

IN THIS CORNER

George Bookan

Central Casting in Hollywood never would have picked Mikey Troy to play the role of a major league gambler. He shunned the spotlight. He visited only a couple of quiet little out-of-the-way restaurants. He spent his non-working time with his family.

On about the only day he ever really was sick in his 74 years, Michael Troisi died last April 4. He was the cleanest bookmaker in the city's history. When he wasn't dealing horses and blackjack in his storied Front Street horseroom, he took action now and then in some high life dice games. By appointment only. In Auburn, Geneva, wherever the high rollers gathered. When Mike was booking the game, or playing in it, you could bet it was an honest shake.

He was famous for making "refunds." When a guy went Tap City in Mike's joint, he never had to leave broke. Mike could estimate what the guy lost, and if he ever said "No" to a touch by a walk-out customer, it never was witnessed.

Mike never dealt in sports, as a bookmaker. About the only times he ventured out to sports events, they would be boxing matches. Old Convention Hall, the Sports Arena, or New York or Chicago, wherever the big ones were staged. He'd bet the eyeballs out of a charging rhinoceros.

Stories about his Front Street horseroom, in the days when wire service gave the clients up to the minute rundowns on odds changes, plus descriptions of races from Santa Anita to Suffolk Downs — the stories are legion.

Mike offered a special service, known as Lawton's selections. Lawton was the world's best horse race handicapper, and some bookies put limits on Lawton figures. Mike gave the Lawton figures to all his customers. Free. "All it does for them," he explained, "is let them last a little longer."

One of his customers was a Saturday-only, one-race plunger who owned a prosperous restaurant. This guy was degenerate for impossible longshots. He couldn't cash a bet. Mike felt so bad for the guy, he instructed his board man, who called the description of the races to give the man's impossible longshot a "call" in the stretch.

The man had bet \$600 on the dog and when the pack turned into the stretch, the caller named the man's impossible horse as "coming fastest of all in the stretch." The caller then turned to Mike to add, "And I ain't kidding, Boss." Mike personally paid the man his \$9,000, and laughingly told him about the "plot."

One of the desperado hoodlum element, a consistent loser, managed to work in a past-posting gimmick. With the aid of a wristwatch radio, while the wire service was running late, the guy was betting on winners after the races were official. The gimmick was spotted and Mike was informed.

"Let him go a couple more days," said Mike. "But make him bet parlays involving a later race. He'll blow his money anyway."

There was the Saturday morning before the place got busy when the masked stickup man shoved the wrong end of a 45 under Mike's prominent nose. Mike hollered for no cops. No

help. He just handed over the cloth bag containing the day's bankroll. But he knew the guy.

"Okay," said Mike. "But do you think you might pay me the \$60 you touched me for yesterday?"

And the guy handed over the \$60. True story.

Mike was such an easy touch for charities that he bought tickets for benefit dinners that didn't exist. He helped countless young people through colleges. His Christmas gift mailing list during World War II found GIs spread all over the globe. He bailed out priests in poor parishes and he sent truckloads of food and goodies to orphanages in days when they couldn't make it without his help.

His pride and joy was his family. When people from all walks gathered to pay respects last week at the funeral home, his family hardly could believe all the things visitors told about what Mike Troy had done for people.

Mike himself would pretend to believe any hard luck story for a touch. He was no collar-ad model, but he was a beautiful man. One thing he wouldn't have believed. That he would be the subject of a sports column in the Courier-Journal. He can believe it now.

Hanson Commissioned To Write Chorale For Nazareth Fete

Howard Hanson, eminent composer and director emeritus of the Eastman School of Music, has been commissioned by Nazareth College of Rochester to compose a choral work for the college's 50th anniversary.

Both the Nazareth Glee Club and Chamber Orchestra will participate in the performance, tentatively scheduled for Oct. 25.

Hanson will compose the work using texts relating to light symbolism drawn from the college seal, "Lumen in Christo" (light in Christ).

A native of Wahoo, Neb., Hanson was educated at the University of Nebraska, Institute of Musical Art (now Juilliard School of Music) and Northwestern University. He also holds 36 honorary doctoral degrees.

Hanson has received numerous musical honors including the Prix de Rome Competition, he was the first American to win the prize; a Pulitzer Prize in 1944 for his Symphony No. 4, Opus 34; and the George Foster Peabody Award in 1946. He has served as president of several musical societies including the National Association of Schools of Music, the Music Teachers Association and the National Music Council.

Before his appointment in 1924 as director of the Eastman School

of Music, Hanson taught at the College of the Pacific, and later served there as dean of the Conservatory of Fine Arts.

He was director of the Eastman School of Music until 1964 when he retired with the title director emeritus and was appointed director of the Institute of American Music of the University of Rochester, a position he now holds.

Hanson's compositions include orchestral works, his best known being the "Romantic" symphony;

choral works; stage works, including the opera, "Merry Mount;" chamber music; band music; piano and organ pieces and various songs. He has composed commemorative works for numerous orchestras and symphonies including the Boston Symphony, New York Philharmonic and the New Orleans Philharmonic Orchestra.

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SCHOLASTIC NOTEBOOK

John Doser

Charles P. McQuatteas' recent letter to the Democrat & Chronicle sports editor took exception to Section 5 basketball chairman Bill Farrell's remarks about Catholic school support in the sectionals at the War Memorial.

McQuatteas, who wrote he was not a Catholic, thought Cardinal Mooney's cheerleaders were outstanding during all the games and on a par with other cheering sections.

He wrote that Mooney's cheerleaders produced more cheers than did East's supporters in the Class AA title match won by the Orientals.

"Mr. Farrell must have been absent during the McQuaid (vs. Brighton) game," McQuatteas concluded, "because their cheering section brought down the roof."

Don Murray, East High athletic director, recently presented the coach's trophy on behalf of City-Catholic basketball coaches to McQuaid's Tim Jordan at the historical C-C coaches' meeting at Bolo's — historical because it marked the first combined men-women coaches' meeting of the newly merged group.

Jordan, described by Murray as an extremely fine gentleman, accepted the honor on behalf of his brother whom he said was suffering from cancer.

Glenn Hagan, Cardinal Mooney's hot-shot basketball playmaker, made fifth team All-State a week after accepting a free tuition ride from St. Bonaventure University.

Hagan, personally scouted by head Bona coach Jim Satalini, was told he was a good chance to play varsity ball his freshman year and even has a shot at a starting slot.

In the background of Hagan's basketball successes are classroom points greatly helped by Sister Mary Ruth Gilligan and guidance counselor Tony Citino.

Hagan said he's not going to St. Bona's just to play basketball. "It's a good caliber school academically, too," he added.

Many early graduates of St. John Fisher College are mourning the death of Father Robert H. Flood, former librarian at the East Avenue school.

Back in the early 50's there were two Father Floods at Fisher, the other being Father Frank Flood, who taught business math at the time.

Father Robert, because of his height in comparison to Father Frank, was known affectionately by students as "High Tide," while Father Frank was, you guessed it, called "Low Tide."

Mark Nunn of McQuaid and Tom Farrell of Bishop Kearney were unanimous choices for the 1974 Monroe County High School Hockey All-Star team. Nunn led the Knights with 18 goals including four game-winners, while Farrell tallied 20 goals and 11 assists.

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