Norton leaves Rice for MSU

Bill Norton

By Marty Budner
staff writer

Bill Norton has accepted an offer to be assistant basketball coach at Michigan State University, according to Spartan head coach Jud Heathcote.

A longtime high school coach and athletic director at Birmingham Brother Rice High School, Norton was rumored to have been in line for the Spartan position over the past couple weeks.

The rumors were laid to rest Friday. "Bill was hired this morning (Friday)," said Heathcote from his office in East Lansing.

"There were a number of other applicants, but Bill was the number one candidate from early on. Bill was head and shoulders above the rest of the field.

"I was looking for an outstanding candidate, and I contacted (Norton) first. I wanted someone with a proven coaching experience, plus the type of personality that radiates enthusiasm.

"I think it's time to hire a Michigan high school coach," said Heathcote, who will be starting his sixth season as MSU's varsity basketball coach. "We think he's one of the best."

Heathcote indicated Norton will be in charge of recruiting and coordinating, and will also be involved in scouting and coaching. "(Norton) will be involved in all the myriad of duties we have to do here are Michigan State," said Heathcote.

NORTON HAS been affiliated with Brother Rice athletic programs since he arrived for the 1964-65 season.

Norton was hired as basketball coach his first year at Rice, and was named athletic director the following season. He served as varsity football coach in 1968.

In 17 years as Rice's basketball coach, Norton has compiled an incredible 373-106 won-loss record.

Warriors teams have won 10 district and five regional titles, plus a state championship in the 1973-74 season. Rice lost the state title to Earvin Johnson's Lansing Everett squad in 1976-77.

In the Catholic League, Norton led his team to four Central Division titles and three overall Catholic League crowns.

Norton has coached two high school All-Americans — Kevin Smith in 1977 and Tim Andre in 1979 — and 20 all-staters.

Norton was named coach of the year by the Observer & Eccentric newspapers after the 1967-68, '76-'77 and '80-'81 seasons.

Last year Norton guided Brother Rice to a 22-4 overall record. The Warriors were eliminated from the state basketball tournament last year in the semifinals by Eric Turner's Flint Central squad.

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Steve McCatty: "At first we couldn't move without bumping into a kid. Then after awhile, I think it was not that big a deal for the kids anymore."

McCatty heads back to work

By Richard Lech
staff writer

The hitters will be more out of tune than the pitchers now that the major-league baseball strike is over.

That's how Oakland A's pitcher Steve McCatty sees it, anyway.

"Everybody thinks it's going to have more of an effect on the pitchers than the hitters," the Troy native and Rochester resident said. "But I know myself I've been throwing quite a bit. I don't think I'll be that much behind.

"But as far as the hitters go, they'll be the ones in trouble over things like their timing. A pitcher can go out there and just throw it. But a hitter's got to have his timing just right."

The baseball strike came at a bad time for McCatty.

He'd been off to his best start ever, posting a 7-4 record.

And his team, led by the fiery Billy Martin, was sitting atop the American League West.

DURING THE STRIKE, McCatty spent most of his time in Oakland, working out with his teammates, conducting baseball clinics for local youngsters and playing a lot of golf.

His wife, the former Audrey Dittenber of Troy, kept the dollars coming with her job at an Oakland medical center.

"I didn't want to take a job because every time they went into negotiations it looked as though they might settle," McCatty said. "Maybe I should have taken the job."

He said he kept in close touch with Oakland A's player representative Jeff Newman on the progress of the negotiations. In fact, Newman was one of the players with whom he practiced.

"I heard they had some problems with the Tigers," McCatty said, referring to some complaints that player representative Milt Wilcox wasn't keeping them informed. "All I can say is they can't blame Milt Wilcox all that much. They all knew his phone number."

McCatty said he and his teammates completely backed the players' organization in its resistance to the owners' proposed free-agency changes.

"It's a pretty serious issue for guys who are not premium players," McCatty said. "Guys below the top level wouldn't be able to move around as much. It would cut down on the movement and salaries of the lower-level players."

Please turn to Page 2C

Royal Oak wins Legion title

Royal Oak rallied to win the 18th District American Legion championship 7-3 over Troy-Clawson in a sloppy first-place showdown before some 300 screaming fans Friday afternoon at the Kimball High School field.

Royal Oak, Berkley and Troy-Clawson all finished the regular-season schedule with identical 21-5 records that forced a round-robin playoff to decide the league champion.

Royal Oak defeated Berkley earlier in the week to set up Friday's meeting with Troy-Clawson, who had drawn a first-round bye.

Troy-Clawson took an early 3-0 lead on Royal Oak, scoring twice in the second inning and once in the fourth inning. T-C's right fielder Ron Yatooma led off each rally with a walk.

Royal Oak starter Bill Gall was relieved by Brad Cross in the fifth inning, and that signaled the beginning of Troy-Clawson's downfall.

Royal Oak started its comeback with two fifth-inning runs on three singles and a walk.

Trailing 3-2 entering the bottom of the sixth, Royal Oak took advantage of four errors, two walks and two triples to score five runs. And, all the action took place with two outs.

Gary Peters got on by error to lead off the inning, but was doubled off first base when Russ McKenzie's attempted sacrifice bunt went into the air and landed right in T-C pitchers' Gordie Hershiser's glove.

But, Brian Tangney followed with a triple down the right field line, and scored the tying run when third baseman Scott Dugan's throw to first base on an ensuing ground ball went wild. A walk to John Budzinski and a triple by Dave Kopf gave Royal Oak the lead for good.

Cross picked up the victory as he held Troy-Clawson scoreless over the last three innings. Hershiser, Troy-Clawson's top pitcher all season, was victimized by Troy-Clawon's defensive breakdwon and absorbed the loss.

Each team will represent the American Legion int he zone playoffs that begin Aug. 8 at Royal Oak's Memorial Field.

BLOOMFIELD HILLS 7
SAG. EISENHOWER 2

Bloomfield Hills, representing the American Legion's 18th District, fought off elimination from the Connie Mack District Tournament in Saginaw with a 7-2 win over Saginaw Eisenhower Thursday.

Manager Norm Kaplan's Bloomfield Hills crew opened tourney play with a 10-2 loss to Bay City.

In the Eisenhower game, winning pitcher Paul Sabol tossed a one-hitter and struck out four. He didn't allow a bit until the sixth inning. At the plate, he rapped three hits, including a home run.

Bloomfield Hills, which had 14 hits, scored five runs in the fourth inning. Matt Joseph ignited that rally with an over-the-fence solo homer. Eric Girdler went two-for-five in the game. Bill Rankin and Joseph each had two hits in four trips.

Against Bay City, winning pitcher Todd Toyzan went the distance and pitched a five-hitter. Only two of Bay City's runs were earned. Chip Vaughan was the losing pitcher.

Bloomfield Hills finished the Legion season with a 20-5 record and landed just one game out of first place in the final 18th District standings.

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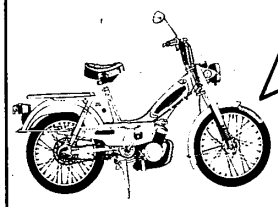

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St. Mary's AD quits

Bob Shoemaker steps down as AD

Bob Shoemaker has stepped down as Orchard Lake St. Mary's college and high school athletic director.

Shoemaker said he resigned the post to devote more time to his duties as dean of men and basketball coach at the all-male boarding high school. He held all three positions last year.

Tim Domke, the college varsity basketball coach, will replace Shoemaker as athletic director. Domke had been serving as the schools' admissions director.

Shoemaker spent the last nine years as an athletic director, the past four at St. Mary's and the five before that at Detroit St. Andrew.

His 1977-78 Orchard Lake St. Mary's basketball team won the state Class D championship. Last year OLSM advanced to the Class C finals before losing to a tough Three Oaks-River Valley team.

This year he coached the Eaglets to a 25-14 record in summer competition. The summer's highlight was his team's 3-0 showing in the eight-team Traverse City Cherry Festival Tournament.

St. Mary's all-stater Hiram Harris was named the tourney's most valuable player. Eaglets Brett Green and John Mungon-Frizzell were named to the all-tournament team.