

supervision of the venerable (founded in 1882) Canadian Wheelmen's Association. Although basically amateur, an unusual pro-am set-up sees the association representing the Union Cyclists International, world governing body of cycling.

Knowing the incredible salaries that European top-notchers command (Jacques Anquetil, five-time winner of the *Tour de France*, earned \$252,000 last year and Holland's Peter Post has an asking rate of \$1,000 a day) I asked president Louis Chantigny of the Wheelmen how the Montreal group hoped to woo stars. He explained:

"Initially, the money to be made in the expanding North American bike picture won't compare with what can be made overseas, but the smart riders realize the market potential and, meanwhile, they may enhance their records. Post, for instance is gunning for the six-day record [he has 33 wins to date]. We are virtually sure of getting England's much-hated and much-respected Tom Simpson, rated the most spectacular rider in 20 years, for the same reason. Neither basic pay nor bonuses appeal to him as much as winning the big Canadian race in Montreal in Expo year."

The sport originated on this continent. Back in 1891 in New York an endurance race atop high-wheelers was staged. The race was on an individual-rider system; they rode until they dropped off from exhaustion, when trainers would revive them with cold water and smelling salts. Out of 40 riders who started, six finished. New York State ruled that in future riders must rest so many hours daily. In 1899 the two-man team format such as we know today was introduced at Madison Square Garden (the hand-change between partners when relieving each other is known as "The Madison"). Under a hard but shrewd promoter, John Chapman, the six-day took on prestige and spread to major cities of Canada and the United States.

World War I took away the cream of the European racers pronto and

the sport skidded. The stock-market crash of 1929 seemed to have ruined it for good until a revival attempt was made by promoter Harry Mendel, of New York. Harry made a dramatic pitch by presenting a daring and dramatic pair of Germans, Gustav Kilian and Heinz Vopel.

It was a mistake; they were too good. It was a foregone conclusion that they would win by a bunch of laps. The best thing that happened was their upset defeat — by the Peden brothers in the 1939 race at Madison Square.

But it was too late. World War II cut in. Kilian and Vopel went back to join the German army, Torchy enlisted in the R.C.A.F. and Doug joined the Canadian army.

Torchy is now 60 years old and Doug is 50 and most sports fans below the half-century age mark undoubtedly identify them with cycling. But a visit to the British Columbia Sports Hall of Fame at the Exhibition Grounds in Vancouver, where they are both enshrined, tells a great story about the Pedens.

Torchy, "small-chested and underdeveloped at 15", was persuaded to take up sports by his parents as a body-building measure. He did quite well at rugger, swimming and cycling. However, in terms of potential travel the 1928 Olympics at Amsterdam looked like the best bet and he once placed second in the Canadian breast-stroke championship. However, realizing there were swimmers who could beat him, Torchy concentrated on cycling and made the Olympic team. Two punctures and food poisoning knocked him out of the medal parade. He made the Canadian Olympic teams in 1932 at Los Angeles and in 1936 at Berlin — as a coach.

At Berlin, the kid brother, Doug, showed up with the Canadian Olympic basketball team that finished second to the United States. Doug had actually ridden in the Canadian Olympic cycling trials but had been told he'd have to choose between cycling and basketball.

Actually, the mild-mannered Doug, who appears almost ministerial behind the sports editor's desk, made it as a professional in three sports.

In six-day racing he really won seven of his 37 races — once without Torchy as partner. In basketball he played two seasons with the pro Vancouver Hornets. In baseball he started at the age of 25 with, of all teams, the bearded House of David team at Hot Springs, Ark.

Doug echoed Torchy's optimistic feeling about the comeback of the six-day at Montreal's Forum under Expo 67 world-publicity exposure: "Major-league cycling is booming today in Europe and all it needs in North America is exposure to boom again here." ◀



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