wednesday, september 8, 1976

Goodyear strike thing of the past but effect still felt

A 130-day strike doesn't slip by unnoticed within a community.

"The strike wasn't too bad, but to say it doesn't hurt would be a lie," Lee Domeier of Local 286 of the United Rubber Workers of America said. Domeier, a spreader in the preparation department of the Lincoln Goodyear Tire and Rubber Co. is one of almost 600 local union members effected by the four-month nationwide dispute between Goodyear and the union.

"I never got any farther ahead," Domeier said of his financial standing during the strike. "You're in the hole, You don't do a lot of things you've done before, and you make things stretch."

Domeier, whose wife is employed at UNL, did not find another job for the duration of the strike. "If the strike had lasted past four months, I would have looked for a iob."

Domeier estimated more than 1000 union members found other jobs while on strike from Goodyear.

"The people that were hurt the worst were the ones who waited it out, maybe because they didn't like the idea of going to a lower paying job."

He added that the United Rubber Workers Union arranged jobs for many of the striking workers.

Although out of a job, Domeier did volunteer work at the union's local office at 5724 Seward St.

"People contributed in their own way, he said. "This one gal who was anti-union at first wound up walking the picket line 46 times. A strike can bring out the best in some people."

All union members received four chekcs, averaging \$30, from the union strike fund. The union was unable to supply more money to members because the strike fund was low from the Canadian rubber strike two years ago, Domeier said.

The Goodyear union members used \$6 million from the United Rubber Workers strike fund during the first month of the strike, he said.

"I don't think anybody was hurting too badly for



money during the strike, but you're kind of playing a hope game, hoping you can outlast the company.

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"You're never going to settle until the corporation is ready. They use the strike to their advantage. You can't hurt a billion dollar company. They'll come out ahead no matter what you do," Domeier said, adding that he thought Goodyear may have been hurt during the last month of the strike.

The Lincoln Goodyear plant continued to operate during the strike, according to Domeier, with secretaries and employes on the manaagerial level building belts, hoses, and tires.

Domeier said those working during the strike received 75 cent an hour raises and had steak served to them at the plant. Word of this treatment was supposed to get to the outside, he said, to put pressure on the workers to return.

Daily Nebraskan Photo

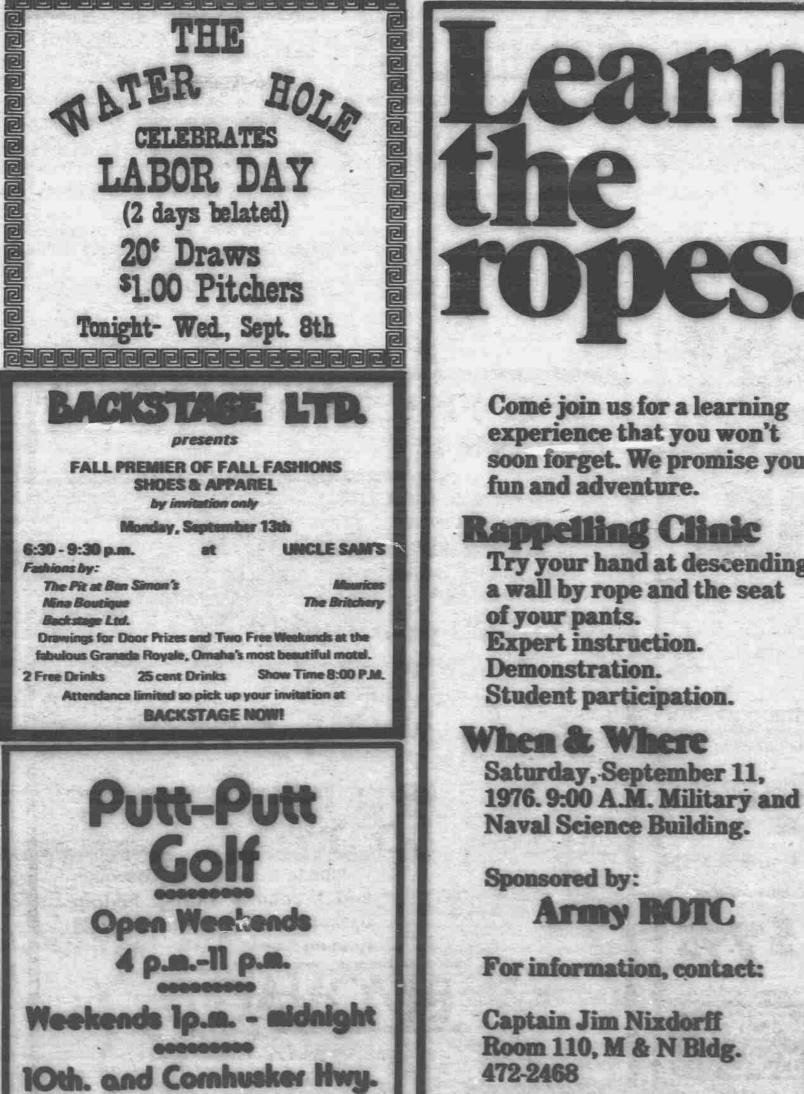
Domeier felt that it may have helped to have supervisors work in the plant, because they got a taste of the union workers' jobs.

Although the strike settlement didn't meet all the workers' original demands, Domeier said he thinks it is satisfactory. "I don't believe we could have done any better if we had been out two more months."

Local negotiations are pending on a 60-day waiting period from the date of the national settlement. The major issue will be a demand for better working conditions, he said.

"I sure hope there isn't another strike. A long strike will usually work to settle things, but if there is another one, I'll just go out and get a job to tide me over.

"I hate strikes, but we're up a creek without them," he said.



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