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January 14, 2006

Duly Noted

By Ron Kantowski <kantowski@lasvegassun.com>

Las Vegas Sun

I WAS MADE FOR RACIN' YOU

In an effort to boost flagging interest in open-wheel racing, the Indy Racing League has joined forces with KISS guitarist Gene Simmons (he's the one with the long tongue), who has written a theme song for the league called "I Am Indy."

The song will be used to market the series and, no doubt, make your old man angry, which is what happened every time I played my KISS records in high school.

As a press release stated, IRL fans and others may be surprised that the league has decided to link its marketing effort to a musician who is known for spitting blood as "the demon of KISS."

I think a better gimmick -- er, marketing ploy -- would have been to just let Simmons drive one of the cars.

With that tongue of his, he could lap the field without ever leaving the pit lane.

TWO MINUTES FOR INTERFERENCE (AT PRACTICE)

This is why hockey -- especially hockey in Canada -- is such a cool game.

When Canadiens goalie Jose Theodore noticed that an imposter had somehow gotten onto the ice and was skating toward him, he didn't alert the authorities or leave his post, either one of which probably would have happened south of the border.

Instead, Theodore told the interloper to bring it on -- twice. First he stopped the wannabe Rocket Richard with a poke check. Then he made an easy save of a weak wrist shot on the trespasser's attempt to beat him on the glove side.

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"I thought he had the (guts) to go on the ice, so I let him have a free shot at me," Theodore said with a huge grin. "He couldn't beat me. That's the main thing."

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Afterward, the Canadiens, seeing no harm in the incident, decided to let the man go without pressing charges.

Which is just another reason why Canada is such a cool place.

CALENDAR GIRLS AND POSTER CHILDS

In an effort to entice me to cover this week's LPGA Takefuji Classic news conference, one of the publicity guys said I was welcome to ask Lake Las Vegas resident Natalie Gulbis about the new pinup calendar she's selling on her Web site (www.nataliegulbis.com) -- as if that (women using sex appeal to promote their sport) was something new.

But it did make me think about the fabulous sports babes who adorned my dormitory walls during the 1970s:

* Jan Stephenson, LPGA golfer. The first to pose without her wood covers, in a bathtub full of Titleists.

* K.C. Carr, roller derby. That was Raquel Welch's character in "Kansas City Bomber." As I recall, she wouldn't wear a jammer's helmet because it messed up her flowing hairdo. I also remember that the zipper on her jersey didn't go all the way to the top.

* Nancy Seaver, baseball wife. I was so smitten with Tom Terrific's significant other than I once bought a copy of "McCall's" magazine because she was modeling a bare-shouldered crepe sheath on the cover.

* "Machine Gun" Molly Bolin, basketball: She was the first women's pro basketball player I had ever heard of. Machine Gun Molly played for the Iowa Cornets. Her poster was just as hot as Farrah Fawcett's and her jump shot was way more accurate.

* Lauren Hutton, George Plimpton's girlfriend in "Paper Lion." That was way, way back (1968) when super models dated sports writers instead of players.

A BIG BIRD TOLD ME ...

... That Las Vegas has been "awarded" a franchise in the obscure Women's Professional Football League. Supposedly, the team will be known as the "Showgirlz" and will begin play sometime after the league gets around to announcing its schedule in the spring.

I tried to call WPFL headquarters for confirmation. But when you dial the number listed on the league Web site, you get a 24-hour home information hotline.

Which is great if you're looking for a ranch home or a bungalow. But not so great if you're trying to purchase season tickets.

...

The NCAA doubles ranking of the Thompson Twins (Bishop Gorman graduates Catrina and Christian) heading into the spring tennis season at Notre Dame.

...

\$33,480

The estimated cost of installing a new warning track at Cashman Field.

...

\$2,993,775.54

The amount of money won by Professional Bull Riders star Chris Shivers, bidding to become the sport's first \$3 million man.

...

(quote)

Ross Greenburg, president of HBO Sports:

"It is a disgraceful and undignified remark by a disturbed man."

on Las Vegas promoter Bob Arum's claim that undefeated Kelly Pavlik can't get a fight on HBO because he is white

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