



The number of racquetball players has approximately doubled every year since 1970, and is conservatively projected to reach 5.5 million this year.

Farmington Observer

SPORTS

Monday, August 8, 1977 (F) 1B

Early detection needed for athletic injuries

BY KEN VOYLES

Over the past few years, athletic injuries have become an increasingly common sight on the playing fields. Battleground is a most fitting word for the heavy contact sports such as football, but that sport is not the only villain when it comes to serious injuries. The semi-contact sports also add to the injury ranks.

Injuries, it could be concluded, have become a major part of athletic life, and the need to know about them is tremendous.

Two of the most common injuries in sports, according to Richard Milder, director of the Physical Therapy and Sports Medicine Clinic in Livonia, are ankle and knee injuries. Both, said Milder, are common because of their anatomical location and the lack of "good protection for those areas."

"Girl athletes also suffer from a type of knee injury. Instead of a torn cartilage, most familiar to male athletes, the knee cap slides out of place and must be readjusted."

"A very difficult problem for the athletic trainer or therapist is an injury that has gone unrecognized for a lengthy period of time," Milder said. "The initial treatment is usually difficult because the injury has changed in the time that it has gone unrecognized."

Milder, a former head trainer for the now-defunct Detroit Wheels professional football team, recently set up his center for Physical Therapy and Sports Medicine to deal with these kinds of injuries.

THE ATHLETES, according to Milder, have two big advantages over other patients in need of therapy or rehabilitation.

The first advantage is a general desire to get treated and cured as fast as possible. The athlete wants to get back into action, while the non-athlete has no such drive, according to Milder.

"Athletes have a very good attitude when it comes to injuries and that definitely makes things easier on us," Milder said.

The second advantage is that the athlete is in better shape than the non-athlete who needs treatment. The athlete trains long and hard, and it shows in his physical condition.

"Athletes are willing to work to recover," Milder said. "They are willing to make sacrifices unlike a patient with a heart condition, for example."

In the world of athletics, a number

of sacrifices have surfaced over the past few years. Athletic trainers are usually in a good position to comment on most of these controversies.

One such controversy concerns the "heat and cold" debate. Heat is applied to an injury such as a bruised leg to relax the muscles and relieve the swelling as much as possible. Cold is used for the same purpose — except that the cold will not relax the muscles, the controversy is simply a question of which is the better treatment.

According to Milder, there isn't much difference between the two treatments for healing purposes.

"COLD," MOST frequently, is generally better in the initial stages of treatment," he said. "Heat is slowly being phased out by the medical field and cold is coming more into use. I prefer cold."

One use for cold treatment comes during rehabilitation programs when the patient is in too much pain to exercise the injured area. Milder applies ice to the injured area and numbs it so that the patient can exercise with less pain.

"The cold acts as an anesthetic so exercise is possible," he said.

Questions have been asked in recent years about whether young boys and girls should be allowed to participate in sports at an age when participation might be harmful to their physical development.

As a certified athletic trainer, Milder is in a good position to comment on that controversy, too.

"I feel as though the Little League athlete is just that — a little athlete, not a small adult as many people believe," he said. "It's all right for kids to participate as long as the adults have a proper perspective on the sport."

Milder's center hasn't seen many Little League athletes, and he expects to see very few during the Little League football season.

The injuries, said Milder, just don't seem to come to the surface in Little League. "There is nothing wrong with Little League sports," he said.

A MAIN issue in the controversy is the difference in the bone and muscle structure of the young athletes as compared to the older ones.

Milder said that the bones and muscles of the youngsters are radically different and can be hurt, but he also said that it is unlikely to happen to a large degree.

Area firm plans chain of clubs

Racquetball craze continues

Time Inc., the international publishing firm, is joining forces with a Southfield firm in the hope that they will become the sport of racquetball what McDonald's has become to golden arches.

Time has purchased an 18 per cent interest in Standard Court Players Corp. of Southfield for \$1 million. The firm has been renamed Sports Illustrated Court Clubs, Inc. Sports Illustrated magazine is published by Time, Inc.

Craig Hall, founder of the racquetball firm, remains chairman and president. Other officers are M. Martin Rom, vice-chairman, and William H. Poore, executive vice-president, and Robert S. Hobbs, secretary and treasurer.

Though none of the clubs are planned for Southfield, which already has three racquetball facilities (Racquettime, Oakland Racquet Club and Franklin Racquet Club), Sports Illustrated

Court Clubs plans to open a total of 75 to 100 racquetball clubs within the next four years, Hall said, and some 20 to 22 during 1978.

The firm expects to invest between \$100 million and \$125 million in racquetball facilities in the next four years.

Most of the clubs will be placed in areas where racquetball is not yet established. Hall said, avoiding areas with a high concentration of racquetball facilities such as Chicago, Detroit and San Diego.

BY THE TIME clubs now under construction or about to break ground this month are completed, the Time, Inc., affiliate expects to be one of the largest group operations in racquetball.

Proposed Michigan locations for the Sports Illustrated clubs are Lansing, Kalamazoo, Flint, Lemontree (near

Ypsilanti) and Saginaw. Clubs are also planned for Atlanta, Ga., and New York.

Hall said, "We'll be trying to locate the clubs near college campuses and suburban areas." He remarked about the diversity of those who play racquetball including blue collar workers and college students.

Henry Luce III, vice-president of Time, Inc., and director of corporate planning, said: "Racquetball is now the nation's fastest growing participation sport. The number of players has approximately doubled every year since 1970 and is conservatively projected to reach 5.5 million this year. We believe that the demand for court facilities will be prodigious. We are delighted to team up with Mr. Hall and his group because of their quality concept and proven management skills."

John A. Meyers, publisher of Sports Illustrated and a vice president of Time, Inc., said: "We believe the Sports Illustrated Court Clubs could help significantly expand racquetball on a national scale and become an exciting business as well."

The joint venture's goal, said Hall, is "to become the national standard in racquetball."

tion will offer a number of advantages over individual racquetball clubs," Hall said. "Members in one Sports Illustrated Court Club will have privileges in all the others. A businessman or vacationer can count on having court time when he travels to another city and can even make the reservation before he leaves home."

"We can provide superior training for club managers and teaching pros. of whom there is already a shortage. Our 'Off-the-Wall University' is already in operation, providing on-the-job training along with orientation in modern management techniques."

"We'll have substantial economies in centralized purchasing of racquetball supplies, which we can pass on to members."

"We can afford better design, with all the amenities our user surveys have told us members desire, because the cost is being spread over many clubs."

"We will have greater resources for promoting the sport of racquetball."

"Perhaps the most important, players all over the country will be able to count on a uniform, predictable standard of racquetball operation and this will help to sustain interest in the sport and promote its growth."

Hall said the clubs will be open 24 hours a day to capitalize on racquetball's popularity with those who don't necessarily work daytime hours. Membership at each club will be limited to 2,000 to 2,500.

He projects membership dues to be annually \$45 per individual, \$65 for families and \$20 for students. Court fees are expected to run from \$4-\$10 depending on the time of the day.

Expos top Astros in NFWB Series

The Expos polished off the Astros, 23-7, in the finals of the North Farmington-West Bloomfield Minor World Series played recently as a finale to the NFWB Federal Summer baseball season.

Brian Kipp led the Expos, going five for five at the plate, while teammates Bob Butler and Jeff Linsky each had four hits in four trips. Other Expo stars included Chris Weber, who had three hits, and Sandy Wexler and Adam Freund, who each had two.

The Astros advanced to the World Series finals by whipping the American League Yankees, 10-3, behind the outstanding play of John Krietz, Jeff Henderson and Bob Rupp.

In other recent NFWB action, The Federal Majors ended their season by dropping an 11-2 decision to Davison in the finals of the District 4 tournament in Novi. NFWB had beaten Southfield (9-4 in extra innings) and Birmingham (8-6) to advance to the tournament final.

Southfield grabbed a 4-0 lead after the first inning, but NFWB came back with a run in the first on an RBI single by Paul Ward, and two more runs in the second on a run-scoring hit by Chris Seal.

NFWB took a brief lead, 5-4, with two runs in the third as Matt Blanz, Jim Morris and Bob Fish provided the big hits. But Southfield scored four runs in its half of the inning to take the lead again, 8-5.

NFWB started its comeback with two runs in the last of the fourth with Blanz and David Austin getting the key hits. In the bottom of the sixth inning, NFWB tied it at eight all as Jim Hall's clutch double scored Austin.

NFWB won the game in the seventh when Ward tripled and scored on Austin's hit. NFWB's pitching was sharp in the remainder of the game as Blanz came in to relieve Austin and shut down the hard-hitting Southfield team.

Ward provided some fine pitching as NFWB beat Birmingham in the second game, which was marked by hard hitting by both sides.

In the championship game, NFWB's Matt Jackson hit a long home run in a losing effort as Davison scored 11 runs to NFWB's 2.

HIS ORGANIZATION currently operates two racquetball clubs, one each in Ann Arbor and Kalamazoo, and has three others scheduled to open this fall and four more soon after the first of the year.

The clubs in Ann Arbor and Kalamazoo opened last October and this February and achieved a membership of 2,000 each and 80 per cent average usage in just five and two months respectively.

"We believe our national organiza-



Shown here is an architect's rendering of one of the Sports Illustrated racquetball clubs.

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