



Mike Lee Reports

HERE'S A CHANCE TO HELP MICKEY NORTON

I hope that the folks in and around Huntington come through with donations to enable the Norton A. C. 115-pounders to play in the Kumquat Holiday Bowl in Fort Lauderdale, Fla., on Thursday night, Dec. 30.

Mickey Norton has done an outstanding job for the youth of his community and this invitation must be regarded as recognition of his efforts.

The Norton kids won the Western Suffolk Little Football Conference title with a 9-1-1 record and most of the boys have been playing with the Norton gang since their fourth grade days . . . next football season most of them will be trying out for their high school freshmen or jayvee teams so this trip to Florida will be a fitting climax to their careers with Mickey's wonderful group.

The party will be leaving from Kennedy Airport next Tuesday morning and the transportation cost is figured at \$2,300 . . . Mickey has received several substantial pledges, but much more is needed.

Here is where you can come in . . . donations can be sent to me or directly to the Norton A. C. Football Fund, PO Box 1, Huntington.

It would be a wonderful thing if all of this could be accomplished by Monday night when the Norton A. C. holds its annual sports award banquet for baseball, football and softball teams at the Town House, Huntington.

LITTLE LEAGUE FOOTBALL— THE SUPPORT

What do you think about organized sports programs for youngsters—the little-league type—that have become so popular and in some cases controversial? If you were a parent would you want your nine or 10-year-old boy engaging in the rough-and-tumble of football on one of those midget teams? Is too much pressure put on the kids? Do parents and/or coaches expect too much from the little ones? Here are some comments from the Huntington area.

A mother, Mrs. Herbert Messinger, whose son, Craig, nine, is now playing league football. "It was his idea to play on the football team. He led me to it. From my standpoint, after watching him playing with the neighborhood boys, I'd rather have him here, on a regular team. I'm more frightened about his safety of life and limb when I see him playing with a bunch of children in a lot without any supervision. Here they are coached. They have proper equipment. They learn how to tackle. How to fall. Being on an organized team such as this is much better."

A father, Charles Ruessell, whose son, Scott, 11, plays baseball and football under sponsorship of the Norton A. C.: "All the youngsters here get a chance to learn a lot. When they get in high school they already know a great deal about the game. And kids have to learn about pressure, because there is some kind of pressure from the time they are very young."

The director of physical education at the Cold Spring Harbor High School, Ralph Whitney, said, "There has been a lot of criticism of the little league idea in general from educators. Some say there is no program of physical conditioning, it is run by people without training, too much pressure and competition. It is true that coaches sometimes take a defeat as a reflection of their ability. And there are parents who make negative remarks about referees, coaches, and even their own kids."

From a former member of the Norton A. C. Danny Martin, now the quarterback on the Huntington High School team: "Playing on Mickey's teams was a definite help in my high school career. I learned to block and tackle and pass when I was small, and I learned to be tough. I knew something of myself when I got into high school."



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ANOTHER 'FIRST' FOR JOE HERNANDEZ

Remember Joe Hernandez, the race caller at Belmont Park many years ago when Alfred Gwynne Vanderbilt had a brief fling as president of the Westchester Racing Association? . . . well, Joe pulled a classic goof the other day calling races at Bay Meadows . . . during the entire running of the fourth race, Joe kept using the names of the nags entered in the fifth race . . . Bob Wuerth, the track's publicity chief, tried to stop him, but Joe waved him off with a big "Shhhhhh!"

There isn't a race caller alive who hasn't missed horse or called a wrong one, but to call an entire wrong field, that is something special, and another "distinction" for Hernandez, who gained a great measure of fame with his call of yesteryear, "Here comes Malicious!"

Joe is quite a guy and completed undaunted by his monumental goof . . . he has the unique distinction of calling every race ever run at Santa Anita and right now is within 100 races of reaching the 12,000 mark.

Four years ago in mid-season, he fell off a horse he was galloping and fractured a hip and shoulder . . . it was 9:30 A.M. . . . taken to the hospital, he was told he'd have to remain for a week or more.

"The heck with that," he answered.

"Well, then," the doctor compromised, "you'll have to stay in bed at home."

"The heck with that, too," snapped Joe.

"What do you have in mind?" asked the doc.

"I've got to be at the track no later than noon today."

And he was . . . he was bandaged and in a wheelchair, but made all the calls and didn't miss a single announcement.

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BOBCATS DISCOVER SANTA CLAUS' PAL

Mickey Norton's Huntington Bobcats, who are in Florida today preparing for their Kumquat Bowl battle against the West Coast All Stars in Fort Lauderdale tomorrow night, think Sam Albicocco of Huntington, president of the Nick Bros. Fuel Oil Co. and the Mutual Sand and Stone Co., a real running mate for Santa Claus . . . Sam is the fellow who stepped into the breach when the Bobcats need funds to pay for the trip to Florida by guaranteeing the \$2,400 necessary to make the flight . . . most of the funds came in from the general public and a handsome contribution from the Football Giants, but Sam was there when it was vital.

The strange thing about it is that while he has four sons, none of them are in the Norton A.C. program, all of them participating in the neighboring St. Patrick's youth activities . . . but Edward J. Gavin, district sales manager for Sunshine Biscuits, interested Sam in the Norton A.C. plight and once he started talking to Mickey and saw his dedication to kids, it was all over but the check writing.