

# Festive Farmington lays out its welcome mat

## Board fans skate, let good times roll

By LOUISE OKRUTSKY

Hopeful young athletes gripped the edges of their skateboards and waited for their chance to glide down the hill near the Farmington School Administration building, Raphael and Shiaswasse.

For their efforts and skill at balancing themselves on a narrow wooden or plastic board with wheels, the winners of the three age divisions walked away from clutching a certificate and a t-shirt from the Farmington Area Recreation Commission. First place winners possessed a gold trophy to commemorate their test of skill during the Second Annual Skateboard Race during the Farmington Founders' Festival.

Winners credited their equipment with making victory a reality. Some of them added a tribute to blind luck.

"You have more control with a wooden board," said Russ DeLong, 16, who placed first in the teen division with a time of 10:9 seconds. His main concern while out on the slope was to keep away from stones that could lodge in the wheels of his \$90 ski board and cause him to skid and lose his balance.

Although most of the teen division contestants admitted to favoring free style competition over going through a straight course in slalom, Thursday's competition held some compensating enjoyments for the group.

"I LIKE FREE STYLE," said Dan Pretto, who finished third in the teen division with a time of 11:4 seconds. "It's fun," he said. He also prefers a

wooden skateboard in competition. His was a custom made board which has served him through three contests.

It was DeLong's second appearance in skateboard competition. He confessed he enjoyed the speeding on his board.

"I love speed," he said, with enthusiasm. He keeps in shape during the winter months by practicing turns on his board in the basement.

Third in the teen division was Doug Roberts, who recorded a time of 11:1 seconds in the finals. Fourth place was gained by Kurt Robertson, with 11:5 seconds. Joe Phillips came in fifth with a time of 11:7 and John Schumacher held sixth place with a showing of 11:9 seconds.

It was Vince Paul's first showing in skateboard competition and he came in seventh with a time of 12 seconds. Instead of the custom made boards that his co-competitors used, he sailed down the hill on a board he borrowed from fifth place contestant Phillips.

"Some people buy names," Paul shrugged in explanation for his commonplace board.

KEVIN O'CONNOR was eighth in the nine man finals with a time of 12:5 seconds. Ninth place was held by Chuck Danto, who slid down the concrete covered hill in 12:6 seconds.

In contrast to the cool acceptance of the game by their 13-16 year-old counterparts, the under nine group let their enthusiasm show. Three youngsters showed for this portion of the

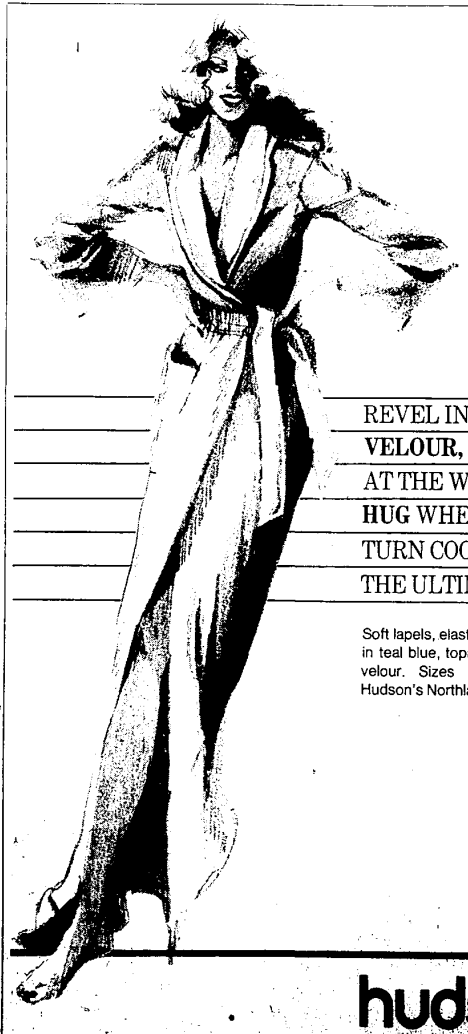
(Continued on page 4A)

Don Pretto, of the Farmington Area Recreation Commission's junior skateboard competition, demonstrates some of the free style stunts that he and his friends enjoy.

Both police departments were active in the Founder's Festival. Farmington City Police (left) took the opportunity to auction off a few items they had in storage. Det. Tom Daniels (left) confers with Sgt. John Maxwell (right) before the event. Firefighters took a turn at entertaining the crowds (below) during the annual waterball fight which was won by the Farmington Hills Fire Department.

Staff photos by Harry Mauthe

Farmington Observer Editor Steve Barnaby hangs in there while his horse races toward the finish line during the barrel race at the Founders' Festival rodeo, Friday.



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