

EW'S TRASH TALK - AGONY IN DEFEAT EDITION

There is a lot going on out there, so consider this a somewhat open thread to yammer at will.

The first item of business is the passing of Jim McKay.

He was host of ABC's influential "Wide World of Sports" for more than 40 years, starting in 1961. The weekend series introduced viewers to all manner of strange, compelling and far-flung sports events. The show provided an international reach long before exotic backdrops became a staple of sports television.

McKay provided the famous voice-over that accompanied the opening in which viewers were reminded of the show's mission ("spanning the globe to bring you the constant variety of sports") and what lay ahead ("the thrill of victory and the agony of defeat").

McKay – understated, dignified and with a clear eye for detail – covered 12 Olympics, but none more memorably than the Summer Games in Munich, Germany. He was the anchor when events turned grim with the news that Palestinian terrorists kidnapped 11 Israeli athletes. It was left to McKay to tell Americans when a commando raid to rescue the athletes ended in tragedy.

"They're all gone," McKay said.

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McKay was the first sportscaster to win an Emmy Award. He won 12, the last in 1988. ABC calculated that McKay traveled some 41/2 million miles to work events. He covered more than 100 different

sports in 40 countries. In 2002, McKay received the International Olympic Committee's highest honor – the Olympic Order.

McKay was simply an outstanding journalist and reporter. Not just for sports, but of any kind; he was that good. His work will live long, and we have all prospered from it. Thanks for all the thrills of victory and the agonies of defeat Jim, vaya con dios.

Now one of Jim McKay's greatest loves was thoroughbred horse racing, particularly the triple crown races.

McKay's first television broadcast assignment was a horse race at Pimlico in 1947. It was the start of a love affair – horse racing captivated him like nothing else.

"There are few things in sport as exciting or beautiful as two strong thoroughbreds, neck and neck, charging toward the finish," he once said.

Today is the Belmont Stakes and Big Brown is going for the triple crown. There hasn't been a triple crown winner in thirty years, and Big Brown is a hell of a horse in what is seen as a weak field. Lets see if he can make it a special day for Jim McKay. I am pumped, and think this may be the year, and Big Brown's biggest competition, Casino Drive, has been scratched from the field because of injury. But Big Brown has a little agony in da feet himself. Got a bum hoof, but the experts seem to think he is good to go. The Belmont sure will test it though, it is one long distance. What do you folks think?

Lastly, F1. Didn't think I would leave F1 out did you? This weekend is the Canadian GP. Round seven of the 2008 Circus. The Montreal circuit is one of the faster tracks; should be a great race. Lewis Hamilton in the McLaren is leading the Driver's Championship standings by a scant

three points over Kimi Raikkonen of Ferrari; and four drivers are within six points of the lead, which is unusually tight grouping. The race is at 10:00 am EST and is being covered this week on Fox.