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Bench Talk
By GLENN BUNTING



CATHY IRVINE

International Women's Professional Softball (IWPS) made its debut in East Detroit during the Memorial weekend, with leftfielder Cathy Irvine capturing the fancy of the opening day crowd.

The 1976 Rochester Adams graduate hit safely in her first four games against league power Connecticut and world famous pitcher Joan Joyce, while leg-kick flying at her every move, Irvine paced the Travelers' offense with eight hits in 14 trips to the plate.

She was named the Travelers' player of the game in the opener, which Michigan lost, 5-0. In the second game, coach Bud Hucul's team dropped a 10-inning 6-5 decision, in which Irvine batted out three hits.

The Travelers split Monday's twin bill with Connecticut, losing the first 6-3, and taking the nightcap, 7-1. Irvine kept her Ron LeFlore-like streak alive with a bunt single in the first game and two line-drive base hits in the second.

Cathy's offensive heroics weren't the only contributions she made to the Traveler cause however, as she converted her speed into several impressive defensive maneuvers.

AFTER A SHAKY start that saw her drop a shoestring attempt and a home run deflect off her glove, Cathy made one outstanding catch after another from her left field position.

In the extra-inning contest, twice she went over the shortened three-foot net fence to rob Connecticut of go-ahead runs. If there was a most valuable player on the field after the first four games, Irvine was it.

She possesses blazing speed and is said to be the fastest player in the 14-team league. Nicknamed "Flash" by her teammates, Cathy was clocked running from home plate to first base in 2.7 seconds. That doesn't give opposing infielders much time to throw the switch hitter out.

(Like professional baseball) the pitch-

Cathy Irvine:
Heroine in Travelers' debut

er's throwing arm doesn't determine whether Irvine will bat right- or left-handed. Instead, it's the side she feels more comfortable on, the situation when she comes to bat or Hucul's advice that dictates where she'll stand.

For instance, if the play calls for a sacrifice bunt, Cathy usually feels more comfortable on the right side, but if bunting to get on base, often times she'll bat left-handed.

Hitting second in the line-up behind number one draft choice Linda Muller, Cathy

said she doesn't always bat on the same side under similar conditions.

"I LIKE MY switch hitting abilities to cross the pitchers up," said Irvine. "This is really the first year that I've had enough confidence in myself to bat both ways. With the Rochester Ramblers, I'm right-handed in the games and left-handed in exhibitions and practices. I'm hoping that switch hitting will pay off for me this year."

The Travelers' seventh round draft choice, Cathy is excited about playing for the Michigan team, which drew a sellout 5,785 fans on opening day and 2,138 the following night. She said that supporters will see better play in the future.

"We were really nervous in the opener," said Cathy. "Connecticut had already played four games and is one of the best teams in the league. Facing Joan Joyce didn't make things any easier for us."

"But we played better the second night once we got the jitters out of our systems." The Travelers collected 14 hits in the second game, made several outstanding plays and looked like a different ballclub from the previous day.

The Michigan outfielders all boast proven arms but experienced difficulty in properly relaying the ball to the infield. The hitters also encountered problems with the strike zone as many swung at pitches over their heads.

BUT THE BASICS will come and one can't help but feel the Travelers will be a success. By paying their players \$100 a week, having only two umpires and not allowing fans to keep the yellow softball bouncing out of play, the Travelers are shaving costs in a serious attempt to build a solid franchise.

The players offer a new dimension to sports viewing. While the femininity still exists, the women are serious players on the field. They can be seen embracing one

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Gymnastics at Athens

Every gymnastics coach and instructor of girls and women, is invited to Michigan State University's one-day Workshop in Gymnastics at Athens High School in Troy, Michigan, on Saturday, June 19, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Barbara McKenzie, head women's gymnastics coach and Dr. Michael Kasavana, assistant women's gymnastics coach at Michigan State University, will serve as master instructors. AIAW gymnasts, Ann Weaver and Pam Steckrodt, from MSU will also instruct.

Morning sessions will emphasize vaulting and trampoline techniques as well as the balance team. In the afternoon, floor exercise and uneven bars are the areas to be covered.

McKenzie came to MSU from Clark State College in Pennsylvania where she coached gymnastics and modern classical dance; she received her M.A. in physical education from MSU. She states, "The rise in popularity of women's gymnastics in the past three years has been phenomenal. It's probably due to an increased interest in women's abilities across the board. The television coverage of the 1972 Olympics with gymnasts Olga Korbut and Cathy Rigby obviously had a great impact on public interest; however, parents and students are really interested in physical fitness as a whole, and gymnastics with its physical conditioning has become very appealing."

The upcoming gymnastics workshop is the first of several gymnastics activities Michigan State University plans in the Detroit area. To register contact the Michigan State University Regional Center located at Kingswood School, Cranbrook, 88 Cranbrook Road, Bloomfield Hills, phone 645-3442.

ROCHESTER LADIES GOLF
Results of May 23-25

- Championship Flight: Gross—Mary Seaman (46); Net—Mary Seaman and Irene Johnson (26); Putts—Dea Spaven and Irene Johnson (14).
- First Flight: Gross—Mille Wallen (51); Net—Mille Wallen (23); Putts—Nancy McGlowe (14).
- Second Flight: Gross—Joan Wagner and Marg Sharr (58); Net—Joan Wagner (26); Putts—Marilyn Bass (15).
- Third Flight: Gross—Cecilia Tobassen (67); Net—Cecilia Tobassen (25); Putts—Cecilia Tobassen (13).

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