 in the Fiesta Bowl.

"People said I couldn't pass before the Fiesta Bowl," Rice said. "I could have said a lot of things after that. I just kept my mouth shut. That's the Notre Dame way."

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Rice, who sat out his freshman year under Proposition 48, expects nothing easy this year, as the Irish try to win the first repeat national title since Texas in 1970.

"I'm still going to be criticized no matter what," Rice said. "They'll say, 'He's a Heisman candidate but he still can't throw and can't run.' You've just got to do what you can to help out the team."

Rice ran for 700 yards last year and was the first Irish quarterback to lead the team in rushing since 1956, when Paul Hornung did it and won the Heisman. He completed 70 of 138 passes for 1,176 yards and 8 touchdowns. Rice has a 16-2 record as a starter, highlighted by victories over Southern California, Michigan, Pitt and Penn State.

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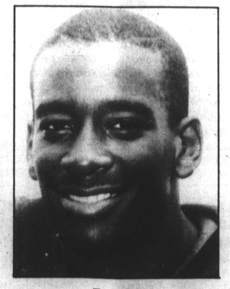
"Tony Rice has improved tremendously," Irish coach Lou Holtz said. "There's more that goes into a quarterback than the ability to pass and run. I look at his ability to put the ball in the end zone and he has done that. I don't know if he'll ever be good enough to play on Sunday, but he's a good passer."

Notre Dame players have won seven Heisman awards, more than any other school. Watching teammate Tim Brown handle the pressure while winning the 1987 Heisman has helped Rice prepare for similar stress this fall.

"The way he handled it, it didn't affect him at all," Rice said. "I like the way he handled it. I learned a lot from him. The Heisman is one award, but it's for the whole team."



Tony Rice
Fiesta Bowl didn't suffice

Notre Dame, which has lost five starters this preseason, plays Virginia Aug. 31 in college football's Kickoff Classic. The Cavaliers, blown out in recent early season-games against quality non-conference opponents, fumbled four times during a Tuesday scrimmage.

Rice's first bit of national fame was on a similar fumbling note — on his first collegiate play, he lined up behind the guard instead of the center to receive the snap.

This summer on a flight from Idaho, passengers seated next to him read three magazines featuring him on the cover and spent the flight talking about college football, but never noticed Rice.

Rice also remembers the stigma attached to his academic ineligibility as a freshman at a school known for high standards on and off the field.

"I'm a Prop. 48 guy and that's still stamped on my head," Rice said. "It was frustrating, but it made me realize there is more to life than football. When I'm gone, I just want it said that he earned his degree and played as hard as he can."

The loss of key offensive starters from last season will put more pressure on Rice's rushing and timely passing.

"I've learned to adapt because I've been here four years," Rice said. "A lot of people expect a lot of things from me. I'm ready for that. This year we're young but we're more mature. I'm better than last year. I've learned a lot about people and about myself that carries onto the football field. I'm comfortable with the whole team."

Rice, a Woodruff, S.C. native who played on two state prep championship teams, admits his passing game needs the most work, but he expects improvement before next week's opener against Virginia at the Meadowlands.

"I've got to get the ball out quicker," Rice said. "I'm still looking at the ball going through the air. I've got to look at the receivers."

Morgan opens football season

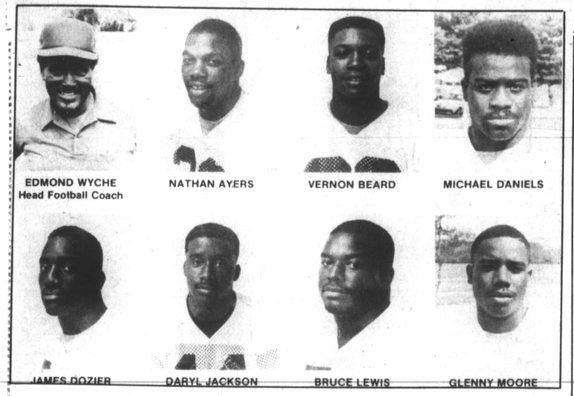
This Saturday, the Golden Bears of Morgan State will begin their 1989 football season against CIAA opponent Norfolk State who were 5-5 overall and 2-4 in conference play last year.

Morgan coming off a 1-10 campaign last autumn, are optimistic about the new year and have high hopes of changing their football fortunes.

Norfolk State has two preseason All-Americans: 6'1", 180 lb. wide receiver Eric Still, and 6'2", 300 lb. offensive tackle Rob Roberson. The Spartans lost their starting quarterback of a year ago to graduation, but are looking to Jim Barnes, from Washington, D.C.'s H.D. Woodson to do the job.

MORGAN STATE
AT A GLANCE

* COACH: Ed Wyche (entering 2nd year). Career Record — 56-55-4
* '88 RECORD: 1-10
* STARTERS RETURNING: 14 (no break down)
* PLAYERS TO WATCH: QB Daryl Jackson, RB Nathan Ayers, WR Glenny Moore, RB Michael Daniels, DB Vernon Beard, OC Bruce Lewis
* OUTLOOK: Has a chance for a .500 season, but is expected to finish last in the MEAC.
* HOME FIELD: Hughes Stadium
* TICKET INFORMATION: Joe McIver at 444-3022



1989 Morgan State University Football Team.

Summertime basketball

By Fred Lindsey
Local Sports Editor

As Fall nears and leisure basketball is interrupted, there were several remembrances from various leagues around the city that will help us stay in touch with Summer Basketball 1989.

Deirdre Taylor — Ms. Taylor shows her form on the way to the hoop at the Maryland State Games.

Kevin Langhorn — Among other things, Mr. Langhorn is often called the Dean of summer basketball referees.

Kim Adamson — Ms. Adamson was a winner in several leagues this summer, but shoots off the wrong foot at Cloverdale.

Cecil Recreation went undefeated in league and tournament play this summer at Cloverdale.

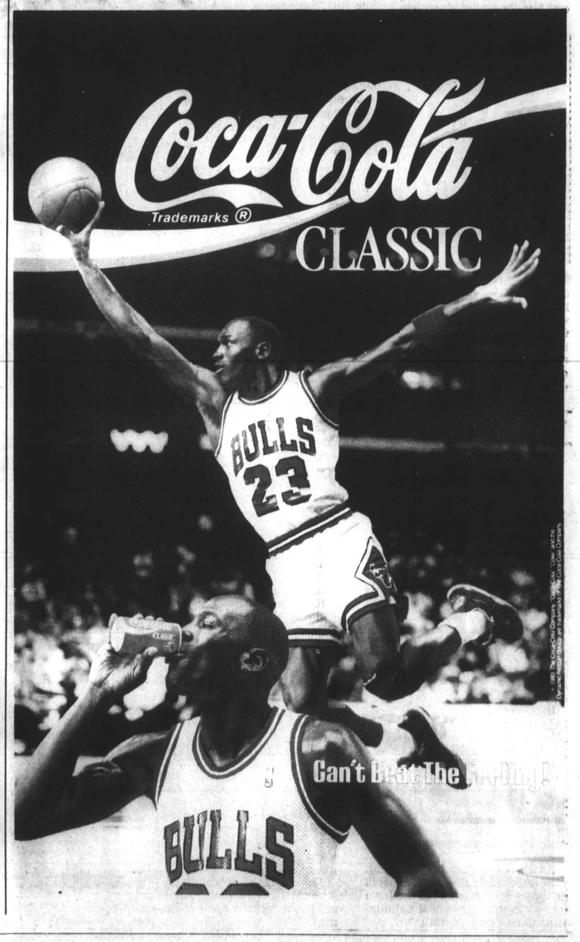
Coach Wardell Selby and his U.S. Youth Games team at the Greater Women's Basketball League at CCB.

Watching the flight of the ball was William Gladden (left) at Bocek.

Wheelchair tennis

Last week, at the Greater Baltimore Tennis Classic, a demonstration of wheelchair tennis was shown at Clifton Park.

Sponsored by the Baltimore City Parks and Recreation Department and the United States Tennis Association (USTA), the demonstration was given to highlight an emphasis on wheelchair sports and to urge more handicapped residents to use Baltimore City Park for their recreational outlets.

From left to right are James Parker, a volunteer, Kevin Whalen, Marcus Eyth, Leroy Levi, Mid-Atlantic Tennis Association representative, Kevin O'Connell and Mike Naugle.

For more information about wheelchair sports, contact Naugle at 633-7127.