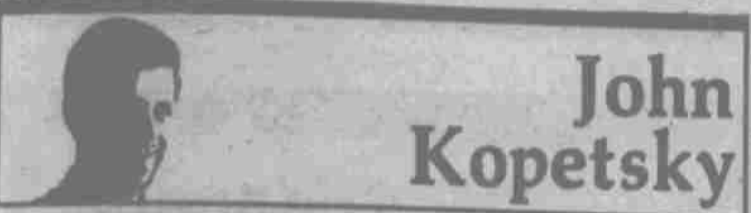


# Professional athletes overshadow amateurs in watered-down Olympics

The ideal of only amateur athletes competing in the Olympics is noble indeed. Unfortunately, that's all it is; an ideal, not reality.

We've all heard the complaints about "amateur athletes" from Eastern block countries at the Olympics. What they are, in reality, are government employees who have phony jobs...in the army, as obscure bureaucrats, or whatever. The reality is



**John Kopetsky**

that they are professional athletes. The Soviets hadn't lost an Olympic gold medal in hockey in 20 years when the Lake Placid miracle occurred in 1980. The reason? Most of the players on that Soviet hockey team had been playing together for eight or 12 years. Amateurs? Hardly.

A case could be made against some American competitors, too. The International Olympic Committee has approved athletes taking money for endorsing shoes, athletic equipment, and the like. These endorsements don't alter their amateur standing one bit.

### Professional athletes

If the idea of the Olympics is to showcase the best athletes in the world, why not open it up to all athletes? In today's world, ways of skirting the amateur rule are a dime a dozen, thus rendering the rule a joke. Let's drop all pretenses, and recognize the Olympics for what they are...a major international event, deserving of only the best.

Can you imagine Kareem Abdul-Jabbar, Moses Malone, and Julius Erving playing basketball in the Olympics? Munch, munch, munch.

While we're on the subject of the Olympics, did you hear about the efforts of the Montreal Canadiens to lure away Russia's best goalie? Vladislav Tretiak, 31, has been recognized as world-class for years. The Canadiens, in dire need of someone to play the goal, have offered the Soviet Ice Hockey Federation \$500,000 for the rights to sign Tretiak.

Image that. The Soviets selling away, to us runningdog capitalist pigs, no less, one of their heroes for a mere 3/4 of a million rubles. Is there no honor?

### Permanent game site

One more Olympic item: Why do they keep rotating the site for the Games? They are enormously expensive, they are embroiled in politics, they deserve one home. The citizens of Canada, and Montreal in particular, will be paying for the 1976 Games for years and years. What did they get out of it? Olympic Stadium and that's about all.

Los Angeles is taking a somewhat more sensible approach to hosting the Summer Games. Instead of building a village and a whole new complex of buildings, they are using existing structures. The Coliseum (built for the 1932 Games), Pauley Pavillion, the Forum, and Dodger Stadium are all being utilized in one way or another. One of the few new structures that had to be built was a velodrome for bicycle racing, and that was paid for by Southland Corporation (one of thousands of "Official Sponsors of the Summer Olympic Games"). While this approach makes sense, it makes even more sense to build a permanent Olympic Village in Greece. After all, that's where they started.

Having the Games at one permanent site would go a long way toward eliminating the politicking that goes on. Would the U.S. have led the boycott of the 1980 Games if they hadn't been in Moscow? No way! Throughout their history, the Olympics have, in spite of their ideals, been entangled in international politics. Moving the Games to even a semi-neutral site would help get rid of the problem.

Moe must goe, Must Moe goe? Oh, I don't know. It has been, at best, a very disappointing season for the Husker basketball team. All of the enthusiasm of last year's success has disintegrated into the cascade of booing heard at Saturday's humiliating loss to Iowa State.

What's wrong with the Huskers? If I knew, I'd be the first to tell Moe. It's frustrating for the fans, sure, but it has to be extremely frustrating for Iba.

How can a team win the road games in the Big Eight (at Ames, where Iowa State had beaten Oklahoma and Iowa less than a week before; at Manhattan, where Nebraska has won six times in 34 years; and at Columbia, where Nebraska has won three times in 16 years), and then lose four of five conference games at home? Is it because the players feel too much pressure to win? Is it because other teams are playing sky-high against Nebraska in Lincoln? What is it?

Whenever a team has a disappointing season, the first finger is pointed at the coach. That's the cruel reality of sports. Moe Iba has taken a lot of heat this year, just a year after perhaps his finest hour in coaching. The other day, I saw a letter in the *Omaha World-Herald* demanding Iba's departure. I don't think that Moe Iba is in any danger of losing his job, but until results are produced that the fans feel should be produced, Iba will continue to feel the heat.

Unfortunately, the way Nebraska played Saturday night, those results may be a long time coming.

**Instate Player**  
Think of the possibilities...FOUR Nebraskans starting for the men's basketball team next year. Dave Hoppen, John Matzke, and transfer Bill Jackman are almost sure-fire starters right now. Lurking in the wings are James Moore and Mike Martz. Moore would seem to have a better shot than Martz, based on playing time this year. The other possibility is Millard South All-Stater Joel Sealer, who has already committed to the Huskers.

Finally, I couldn't let this column go without a word about Lyell Bremser. His retirement after 45 years at the mike for KFAB was a surprise, although not completely unexpected. Bremser, 66, will turn over the play-by-play to 34-year-old Kent Pavelka, his color man and voice of Husker basketball for 10 years. Pavelka just might be the best sports broadcaster in the state. He was honored as the 1983 Nebraska Sportscaster of the Year. He is articulate, exciting, and accurate.

Good as Pavelka might be, however, things just won't be the same without Bremser. He outlasted nine coaches, in a career spanning six different decades. He saw the Husker program rise, fall, and rise again to dizzying heights. If one person might be said to be bigger than Bob Devaney or Tom Osborne when it came to Husker football, Bremser would be it.

Pavelka, who said following Bremser would be akin to following a legend, said Wednesday, "There will never, ever be another Lyell Bremser."

## Cyclone rally ...

Continued from Page 12

Hill said she wasn't pleased with the team's sloppy play in the second half, but she was happy with their determination.

"They dug in their heels in the last couple of minutes and wanted to win the game," Hill said. "We're in pretty good shape in the conference now. If we knock off an Oklahoma school on the road we might finish in the top four."

Nebraska's next game is Wednesday night against Oklahoma State, at Stillwater. The Huskers return home Feb. 22 for a Saturday match with the Colorado Buffaloes.

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