

Country Day picks cage coach

By JOHN BOZZO

Tim Domke, West Bloomfield's head basketball coach for three years, will take over the assistant athletic director and varsity basketball coaching positions at Detroit Country Day (DCC) School. He signed a contract June 4 to replace John Hammett (Hammett is stepping down after 13 years at DCC) to devote more time to his real estate business. All the parties involved expressed good and bad feelings about the move. Domke was one of about 11 West Bloomfield coaches who were laid off by the board of education, to save money following a large deficit. More than 70 teachers were affected by the lay-offs. "I'm real excited about the new job," Domke said. "They (DCC) have the finest academic standards and one of the highest athletic standards. The possibilities there are tremendous."

"I wouldn't have looked for a job or accepted any offers if the millage hadn't failed," he added. "I love it in West Bloomfield. They've been real good to me. They gave me a chance to be head coach." Domke came to West Bloomfield in 1973 after serving as sixth grade coach at Royal Oak Dromero and a junior high school coach in Royal Oak. He posted a 13-18 record the first year, a 24-31 state in his second season, and a 14-20 record this past season. The 1975-76 record includes league and district championships. His lifetime coaching record is 121-39. One of these calls was from his predecessor, Hammett, wanted to help find his replacement and actively recruited Domke for the Country Day post. "I heard Tim Domke is a fine guy and has the best interests of the kids at heart and that's why I hung on these last few years," Hammett said. "He's a super guy to carry on after 13 years." Domke was also high in his praise of Hammett, who has a 175-40 mark during his tenure at Country Day. That record includes two national regular season championships. In 1980 Hammett opened a real estate office and the business has been growing ever since. He has his own office building and employs 25 people. During that time, he has remained as a volunteer coach at DCC, but as the busi-

ness grew, he found it increasingly difficult to devote the time necessary for practices, games, and scouting.

"WE HAVE MIXED emotions," Country Day Athletic Director Gene Reilly said. "We hate to see John go, but if John leaves it's nice to have Tim."

"He's (Domke) a deer," Reilly said. "He gets things done. He's a positive guy and he handles John Hammett in that type of guy."

Reilly explained that Country Day sought Domke for the job after contacting West Bloomfield Athletic Director John Coe.

"After the millage failure, the possibility of losing good staff members now becomes a reality," Coe said. "These individuals are doing a very natural and very necessary thing in terms of looking for employment for themselves and their families."

Coe is looking for a millage approval on June 14, but does not expect staff members to wait until afterwards before looking for a job, because there's no guarantee of a job vote from voters.

"I hope Timmy's very successful there," Coe added. "I have great respect for their program and the quality of students they attract."

Domke adds that another item he regrets about the move is the athletes he will be leaving behind. However, since Country Day is a private school, those athletes don't have to remain behind.

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Midget racing—a family project

By JOHN BOZZO

Vern Redenfort of Orchard Lake and his family spent the Memorial Day weekend camped near a track watching auto races—but he wasn't at the Indy 500. Instead of spending a lot of time partying and watching big name races, Vern had to work in a pit crew and his wife, Doris, helped run the concession stand. But they didn't mind the holiday work, and Vern maintains that it was a fun recreational weekend with the family because

the cars he works on and the racers he watched were his sons, and proceeds from the concession stands go toward track-related expenses.

The event was sanctioned nationally by the Quarter Midget Club of America, and 120 cars participated in the 18 races. The Redenforts brought home three trophies at the completion of the two-day event on Sunday.

Tim, at seven the youngest of the three brothers, failed to bring home a trophy but finished fifth in the junior novice class. He's just started racing this year, and last weekend was his first test against drivers from other areas.

Youngsters can begin racing at age five and stay in the midget classifications until age 14. Participants from all over the Midwest traveled to Waterford for the Memorial weekend races.

It was brother Dennis, age 12 and a veteran of one year, who brought home two trophies from the senior rigid division. He finished first in the division and won another trophy for the fastest lap, which was a 1/4 rounding of the 1/8th of a mile oval.

Ken, a nine year old who also began racing last year, won first place in the senior class. He had the slowest qualifying time of the finalists and therefore the front position.

A few engine adjustments between races cleared up some difficulties he had during the qualifying heat, and when the final started, Ken took off never to be headed by his competition.

AT THE END of the summer, the Redenforts will have gone all over the Midwest, camping at race tracks and running in weekend events. Last summer, they won 13 trophies.

"It's interesting, we have fun, and I get to spend a lot of time with the kids," Vern said.

A former racer himself, Vern is the proprietor of Vern's Service in Orchard Lake. He is a veteran of sports car, drag, off-road, and mini-stock racing, having given up the sport in 1973.

He took his family to a midget race last year, and Vern recalls that the boys looked interested.

"I went out and bought a used car, and they were interested," he said. "They ran in a race and liked it so well that I bought another car so they could each have one. This spring, I bought a car for the youngest."

He said the cars range in price from \$450 to about \$2500, with the higher-priced models being the faster cars.

Racing divisions are broken down into engine size categories, just as they are in adult racing, and the participants have their machines inspected to insure they don't exceed specifications.

"It's a father and mother sport, and the kids are the action," Vern said.

Everyone chips in by working in the concession, as a timer, announcer, or at whatever is needed. Attendance at the races is free, and proceeds from the concessions go toward taxes, track maintenance and trophies.

And if you're like the Redenforts, you get to bring home your share of those trophies.

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