

# SPORTS

by Joel Johnson

## RIFLE CLUB

March 18, 1937

A Rifle and Pistol Club was organized in Almont. Officers elected were: Paul Ewald, President; F.L. Atkinson, Vice President; C.E. Kelsven, Secretary; Art Feland, Executive Officer.

October 5, 1938

The guns and shells for the newly organized Rifle Club finally arrived. A match was held Sunday, at which 21 were present. Wilber Wanstrom took first place; Trygve Olson and Milton Johnson tied for second place.

## GOLF

In 1928, a 9-hole golf course, designed by Lawrence Nelson, was laid out in the hills southwest of Lover's Cliff.

October 12, 1928

A tournament was held at the local course. Quite a number of enthusiasts took part. Lawrence Nelson was proclaimed the winner, having a 97 score on 18 holes.

April 19, 1929

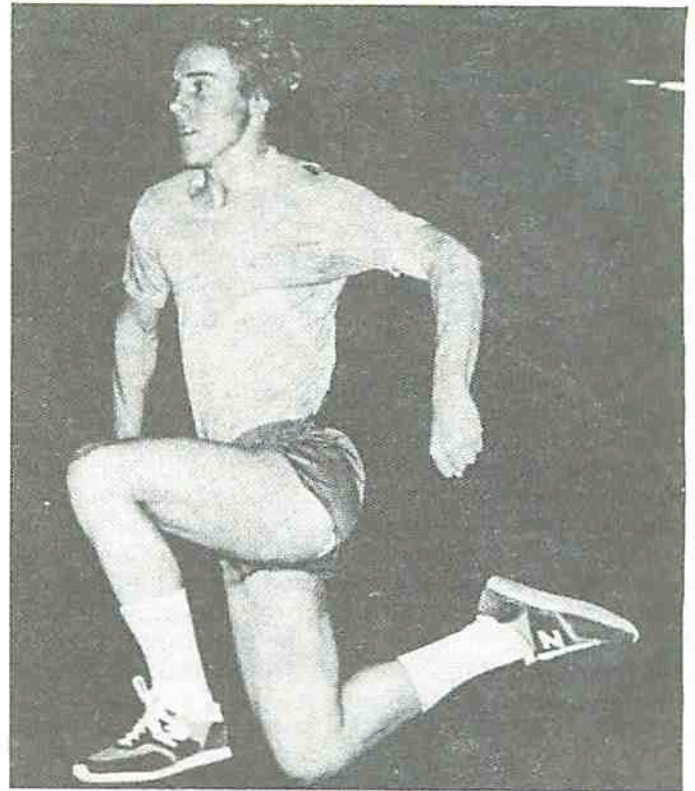
A meeting of the Golf Club was held and plans were made for the the coming season. Last year the course was open to all free of charge, but this year a membership fee will be charged to all members and a nominal charge to those who do not care to take out a membership but wish to use the course from time to time. The greens are now being resurfaced and other improvements made.

May 3, 1929

A large number of New Salem folks visited our golf course Sunday. Although the greens are not ready, playing is excellent, which is evident by the number playing there every Sunday.

## TRACK

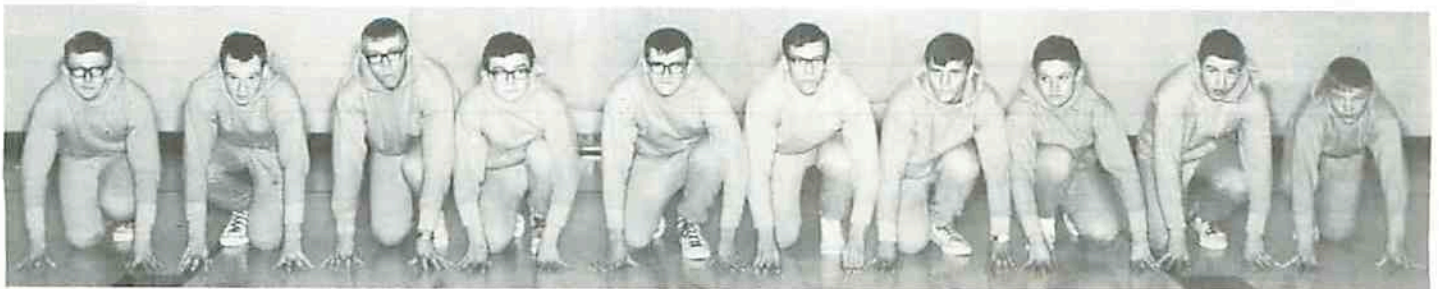
The only records of activities that could be associated with track in the early days were running contests. These contests were special events, as in September 20, 1919. New Salem Homecoming



Bryan Johnson

celebration; winner in the 100 yard dash was Thomas Gray of Sims, and August Timpe of Almont won the hurdle race for boys under 15 years of age. The result of the races at the Annual Old Settlers' Meeting held in New Salem, June 1936 showed Reynold Olson, Almont, taking first in the sack race; Palmer Johnson, Sims, first in boys' foot race; Winona Olson, Almont, first in girls' sack race; Andrew Johnson, Sims, first in Old settlers' race.

The first Cross Country team was organized in the early seventies. A boys track team was organized in 1973 with a girls' team a year later. Members of these first teams were: Cross County - Joel Miller, Terry Dawson, Arvin Kilen, Otto Genz, Larry Smith, Randy Christianson, Terry Smith, David Wetzel, Leslie Bethke, Dale Thorson; Boys' Track - Greg Olson, Grant Johnson, Kirk Bond, Jim Anderson, Bryan Johnson, Marty Hutchinson, Gary Willman, Peter Olson, Dennis Hogan, Steve Conitz, and Kirby Dittus. Girls' Track - Melody, Eleanor and Janice Ritz, Phyllis Bond, Vicky Olson, Mischelle Wetzel, Kay Johnson, Susan Striegel, Laurie Hunter, and Teresa Doll.

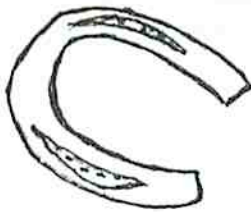


Left to Right: Joel Miller, Terry Dawson, Arvin Kilen, Otto Genz, Larry Smith, Randy Christianson, Terry Smith, David Wetzel, Leslie Bethke, Dale Thorson.

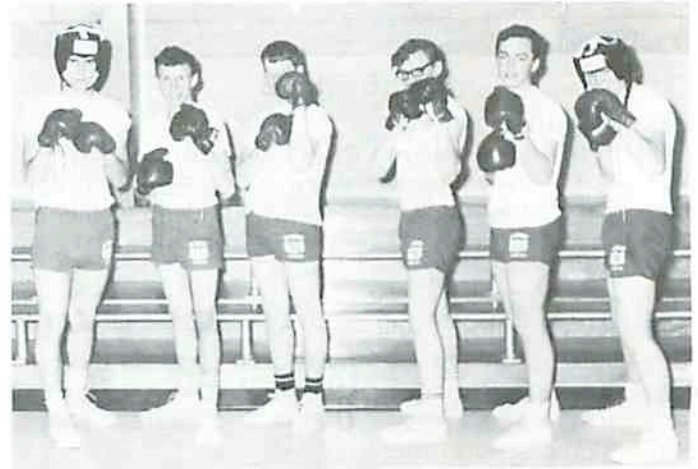
Bryan Johnson qualified for the N.D. State Track Meet in 1975 and 1976. He placed third in the high jump and second in the long jump. In 1976, he missed the state title in the high jump by ½ inch, placing second with a jump of 6 feet, 3 inches. Bryan holds two track records at Dickinson State College: 47 feet in the triple jump and 5,996 points in the Decathlon. He won the N.D.C.A.C. title in the triple jump in 1978. Presently, he is on the Montana State University track team at Bozeman, Montana. His best triple jump at M.S.U. is 47 feet, 8 inches.

### TENNIS

Almont's first tennis court was laid out in 1913. It was south of the present Edward Willman home on Main Street. In about 1920, the school yard grounds were leveled for a court which was well used. The Almont Jaycees constructed an excellent court across the street from the school. Ron Groninger was in charge of the project with labor from the community helping to build it. Help for funding came from the North Dakota Parks and Recreation Department.



### BOXING



Left to right: Paul Genz, Gary Neibauer, Dennis Erhardt, Bruce Peterson, Adolph Genz, Danny Olson.

Amateur boxing was organized around 1925 and matches were held in the present school lunch room. The best matches were between Ernest Feland, an employee at the hardware store, and Melvin Jacobson. Little was heard of boxing in the community until 1968, when a boxing team was organized. They performed as half time entertainment at many basketball games. Members of the team were Paul Genz, Gary Neibauer, Dennis Erhardt, Bruce Peterson, Adolph Genz, and Danny Olson.

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## BOYS' HIGH SCHOOL BASKETBALL

Before the high school gym was built in 1928, basketball was played in the old hall on Main Street, just south of the present post office. In March 1929 Professor L.G. Klopfliesch and the Almont High School basketball team went to Carson to take part in a tournament. They made the trip by team and bobsled because roads were blocked for motor travel. This was the first tournament the team had ever entered. No scores are available. Some scores of early games were: November 22, 1929, Almont defeated Leith 16 to 1; December 6, 1929, Almont 18, Carson 11; December 20, 1929, Almont lost to New Salem, 11-18. Players that year were Art and Harold Harris, Reuben Olson, Bill Weiss and Myron Knutson.

March 16, 1934, Almont won third place in the District Tournament, defeating Hazen 32-26. Players were: Edward and Bob Atkinson, Wallace Timpe, Anderson, Olin, and Olson.

March 9, 1937, Judson High School defeated Almont 32-36. Records are not available for teams of the 1940's.

In 1950 three classes were set up according to enrollment. A, B, and C classes were used, and Almont, being a small school, was class C. They did very well, having a winning season most years. Teams in this district were: Zap, Center, Selfridge, Leith, Solen and Almont. Many area class B schools were played to fill schedules.

Playing on small courts was very physical and sometimes unexpected things happened. Delbert Olson, while playing on the Solen floor, ran into a coal stove situated near one basket and knocked down the black, sooty pipe. Joel Johnson hit the ceiling while shooting a freethrow on the Leith floor. Some gyms were a semi-basement type playing court and the walls were out of bounds. However, competition was keen and games were exciting.

The 1950 record was 13 wins and one loss. Almont won the district defeating Leith 32-57, but lost to Tuttle in the regional playoff, for a place in the State Tournament. Members of this team were: Adam Hegel, Delbert Olson, Dale Harper, Edward Hegel, Joel Johnson, Obert Barstad, Marold Halvorson, Ray Olin, and Roger Becklund. The coach was Mr. Shanks.

In 1951 Almont had 10 wins and four losses, they lost in the District finals to Center, 42-37. The championship game was delayed several days because of a huge snow storm. When the game was eventually played, the Center team came to New Salem by horse and sleigh.



**BOYS' TEAM - 1952**

Back row: Coach Holle, Lester Hogan, Ralph Feland, LeRoy Ritz, Marshall Feland and James Harper. Front row: Warren Hoovestol, Jerome Hegel, Roger Becklund, Ray Olin, and Leonard Olson.

Even though they had a losing season in 1952, (3-13) they won the District by defeating Center, 46-40, and Selfridge, 48-47. They lost in the Regional to Stanton, 53-39.

Three years later, they won the District again by defeating Leith, 51-41, and Selfridge, 52-35. A strong Scranton team overpowered Almont, 41-51 in Regional play.



**1955**

Front: Steve Doll, Leroy Ritz, Roger Nagel, Warren Hoovestol, Leonard Olson. Back: Ted Hellman, Eugene Harper, Clarence Nilles, Jr., Robert Bachler, Darrell Hoovestol, Marshall Feland, Raymond Zemple, Marvin Ritz and Jerald Hellman.



1959

Seated: Carlyle Reeff, Martin Erhardt, Roger Gustafson, Myron Rosendahl and Ray Myers. Standing: Mr. Jahn, Roger Hoovestol, Dwayne Thiel, Duane Hoovestol, Thornton Kilen, and Paul Myers, manager.

In 1959 Almont defeated Solen, 61-48, for the District title. This was the only time Almont hosted the District Tournament.

A new and larger gym was constructed in 1967, with modern facilities. At this time class C was abolished and a new I-94 District was established, including Hebron, Richardton, Taylor, New Salem, Almont, and South Heart. Almont now had to com-

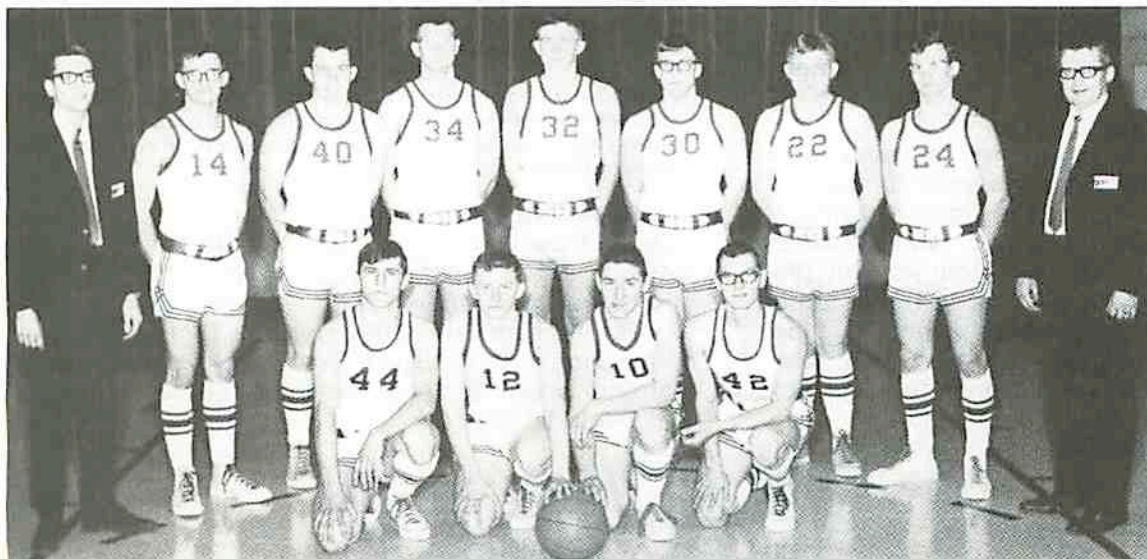


1968 GRADE TEAM

Front row: Elliott Olson, Sandy Stendhjem, Dennis Striegel, Casey Thorson, Bryan Johnson, Dustan Jacobson, Peter Olson, Kerry Wanstrom. Middle row: Monty Ritz, Jimmy Anderson, Jimmy Dawson, Timmy Feland, David Olson, Dale Jacobson. Back row: Blaine Olson, Kevin Christianson, Dennis Hogan, Martin Hutchinson, Gary Willman.

pete against many larger schools in District play.

Almont had a respectable record of 11 wins and seven losses during the 1967-68 season. They took home a third place trophy from the District Tournament, defeating Taylor, 66-63.



1968 "A" TEAM

Ass't Coach, Mr. Boyd, Larry Smith, Elliot Olson, Joel Olson, Kerry Wanstrom, Tim Christianson, Orlyn Wanstrom, Randy Christianson, Coach Mr. Stendhjem. Front: Terry Smith, Joel Miller, Leslie Bethke, Bruce Peterson.



1968

Kerry gets around guard.



Joel Olson, tough man under the boards - 1968.



Bryan's favorite shot - 1975.

Casey blocks a shot - 1975.

Basketball fans could see that a very good team was developing when the grade team won an eight-team tournament at Beulah in 1972. Almont won a Holiday Tournament at Golden Valley in 1975 and took consolation in the District, defeating New Salem, 81-64.

The 1976 record was 17 wins and four losses. At one time, during the season, Almont was rated 10th in the sportswriters' poll. Enthusiasm for the game was shown by the fact that twelve of the eighteen boys in high school played on the basketball team. In district play, Almont defeated New Salem, 82-65, but was edged in a thriller, 65-63, with Richardton for the championship. Regional play saw Almont taking home a 4th place trophy, which was the best showing in the history of the Almont high school.

One of the reasons for Almont's success was the ball playing of Jim Anderson, who was selected by the AP Sportswriters and Sportscasters Association to the first five of the All-State High School Basketball Team, including all A and B schools. After graduation, Jim went on to play ball at Bismarck Junior College.

Presently, Almont High School has a promising young team. Members of the 1980-81 team are Calvin Feland, Brad Timpe, Tom and Lee Bond,



Jim Anderson - All-Stater from Almont in 1976.

Darrel Jacobson, Kelly Dittus, Carl Thiel, Jim Thiel, Bryan Thiel, Jim Greff, and Joel Bachler, with Will Jackson coaching.



**1976 TEAM**

Back: Coach, Mr. Hehn, D. Jacobson, C. Willman, B. Willman, D. Hogan, C. Thorson, B. Johnson, J. Anderson, M. Hutchinson, M. Ritz, P. Olson, S. Conitz, Mgr.  
Cheerleaders: E. Ritz, P. Bond, K. Johnson, M. Ritz, M. Wetzel

## INDEPENDENT BASKETBALL

Very little independent ball was played until the new gym was built in 1928. During the winter of 1929-30 these four teams were organized in Almont: Hardware Store, Halvorson's Food Store, Lumber Yard and Kelsven's Food Store. Players were Art Harris, Alex Gunnerson, Edgar Skjolsvik, Clarence Thor, Helmer Erlandson, Rev. Harris, Punch Timpe, Leo Timpe, Carl Feland, Sig Peterson, Fay Atkinson, Chris Halvorson, Lawrence Nelson, Henry Peck, Ed Templeton, C.E. Kelsven, Cuno Peterson, Bill Knutson, Carl Hill and C.A. Knutson. These teams played all winter against each other and at the conclusion of the season the losing teams treated the winner to oyster stew.

March 7, 1939, Almont Indies entered a tournament at New Salem but no scores were available. January 22, 1939, the Lumber Yard defeated the Home Store in the first game and the Hardware Store romped over the Red & White Store 11 to 19.

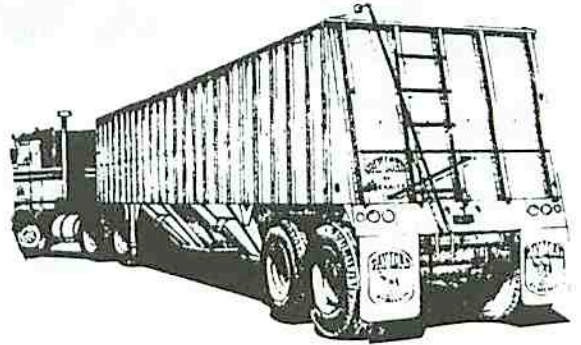
The following is an excerpt from the New Salem Journal, March 16, 1938; the New Salem Indies won the championship of our tournament, defeating Almont. Almont, as always, portrayed wonderful sportsmanship with the fans giving them a cheer before leaving the floor. Almont players were Olin, Knutson, Atkinson, Anderson, W. Timpe, Willman, Olson and Stoeckel.

In the early 40's many teams disbanded due to the war. During the period 1948-1955 the Almont Commercial Club sponsored a ball club furnishing uniforms and equipment. They also organized an annual eight team tournament held at Almont each March. These tournaments were well attended, with each team entered, drawing a large following to the games. In 1952 Almont won the tournament defeating New Leipzig, Hebron and Raleigh in that order. Almont won it again in 1954 defeating Raleigh 87-71. They won a holiday tournament at Elgin the same year. Record for the year was 18 wins and four losses. Members of the team were Roger Becklund, Joel Johnson, Jake Larson, Obert Barstad, Gilbert Holle, Duane Johnson and Ray Olin. Coaching was Pastor N. Jolivette; scorer, Ed Reef; timer, Bob Atkinson.

Almont went to the State Amateur Tournament in 1959 by defeating Leith for the district title. They played a good game winning the opener, but lost the next game. Some players on this team were Marvin and LeRoy Ritz, Leonard Olson, Joel Johnson, Eddy Theil, Wesley Jahn, Duane Hoovestol, Gary Tavis and Warren Hoovestol.

The Almont Jaycees now sponsor a club started in 1977. A Jaycee tournament was held at the high school gym in 1980, which Almont won defeating a strong New Leipzig team. Team members were Kerry Wanstrom, Peter Olson, Monte Ritz, Joel Olson, Casey Thorson, Calvin Anderson, Jim Anderson, Bryan and Grant Johnson, Buz Schollmeyer, Dean Bachler, Arvin Kilen, Dale and Dusty Jacobson and John Meyer. The team now is a member of the Western Amateur League. Monte Ritz is the manager.

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## GIRLS' HIGH SCHOOL BASKETBALL



**ALMONT HIGH SCHOOL GIRLS' BASKETBALL TEAM - 1923**  
 First row: Valborg Peterson, Evelyn Bateman, Evelyn Erlandson, Mary Malone, Violo Knutson, Ragna Olson, Gertie Olson. Middle row: Aalga Knudson, Ida Olson, Elsie Willman, Anna Timpe, Helen Olson, Thelma Duncan, Gertrude Willman. Back row: Agnes Aymond, Lucille Templeton, Ida Mitzman, Helga Olson, Mary Timpke, Catherine Malone, Ruth Malone, Norma Erlandson.



**GIRLS' BASKETBALL TEAM - 1935**  
 Front: Alice Barstad, Lillian Willman, Theresa Erhart, Eleanor Pederson, Naomi Harris, Berethe Bergstrom, Dorothy Lotspiech, Lillian Pederson. Back: Kathleen Kelsven, Laura Reetz, Eileen Becklund, Ida Olson, Louise Bahr.

Girls' basketball was active during the early years, but few records are available. Members of a team in 1929 were Lucille Anderson, Luella Wanstrom, Louise Aanstad, and Louise Hoeger. The 1945 high school team was Arlene Wohlman, Elaine Timpe, Alta Barstad, Marlys Knutson, Elvina Kary, Joyce and Audrey Willman, and Frances and Audrey Nelson.

Girls' rules, at this time, were quite different than boys. The team consisted of six players, three guards and three forwards. The guards

stayed on their half of the floor, only playing defense, while the forwards played offense on the other half of the floor. The players were further limited by being allowed only two dribbles each time they had the ball. Girls' games were usually played as a preliminary to boys' games.

A 1949 news clipping mentioned Almont playing in a Consolidated Tournament held at Hebron. Some players in that tourney were Lois Larson, Charlene Reef, Joan Timpe, Muriel Skjolsvik, Deloris Kary, and Donna Knutson. In 1950, the girls had a good team with a season record of six wins and one loss. Ardys Zemple, Perpetua Doll, Charlene Reef, Adeline Larson, Virginia Bond, Joan Knudson, Audrey Ritz, Dauphine Anderson, Shirley Timpe, and Gloria Hansen were members of that team. Frances Nelson was their coach. Their 1951 record was seven wins and one loss. They lost in the district finals to Center 24-23 with five players fouling out. Many tears were shed after the game since Almont had defeated Center twice, quite easily, during the season. Ann Kary, Romona Zemple, and Audrey Anderson were new players this year. Some season records were: 1952-7-4; 1953-2-6; 1955-6-4, taking district consolation. Team members were Laurel Harper, Dorothy Hoovestol, Jeanette Nagel, Janet Feland, Charlotte Kilen, Iona Hoovestol, Romona Knudson, Bonnie Christianson, Clara Doll, Corma Feland, Leona Monson, and Janice Ritz. Coaching was done by Gilbert Holle. The 1956 record was 7-2, they lost in the district finals to Center.



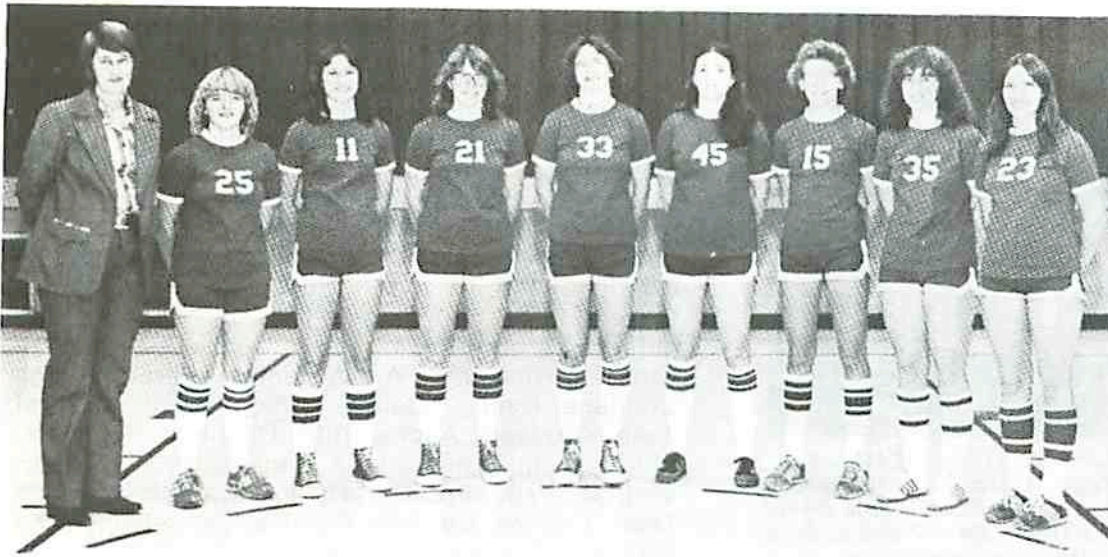
**GIRLS TEAM 1952**

Back row: Romona Zemple, Joan Knudson, Ange Kary, Gloria Hanson, LaVonne Ritz and Leona Monson. Front row: Coach Holle, Caroline Larson, Adeline Larson, Charleen Reef, Perpetua Doll and Iona Hoovestol.



**1956**

Front: Laurel Harper, Ramona Knudson, Clara Doll, Corma Feland, Bonnee Christianson, Janice Ritz. Back: Manager-Janet Feland, Geraldine Doll, Virginia Miller, Dorothy Hoovestol, Kathy Bahm, Charlotte Kilen, Coach-Mr. Holle. Captains: Corma Feland, Clara Doll.



**1980 GIRLS' VARSITY**  
 L to R: Coach Berneice Steinke, Julie Renner, Lynn Bond, Lisa Ritz, Vera Stolberg, Julia Stolberg, Sherry Ritz, Shari Keller, Sherry Thiel. Not pictured: Laurie Hunter.

Girls' basketball was discontinued in North Dakota in 1958 and was not reorganized until 1973. Now girls have the same rules as boys and Class C was abolished. Almont did not organize a team until 1976, consequently had a difficult time competing against teams that had been playing for three years. The 1980 team had the best

season since reorganization with a 6-15 record. They brought home a 3rd place trophy from the Golden Valley Invitational Tournament. Patty Schneider, Shari Keller, Lisa Ritz, Vera Stolberg, Julie Renner, Lynn Bond, Cindy Feland, Debbie Theil and Sherry Ritz, were members of the 1980 team with Will Jackson coaching.

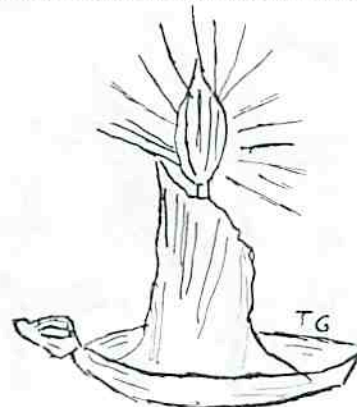


Standing, left to right: Pat Anderson, Patty Feland, Lynn Peterson. Kneeling: Doreen Willman - 1965.



**CHEERLEADERS - 1969**

Top, left to right: Jill Anderson, Mary Jane Thorson. Bottom, left to right: Arlene Kilen, Darnell Christianson, Mary Erhardt.





## SOFTBALL

A girls' softball team was active in 1950. Records show they defeated New Salem 8-4 and Glen Ullin 16-5. Players on that team were Muriel Skjolsvik, pitcher; Charleen Reeff, catcher; Joan Knudson, first base; Audrey Ritz, second base; Colleen Knudson, short stop; Shirley Timpe, third base; fielders were Joan Timpe, Adeline Johnson, Donna Knutson, Audrey and Dauphine Anderson.

In the early 60's Almont fielded a fast pitch team that played in a league with Elgin, New

Leipzig, Carson, Glen Ullin, and Flasher.

A trend to slow pitch ball took place in the 70's and Almont started a team in 1980, practicing on a pasture near the Joel Johnson farm. Sometimes as many as 20 boys and some girls would show up every Sunday afternoon, dodging "cow pies", fishing muddy balls out of the creek and trying to keep horses and dogs off the playing field. They started too late for getting into the league, but they played several non-league away games winning four, of which one was a strong Carson team.

## BASEBALL



**ALMONT'S FIRST BASEBALL TEAM**

Standing: McGary, Albert Anderson, Seimers, E.W. Hyde, J.W. Burt, Cornelius Knutson, Amandus Larson, Ted Peterson. Seated: "Red" Brown, Stevenson, Byron DeLange.



**BASEBALL TEAM - 1911**

Some early recollections of baseball at Almont were in 1919 when they had a youth and adult team. Wilbur Scharff, Lawrence Nelson, Carl Sherwood, Norman Hanson, Henry Peck, Melvin and William Knutson were members of the youth team. Those playing on the adult team were Neal and Johnny Gillis, Amandus Larson, Ted Peterson, Oscar Olson, Albert Anderson, Cornelius Knutson, Byron DeLange, and Red Brown.

There was always a battle between Sims and Almont, with games usually close and well played.

Judson, Carson, New Salem, Lark, and "Pumpkin Center" all had good teams.

Among those who played, in addition to those already mentioned, were Joe Olson, Frank Johnson, Hans Hansen, Fred Kulver, Hjelmer Erlandson, Harry Compton, Rhoades brothers and Nolan brothers. We know we are missing many names.

Almont joined the Missouri Slope Baseball League on May 31, 1928. Other teams were Judson, Center, New Salem and Glen Ullin.

When the Sims ball club disbanded in the early 20's, a Curlew team was organized. Around 1934 or 35, Almont and Curlew joined to make an excellent ball club that played together for many years. Hard times made it difficult to get to games since money and gas was very short.

A newspaper clipping of a 1935 game - Almont over New Salem 11 to 7. Elmer Wanstrom, the Almont pitcher, kept the opposition guessing. New Salem used Lawrence Kruger, Gordon Schmidt, and Harvey Just on the mound.

August 19, 1937, Almont defeats New Salem in 10 innings 18-17. Almont's lineup was: Elmer Wanstrom, pitcher; Wilbur Wanstrom, catcher; Ed Reeff, first base; Jerald Olin, short stop; Ed Atchinson, second base; J. Monson, third base; Barney Peterson, center field; Milton Johnson, right field; Norman Johnson, left field. Wanstrom



**BALL TEAM OF 1936**

L to R - Front: Palmer Johnson, Wilbur Wanstrom, Ed Reeff, Norman Kilen, Milton Johnson, Irvin Olin, Wilbur Sharff. Back: Leander Johnson, Willard Johnson, Charles Wanstrom, Palmer Johnson, Barney Peterson.



**1968 BASEBALL TEAM**

L to R - Back: Gerald Stenehjem, Tim Christianson, Randy Christianson, Joel Olson, Kerry Wanstrom, Terry Smith, Joel Miller, Leslie Bethke, Dennis Boyd. Front: Arvin Kilen, Larry Smith, Elliot Olson, Paul Genz, Orlyn Wanstrom, Bruce Peterson.

struck out 14. Coach was F.L. Atchinson; Thorliev Peterson, scorer, and Otis Malone, manager.

Opening game of the season for many years was on Mother's Day against the State Pen at Bismarck. In one game the Almont pitcher hit the same batter twice. The second time he hit him the batter started for the mound and the Pen guards had to retain him. The Pen had a very good team and Almont could never defeat them until the early 40's when Palmer Johnson pitched, striking out 15 batters. This was the only time they defeated the Pen.

Baseball was organized under the North Dakota Amateur Baseball Association in the 40's ending each season with a State Tournament at Jamestown. League teams were: Glen Ullin, Haymarsh, New Salem, Rocky Ridge, Almont, Hebron and Judson. Large crowds attended these games each Sunday afternoon. Many games were pitchers' duals with each team having at least one excellent thrower. One of the many home runs Palmer Johnson hit was a tremendous clout of about 450 feet into the Muddy Creek. Eddy Kilen, Don Olin, Bob and Marvin Joersz, and Duane Johnson also played with this team. Almont's manager was Irvin Olin.

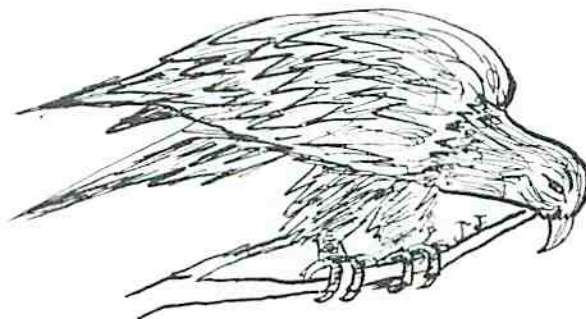
In the late 50's interest diminished in amateur baseball with many area towns not fielding a team which resulted in the league being dissolved.

Almont High School fielded a team in 1948 and 49. Not many games were played because of the great distances traveled for games. It wasn't until 1968 that another team was organized. Almont had a very good team defeating many area schools.



**BASEBALL TEAM - 1980**

Front row: Rory Leach, Daryl Jacobson, Peter Olson, Dusty Jacobson, Kay Johnson. Standing: Gary Willman, Grant Johnson, David Jacobson, Dale Jacobson, Joel Johnson, Jim Anderson and Byran Johnson. Not pictured: Jim Dawson, David & Charles Willman, Joel and Jay Larson, Kim Barstad, Monty Ritz.

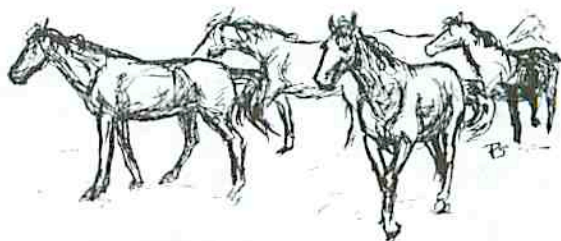


# HORSES

Horses have played an important part in Almont's history. Except for a few yoke of oxen and some mules, horses furnished all the power for farming and transportation in the early years.

In 1909, glanders, an incurable infectious disease was found in a number of horses in this area. The disease affects the air passages and it can be transferred to man but not to cattle. The Deputy State Veterinarian visited Almont several times; he deemed it necessary to have the affected horses slaughtered. The horses were appraised by a local committee of three; the average price was \$100. The appraised amount was paid to the owners by the government.

There were the heavy draft animals and also the lighter breeds for saddle or buggy. By crossing the draft mares with the light stallions, a good, tough dual purpose horse resulted. The draft horses were mostly Percheron, although there were some Belgian and Clydesdale. Some ranchers would have a stallion which they would "stand" at the ranch; to name a few: Joe Pederson, Otto Feland, Severt Olson, Theo Larson and John Olin. Some would go on the road with their horses establishing a route to be covered every three weeks. The



last one to have such a route was Herman Timpe. He took Barney and Sig Peterson's black Percheron around the area, driving him on a cart. The light horses were mostly thoroughbred, Morgan or standard bred; they made excellent saddle and buggy horses. Stallion owners of these would also cover the community in the summer months. All stallions had to be inspected for soundness by a veterinarian and licensed. The quarter horse came in the later years and is most prevalent today.

In 1917 the U.S. government bought horses for the army. They bought only geldings between 1000 and 1500 pounds. No gray colored horses were accepted.

A few of the early settlers raised horses for a living. Among them were Otto Feland and Joe Pederson. In 1913 Joe sold 40 head of horses by auction on the Bluff Dale Stock Farm. Otto sold horses mostly to the early settlers. Most of the homesteaders didn't have the money to pay for them so he would take a "note". He said they all proved honest and paid for them when they were able.

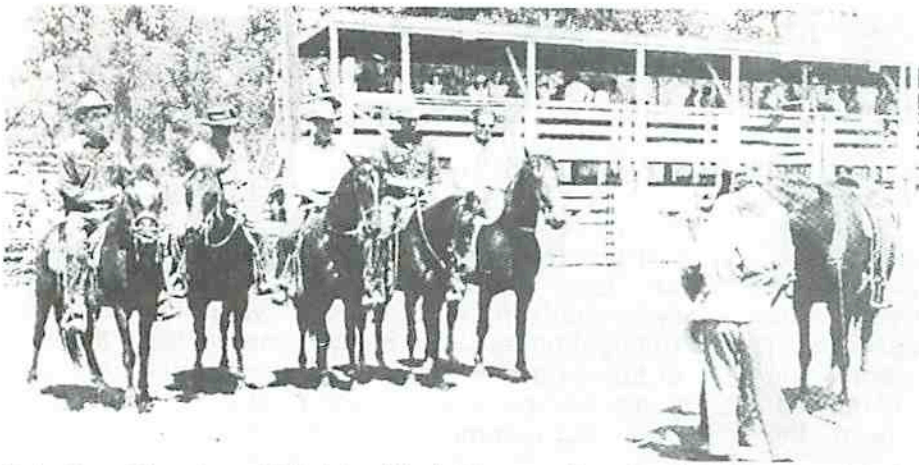
There also were horse traders that used to come through with bunches of horses and would sell and trade horses. Among them was "Calamity Joe" Meyers of Medora. Sig Olson met him in the 1940's. He introduced himself as Joe Meyers. "Oh", Sig said, "are you the Joe Meyers that used to come through with horses?" Sig said he remembered when he was a kid the farmers padlocked their barn doors when they heard Joe Meyers was in the country. Joe said, "I never stole any horses from the farmers but when the Indians stole one from me I always stole two back!"

Jack Watson, at New Salem, made his living dealing in horses. Ben Bird trailed horses from Texas with his 16 year old brother and another



Red Olson winning the relay.  
Junior Horse Club Members and Leaders.





Stake Team Champions - 1948 - l to r: Wendall Dawson, Roger Bond, Levi Dawson, Jake Larson, George Bruington, Robert Feland accepting trophy from Dr. Breslin.

man. A band of thieves tried to steal their horses and they shot it out with them. Ben's brother was fatally shot in the incident.

A band of gypsies sold Charlie Hoeger a beautiful gray mare. She turned out to be a bad kicker but Charlie managed to get along with her. In a couple of days the gypsies came back and thought they would buy her back for little or nothing, but Charlie wouldn't let her go. They had sold her many times before and were always able to get her back cheap.

Charles Atwood would sell a beautiful team at a fancy price. When they would get them home and hitch them up they were balky and wouldn't stretch a tug so they would bring them back. Atwood would say, "I can't give you the money back as I have already spent it, but I have 30 head of horses in the pasture and you can pick any two horses to replace them." The next customer would get the same treatment. That way he got a good price for all his horses.

After World War II there was sort of a transition period when farmers went from horses to tractors to do all their farm work. During this period Art



Sims Team Breslin Trophy.

Feland brought hundreds of horses over a considerable area and brought them to his ranch where the mares, from three to eight years of age, were halter broke and hooves, manes, and tails were trimmed. From there they were trailed to the sales ring in Mandan where they were sold. The mares were sold to government buyers for from \$40 to \$80 per head to be shipped to European countries for some rehabilitation program. Most of the other horses were sold for slaughter for about 1¼¢ per pound.

At one sale in Mandan, they sold 2800 horses in one day. As the horses were sold, they had to be loaded in cars on the railroad in order to have room in the yards.

Other horse traders in the area included: George Bruington, Rudolph Olson and Charlie and Kermit Kruetz.

Early spring was the time to break and train work horses. They were usually about four-years-old and did not know the feeling of a rope. They would be hitched up with a good steady horse to a wagon or two-wheeled breaking cart. A rope would be strapped to one front foot, threaded



Drill team - 1962.



Horses in parade - Almont 1963.



Edgar Skjolsvik accepting trophy from Dr. and Mrs. Breslin. Other members left to right: Sig Peterson, Alf Olin, Obert Barstad, Art Feland and Clifford Knutson.



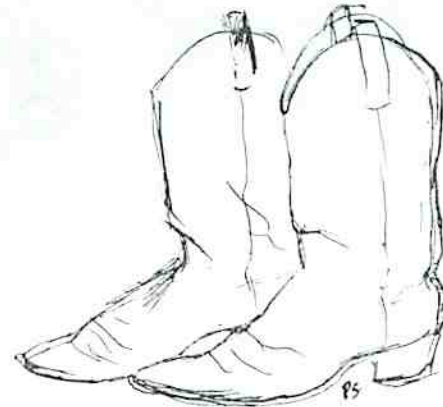
Junior Horse Race.

through a ring under the girth, and then through a ring strapped to the other front foot. This formed a W and by pulling up on the rope, the bronc could be brought down on his knees when he became too rambunctious. The new horse soon learned to respect the W.

Horses were expected to make about 20 miles per day in the field. They were given a one to two hour rest at noon and during this time, the farmer had an opportunity to patch harness, fix machinery or sharpen plow shares. Horses meant a lot to a farmer and were almost like a part of the family; they were watched closely for collar sores and other discomforts.



Arnold Bendish in chariot race in Almont.



85

# CONGRATULATIONS ALMONT

## Val & Gladys Kary

★ Almont, North Dakota ★

# Farming with Horses



Haying — Dinner time - 1938.



Heading - 1938.



Up she goes!



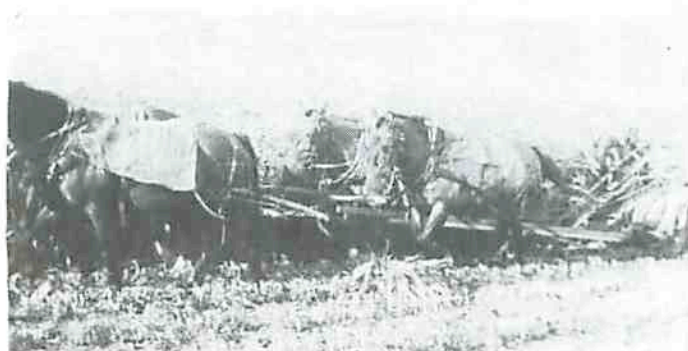
Mowing hay.



Eight horses on 3-bottom plow.



Bucking it in.



Cutting Corn.



Harness repaired and oiled during winter months.

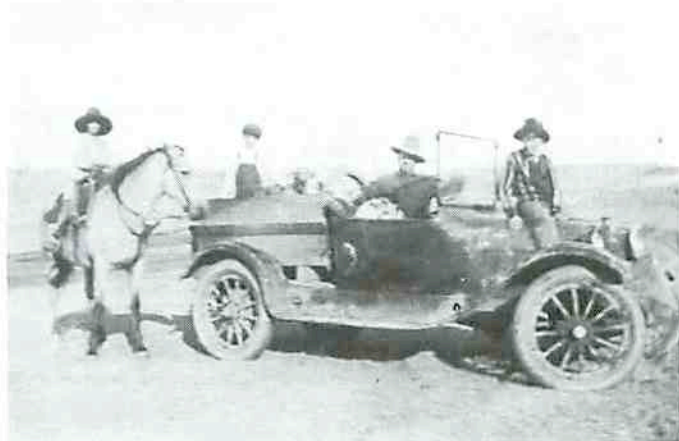
# RODEOS



Ben Bird - taken at rodeo at Weekes Ranch.



The Wolf Wagon - Omar, Bernie, Lenora and father "Red Olson".



Almont has always had a western atmosphere, due to the many ranching operations in the area. Horse racing, shodeos and rodeos have been a source of recreation and entertainment. In the early years there was a circle race track north of the railroad track. There was an elevated judge's stand and races always would draw an audience with considerable betting. Ben Bird was known to have the best horses, both on buggy and running race, although an unknown horse would sometimes win. Rudolph "Red" Olson also did racing as a hobby.

In 1947 Claude Ritz and Bob Feland built a rodeo arena in Art Feland's pasture east of town. They had a 1/2 mile race track around the arena. They had successful rodeos in 1947 and 1948. In 1949 the Almont Range Riders Club was organized as a non-profit organization. The club bought the facilities from Claude and Bob and for a number of years staged shodeos. That was the name chosen because the events would include: pleasure class, stake races, bending, potato, drill exhibitions, scoop shovel and other events besides the rodeo events. Stake racing was popular at that time. Dr. Breslin of Mandan donated a large trophy and the team which could win the state championship three consecutive years would be able to keep it. Almont had a team composed



of Wendall and Bud Dawson, Jake Larson, George Bruington, Roger Bond, and Bob Feland. Their team won honors in 1947 and 1948. Carl Knudson managed a second Almont team which was named Sims. Riders were Edgar Skjolsvik, Clifford Knudson, Obert Barstad, Alf Olin, Art Feland and Sig Peterson. This team won 1949-50 and 51. The trophy is now in the Tavis Cafe. Other teams competing were: Hebron, New Salem, Elgin, Heart River, Wing, Flasher and Carson.

The races held on the track would include the 1/2 mile, 1/4 mile, pony express, and relay. For a few years a local 16-horse drill team performed at the shodeos.

The Range Riders Club was inactive for a few years but was reorganized in 1966. A West Morton County Amateur and Junior Rodeo Association was organized in 1967. For several years the Almont Club received the highest final point award. The association later included East Stark and Grant counties. Calf roping has been a featured event for many years; team roping has been popular of late.

Several of our calf ropers have received state honors. In 1973 Joel Olson received the N.D.R.A. championship calf roping saddle. Joel had a broken leg so was unable to compete in the last two rodeos, but in spite of that his standing earned him first place honors. Joel received a standing ovation from those attending the final rodeo when he was presented the saddle.

In 1973 Tim Feland took first place in the North Dakota High School Calf Roping finals. Tim went to the national finals in 1973 and in 1974 as second place winner and again in 1975 as first place winner in North Dakota. In 1977 Tim won the coveted NDRA calf roping saddle as first place award.



Rodeo Camp of Red Olson - Judy & Omar Olson.

There have been a number of good ropers in this area, to name a few: Dick Bond, Jake Larson, Art Feland, Auggie Schaff, Joe Erhardt, Warren, Duane, Roger and Larry Hoovestol and M. G. Olson.

One of our youngest ropers is Calvin Feland who won second place in North Dakota High School competition in 1980 at 16 years of age. He went to the National Finals in Yakima, Wash., in August.

In 1961 a Junior Horse Club was organized; 26 young cowboys and cowgirls joined the club at the first meeting. Three "get-to-gethers" were held each season at the rodeo grounds. Events included pleasure class, musical chairs, potato race, rescue race, bending, sack races and others. A 5¢ entry fee was charged to make up the purse. The 16-Mounted Junior Drill team, directed by Sig Peterson, performed at each shodeo.

Their last performance was at the Morton County Fair at New Salem. The experience as a Junior Club member evidently was helpful during those years as our local 4-H horsemen and women usually received honors at 4H Achievement Days. The largest shodeo was in 1964 when contestants came from Carson, Elgin, Mandan, Bismarck and McIntosh, SD. Walt Neuens of Bismarck was the judge. A pot luck lunch followed each gathering, and at the end of the season everyone, including adults, enjoyed a trail ride.



"Red" Olson and his race horses leaving in the spring for the rodeo and racing circuit.

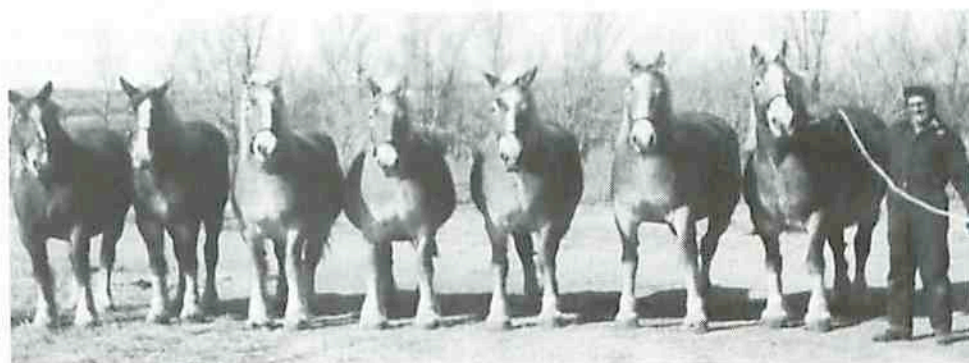


Joel Olson - 1973.

*Congratulations Almont  
on your 75th*

## **HUBER'S Registered Belgians**

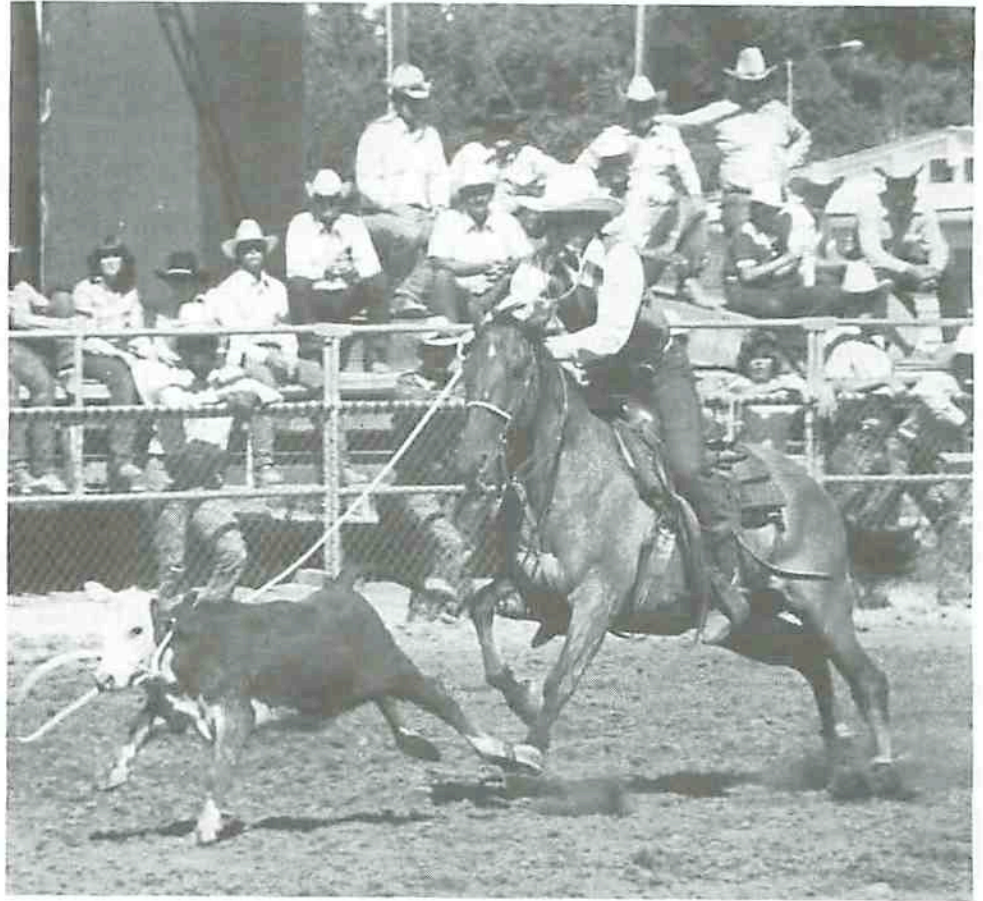
Member: ND Draft Horse Ass'n  
New Salem - Phone: 843-7184







Rescue Race - Carol Feland and Bruce Peterson.



Calvin Feland - Almont - 2nd place in State 1980 - Sophomore high - 16 years old.

Tim Feland - Almont.

