

# Athletes move from beer ads to new television series'

Hi, hello, how are you? Welcome to the world where Debbie Armstrong gave the U.S. team its first gold medal in the Winter Olympics, the world where Nebraska All-American half-back Bobby Reynolds will be inducted into the National Football Foundation's Hall of Fame, and the world where Dick Butkus and Bubba Smith open beer cans and watch opera. In other words, welcome to the sports world.



**Bill Allen**

The last item about Butkus and Smith has me wondering about the integrity of American sports, though.

I could handle it when they started the light beer commercials. Then, it was just a couple of former jocks goofing around and being cool. Remember Smith's "easy-opening cans" where he ripped the top third off of an aluminum can?

Lately, however, things are getting out of hand.

I turned on the television one Friday night and who did I see but our own Butkus and Smith running around in police uniforms and playing with, get this, a giant blue helicopter.

Of course, my first response was the same as yours would have been. I poured the remaining beer from the can I was holding and vowed never to drink so much again.

Then, I turned on the TV again and they were still there. The shame of it all. Two former star athletes going from first beer commercials at half-time to this, the most degrading place imaginable, prime-time television.

I learned later that the helicopter is the same one for the hit movie *Blue Thunder*, and that yes, there is a program built around Butkus, Smith and a giant blue helicopter.

The imaginations of some of these television writers have gone wild (I

suspect hallucinogenic drugs) and they are exploiting former sports heroes for their own personal gain.

Where will this stop, you may ask? To which I answer, it's only beginning.

Concerned, and using Daily Nebraskan expense money, I set out for Hollywood to see just what was going on.

Now really concerned, I found that Daily Nebraskan expense money would only get me halfway between Lincoln and Seward.

While walking back along I-80, I imagined what kind of television programs we might expect on prime time in the future, using this popular athlete/popular movie exploitation formula. mla.

Don't be surprised to see Joe DiMaggio go from hawking Mr. Coffee to night time television.

Poor Joe would be reduced to a steel worker who deep inside wants to be a male stripper in the TV version of *Flashdance*.

Worse yet, O.J. Simpson might soon be running through airports all over the world in full gear in the television version of *An American Running Back in London*.

Do you want to see Wilt Chamberlain exploited in *Godzilla Meets the Skilt*? I should hope not.

The list goes on. Suppose you turn on your television set and see the Super Bowl champions turned hoodlums, where they steal food from supermarkets in *Raiders of the Lost Cart*.

Now, you may be saying, but Bill, this *Blue Thunder* is only one show. Surely it can't be this serious. And besides, former athletes make guest appearances on television all the time.

These reactions may be accurate, and yes they may be valid. My only response is I don't care.

I urge you to write your U.S. senator and put a stop to this exploitation that is ruining the image of our national sports heroes.

And if you aren't that upset and refuse to write such a letter... oh well, I was just kidding anyway.

# American fulfills prediction, wins Olympic skiing event

From Reuter News Report

SARAJEVO, Yugoslavia — Californian Bill Johnson fulfilled his Olympic prediction Thursday when he won the men's downhill race to become the first American male skier ever to win an Olympic alpine event.

The 23-year-old Johnson's victory gave the United States its second gold medal in the Winter Games — both in skiing. On Monday Debbie Armstrong, who had never won a World Cup race, captured the women's giant slalom.

Michela Figini of Switzerland, who like Johnson is not a member of the skiing elite, won the women's downhill Thursday.

Although Johnson and the 17-year-old Figini claimed titles on slopes 37 miles apart, they shared a common

bond — superb gliding styles perfectly suited to the straight-line courses on which they competed.

Figini was the first to win a gold Thursday. Then, 90 minutes later, it was Johnson's turn to spear through the ranks of the race-hardened veterans and end Europe's monopoly of the blue ribbon speed test.

Johnson arrived in Sarajevo with only one downhill triumph to his credit. But he made his presence felt immediately by dominating the practice runs on the Mount Bjelasnica course.

He said repeatedly that he would win, and he fulfilled his promise, leaving Swiss Peter Mueller and Austrian Anton Steiner to pick up the silver and bronze medals, respectively.

The victory margin was .027 second — comfortable for a downhill.

# Mexico...

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The final leg of the trip will be spent in Cozumel Island, one of the best places in the world to skin dive, according to Ebel.

Most of the group will be able to do some simple skin diving off the coast of the island if they wish. As in the hiking at Palenque, Ebel said there will be an opportunity for more advanced divers to do more difficult diving.

There will be two pre-trip meetings to brief participants on the objectives of the trip and to teach the basics of skin diving.

The deadline to sign up for the trip is 5 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 22. A \$250 deposit is required at that time.

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