

MegaMiles Sportstalk

by John Farrow

Have you noticed the proliferation of talk radio shows lately? It seems as though everyone wants to bare his soul to some over-stuffed chipmunk with an attitude of "When I want your opinion, I'll give it to you." And then there are those shows of the sportstalk persuasion. They're everywhere! Try to find some good music or news and it's Vinnie from Vegas wanting to debate the relative free-throw prowess (or lack thereof) of Shaquille "Clank-Fu" O'Neal. Give me a break!

But can you imagine a sportstalk show devoted to running? I didn't think so, either, but just in case, we have an actual transcript from one such show that debuted elsewhere in the country, MegaMiles Sportstalk.

MegaMiles: Butch from the Cape, you're on the air. What's up, man?

BC: Yeah, Meg. Lookin' great tonight. Hey, what's wrong with road racing in this country, anyway? The Americans didn't even show up for the distance races in Atlanta. Are we not eating our pasta, or what?

MM: Hey, nobody runs 'cause everybody's got their attitude, like, they had troubled childhoods or they weren't born at altitude, you know, but let's get real. What's the attraction of running? Why should anybody care? Can you imagine Monday Night Road Racing? We got people out there who want some serious action, and if we're gonna get anywhere, we gotta give it to'em.

BC: Whataya mean, Meg?

MM: I mean, like, where's the violence? When Bradshaw yells "Are you ready for some footbaawl," he really means "Are you ready for some blood and guts!" How can we expect any interest in a sport where nobody gets hit? Pushing, elbowing,

tripping, it's not enough to make people tune in when they really want blood.

BC: C'mon, Meg. Gimme a break.

MM: A break? Yeah, now you're talkin'! We get Lynn Jennings to whack somebody in the knee before a big race.

BC: Hey, man! That might be illegal!

MM: Yeah, but look what it did for figure skating. Look, sports provides a big boost to the psychological well-being of the nation. We all want to feel good about ourselves when we watch a sporting event, and running just doesn't cut it.

BC: Hey Meg, we all feel great about our running.

MM: Sure, but imagine Joe SixPack lying on the sofa with a beer and a bag of chips, watching Cosmas Ndeti blow away the Boston Marathon field. When he finishes, he's less out of breath than Joe after a commercial-break dash to the fridge. This is supposed to make people feel good about themselves? He could at least sweat or something.

And how are women supposed to feel when Uta Pippig looks better after a 2:21 marathon than they do after an hour in the beauty parlor? You'll never win people over by making them feel inadequate.

The triathlon at least gets decent coverage because its participants throw up and fall down a lot. People can relate to that. They know that if they try such a thing, they'll throw up and fall down, too.

Whoa! Lookit the time. Gotta go! This has been MegaMiles Sportstalk! (*Portions adapted from "The State of Running Today," Gail Rodgers, Running Times, Jan-Feb 1996.*)

ARR News, October 1996

Albuquerque Road Runners Club