



jody murray

double play

They stand upright and pressed together like oversized blades of grass. Decades of Emeralds bound in green cover one wall of the paper's library.

I'm one of those people who, given a week, could spend a month inhaling these chronicles of time. But I have dirty laundry and a psych project due, so a couple hours have to suffice.

Wow. Back in 1910 those sports writers really knew how to turn a phrase. It was back in the days when sports events and speech tournaments dominated the front page every day. And a fledgling sports journalist wrote:

Six or more Oregon athletes will go south to enter the all-coast track meet in Berkeley

under the auspices of the University of California on May 14th if the wishes of the Athletic Council are followed. . . .

Captain Williams urges everyone on to come out on the track and try for places on this team. It will take a star man, however, for only sure place winners will be accepted.

Those applicants to the team

were more than likely screened by Bill Hayward, who coached Oregon track for 44 years and is now immortalized by the track facility that bears his name.

Later that same year, something happened that shows how much college athletics has changed:

On account of the premier attraction for tomorrow night at

the Eugene theatre Manager Terry has changed the time for the Oregon-Washington basketball game to four o'clock in the afternoon. The members of the Merry Widow company have been invited and will attend, and in the evening the teams will occupy a box in the theatre.

Try to imagine the same thing happening now. Oregon moves its hoop contest to 3 p.m. so as not to conflict with the 8 p.m. performance of "Much Ado About Nothing" at Robinson Theater. Titter, titter. Jim Haney, being a cultured man, might be coerced into going along with it. But Dick Harter would have had a seizure.

The most fascinating thing about the oldest volume in the library is that the "sporting editor" in 1910 was a woman — Helen Higbee.

Let's skip a few decades, stopping in 1941. The sports editor that year, ironically, was a Hawaiian — Johnnie Kahananui. In his Dec. 11 "Duck Tracks" column (a name loads of Emerald sports editors used), he set aside football for some thought on what had happened four days earlier:

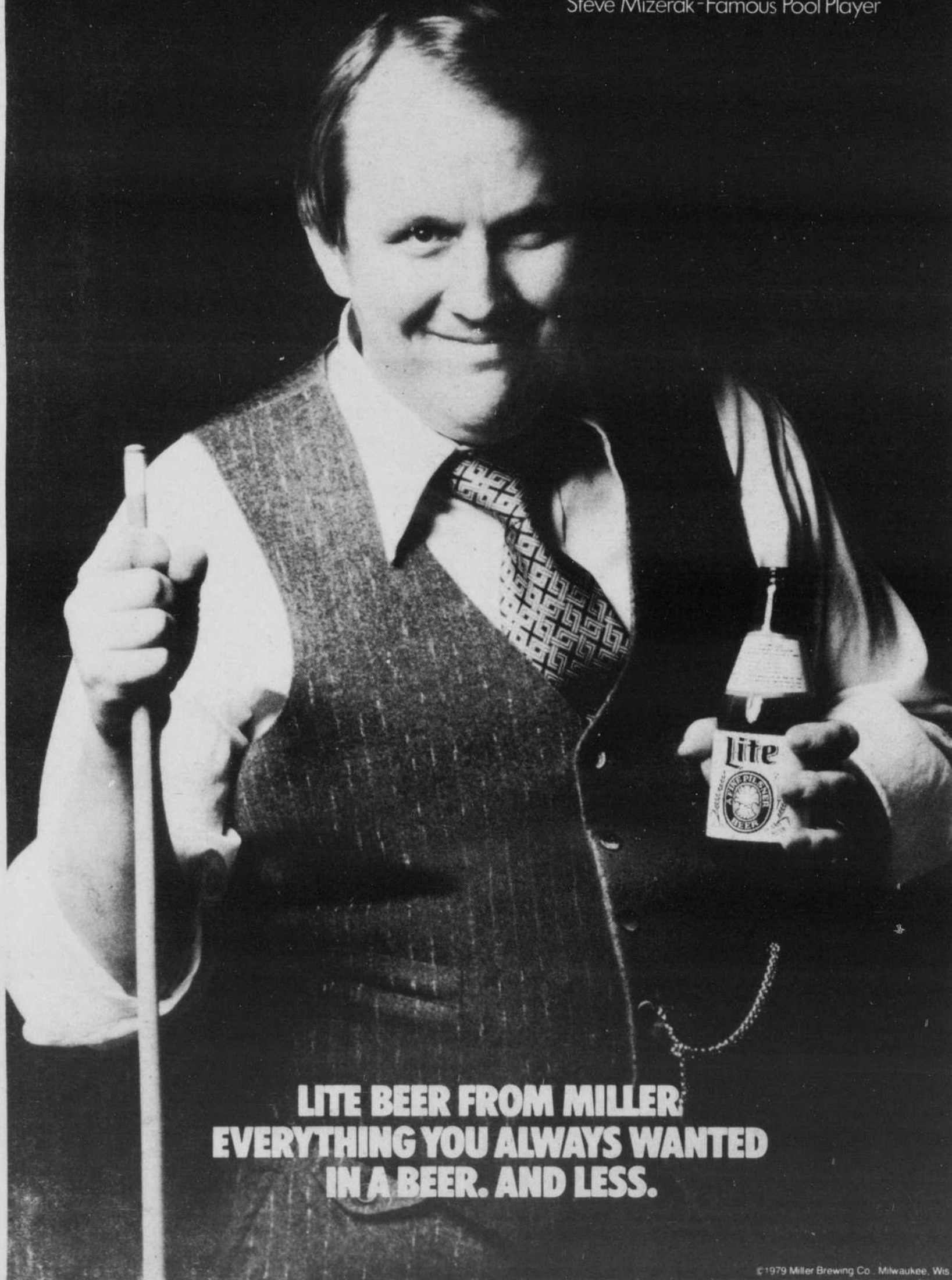
The University of Oregon crawled into bed Saturday night under waves of comment. . . a weary Oregon grid team had suffered a ludicrous 71 to 7 rout. . . When cuffed out from under the covers Sunday morning by the clap of thunder which rumbled furiously more than 2,500 miles distant. . . the 71 to 7 nightmare was erased, so was Oregon's 35 to 33 hoop upset. . . in Portland Saturday morning.

But perhaps the most significant sports story in those volumes of paper and ink is the one that was never written. On Saturday, Nov. 23, 1963, a full week of homecoming activities was to be culminated by the Civil War football game.

That game, along with almost everything that weekend, was stopped cold Friday by a bullet in the president's head.

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