

Sports

Super athlete!

Bob Harris won't give up; continues to play sports

By CHARLOT M. DENMON
Staff Correspondent

Steve Carlton is a young man as compared to Bob Harris of Dallas, who at the age of 52, plays either shortstop or third base on the Native Textile/Brown's Oil team, and outthins and outruns the younger athletes on the team.

Harris, who lettered in three varsity sports when in high school, continues to be an outstanding athlete today, playing baseball, basketball, racquetball, golf, and football when he can round up enough "guys" to field a team.

In addition, he is the father of six children, several grandchildren, and drives a tractor-trailer convoy hauling cars.

Harris not only plays on the Native Textile/Brown's Oil team in the Bi-County League, but also manages it. The team members are all much younger than he, ranging in age from high school students to college age.

"Last year my batting average was over .500 for the season but this year it is only .478. I attribute the drop to the fact that we don't practice this season," said Harris. "Last season we used to get in some practices but the kids on the team this year, for some reason, don't care for practicing."

How much longer does Harris expect to play on the team? "When these young kids prove they're better than I am, I'll quit," he answered.

Last year the team didn't have enough players so Harris played about midway between second and right field which put him in the right position to field a hit ball in either spot.

Coaches of some of the teams in the present Bi-County League were boys he played against when they were younger.

Harris said this season's team could be higher in the league if all of the players would show up every Sunday but sometimes, he is rounding up just enough to make a full team an hour or so before the game.

"They don't take it seriously

like we did at their age. It's too bad because some of these kids are real good players."

Up until two years ago, he played basketball against teams whose players were only half his age. Harris also told about the time he played football on a local team (not too many years ago) because the local team didn't have enough young players and they were scheduled to play against the All-Star team of players at the State Correctional Institution at Dallas.

"That was the greatest experience of my life," said Harris. "We held that team scoreless for the entire four quarters. At the beginning of the fourth quarter, one of the officials came over and asked us if there was no score at the end of the game, would we be willing to play a fifth quarter. We agreed."

At the end of the fourth quarter, neither team had scored, so the game went into the fifth quarter and the local team held the SCID team scoreless. Needless to say, according to Harris, those All-Stars weren't too happy, but of all the teams Harris ever played against, he said they were the nicest guys he went against. They were super athletes, but they were gentlemen in that game, said Harris.

Athletics has been his life since he was a kid. He played sandlot ball in a field where his home now stands on Center Hill Road, Dallas. In high school, he earned nine letters, including three varsity letters in basketball, three in football and three in baseball, the only sports teams the schools offered at that time.

Bob Harris attended first grade in Dallas and Lake-Lehman, then with his parents moved to Forty Fort where he lived until he was in the sixth grade. His family then moved back to Dallas and Bob attended Dallas schools from where he graduated.

During his first year on the football team, he weighed 98 lbs. and when he graduated he weighed 128.

An over-the-road tractor-trailer driver for more than 20 years, he drove a bus for a while. During



BOB HARRIS

that time, he had to give up baseball, basketball, bowling, golf and football, so he took up racquetball.

He discovered that he enjoyed racquetball and became good at it so when he was able to resume playing the other sports, he did but also continued to play racquetball as often as he could. A warning to players, he is a keen competitor and difficult to beat.

Harris also bowls in the Crown Imperial Major League and substitutes in the Monday night league. He ended this season with about a 17% average lower than he usually carries but he considers it not bad for bowling only one night weekly. He still plays golf, but can't get out on the green as often as he would like but says just wait until he can retire and play more often.

His wife, the former Mary Wilson, was also an outstanding athlete and played softball and hockey in school. The coaches wouldn't let her play basketball. They told her she was too rough to play. She was also a cheerleader.

Their children, Bob, Earl, Annette, Brian, Mary Lou and Johnnie, are also athletes and although are graduated from

high school continue their interest in various sports — the boys primarily in baseball and bowling as participants, in most others as spectators; the two girls in hockey and bowling, and like their brothers, most others as spectators. When a member of the family is competing, any other members who can be there, usually are.

The first year Bob went back into the Bi-County League, he played on a Beaumont team and played against his sons, who played for Dallas. Now, he coaches a team and his sons are playing with him. Bob is not only a leading hitter in the league, but he does a lot of stealing bases during the season. He doesn't steal all of them because of speed, he admitted, some are by finesse. Not one player on the team can outrun him, however, from home plate to first base and he can still beat out bunts.

Just as he said, "You're never too old to be an athlete. When the younger kids prove that they're better than I am, then I'll quit." Quit playing in competition with them he means, but not quitting participating in the sports he loves so well.

Tips to avoid injuries

Summer, with its longer days and warmer weather, has always been a season for increased recreation.

Millions of Americans participate in typical summer sports such as baseball, tennis, rollerskating, boating, waterskiing and swimming, and more than 780,000 injuries are reported each year from these activities alone. Before you head off for your softball league, tennis match or swimming pool, take precautions against injury. The following sports safety tips could help keep you playing this summer.

— In sports such as baseball, softball, soccer, boating and skateboarding, protective gear is available, and should be worn. Helmets, life preservers, facemasks, chest and throat protectors, kneepads, and mouth guards all protect effectively, so use them.

— Choose safe places. Check playing fields for rocks, glass and holes. Swim in areas supervised by qualified lifeguards and where water is free from pollution, hidden underwater objects, fast currents or undertows. Never dive in shallow water. Obey warning signs, as they are posted for your protection.

— Beware of heat stress. According to the most recent statistics from the National Safety Council, excessive heat was responsible for nearly 200 deaths in the United States in 1982. To avoid heat stress

problems, Marianne Yuill, R.N., Director of Loss Prevention Medical Services at Liberty Mutual, advises drinking plenty of water before, during and after strenuous exercise. Avoid alcohol, as this causes dehydration. Rest frequently and stay in the shade when you are not playing. Pour water on your head to reduce body temperature.

— Take it easy in all sports at the beginning of the season. Work gradually back into condition before trying to duplicate last year's accomplishments. Know your limitations.

— Keep a First-Aid kit on hand. The kit should include a cold pack or ice, gauze bandages and an antibiotic spray or cream. Treat injuries such as sprains, strains and bruises with cold for the first 24 hours, heat after that. However, you should always consult a physician if pain persists, or if a bone fracture, or muscle or tendon injury is suspected.

— Boating accidents accounted for 1,063 deaths and 2,709 injuries last year. Of the deaths, 941 were caused by drowning. The National Transportation Safety Board estimated that 400 to 800 of these fatalities were alcohol-related. As in driving an automobile, never operate a boat under the influence of alcohol.

Major league coach's wife says life interesting

By STEVE SVETOVICH
Special to The Dallas Post

"We have a very interesting life. We used to go to Detroit for the summer when our daughter, Joy, was very young. Now, we see Dick whenever we can when the Tigers are playing in New York, Baltimore or Boston. It's not easy being a baseball wife, because Dick is away much of the time, but Joy loves it. She and her father are very close. We have a close family," commented Dolores Tracewski whose husband Dick is the first base coach of the Detroit Tigers.

The Tracewskis were married February 16, 1963 when Dick was an infielder with the Dodgers. Daughter, Joy, a former cheerleader at Bishop O'Hara High School in Dun-

more (1981 graduate) will be graduating May 18th with a B.S. in Nursing from Marywood College. She also attended Cedar Crest College for two years. The family currently resides at 5 Flora Drive in Peckville.

Mrs. Tracewski, was born in Mayfield, Pa. and graduated from Mayfield High School. She revealed to me that Dick played high school baseball at Archibald High School before signing with the Dodgers in 1953 although he originally was supposed to have signed with Cleveland. Dick put a two-year stint in the Army, 1959-1961, before appearing in his first big league game with the Dodgers in 1962 where he began his eight year career.

Tracewski immediately went into coaching after his career ended in

(See COACH, page 12)



Winning horse

A-Crown Court, also known as "Freddie," recently passed International Sport Horse-Association at Iron Springs Farms Coatsville, Pa. Bred and foaled at Borrowdale Acres Inc., Dallas on June 20, 1981, he was shown before a panel of official breeding judges from Germany. "Freddie" is trained and shown by Mrs. Peg Malig Bell who was trained at Northeastern Equestrian Center, Cumbria, England holding the B.H.S.I. Degree.

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