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Jocks debate integration of male, female athletes

By LYNN ORR

The battle between the sexes may get more physical, if young women take advantage of a federal judge's ruling that girls must be allowed to compete against boys in high school contact sports.

But while the Ohio decision legally assures equality for the young woman who is physically able to compete in such sports as football, hockey and wrestling, it may present other problems, say some sports enthusiasts.

Concerns about liability; whether the ruling will encourage tightly budgeted boards of education to eliminate separate teams for men and women; and the overall effect on coed physical education are beginning to surface.

There's also a danger that the whimsy of the situation may overshadow the realities of improving the girls' sports program, says Jack Cotton, Farmington School District athletic director.

"I think we spin our wheels on the funny things," Cotton says. "I'm con-

"If we really had an affirmative action program to include girls on all levels, this type of ruling wouldn't be necessary."

—Pat Riley

cerned about the district's liability and about boys playing on girls' teams."

FARMINGTON High School football coach Hal Beardsley and North Farmington High volleyball coach Sandra Lubieniecki share Cotton's concern about the athletic program.

"Both sexes deserve their own teams," Beardsley says, "but administrations which are looking for money may see the ruling as a way to save money down the road by eliminating two teams."

"It's going to ruin girls' sports down the road."

Women want separate but equal activities, Mrs. Lubieniecki says. And since volleyball isn't offered to

boys in the district, what happens if a boy wants to try out for the girls' team, using the same logic as the judge who ruled that a girl must be allowed to compete at football?

"I couldn't turn him away," Mrs. Lubieniecki says. A few years ago, a Grosse Pointe volleyball team had two boys on the girls' team, but a mixed team provides technical problems as well, the coach says.

"In men's volleyball, the height of the net is eight feet, while the girl's net is seven feet, 4 1/4 inches. If you have boys on the team, where do you set the net height?"

The solution might be a boys' volleyball team in the future, since volleyball is one of the fastest growing sports, Mrs. Lubieniecki maintains. But if the ruling is clarified to say that boys can try out for girls' teams, even when separate teams exist, an unrealistic definition of equality could result, Beardsley says.

WRESTLING presents other problems, says Harrison High coach Dick Cook.

"There's a state rule that all wrestlers must weigh in stripped down, and there's only one locker room and one scale," Cook points out. He's convinced the ruling isn't applicable to wrestling.

"I would strongly suspect there's something abnormal if a girl came out for wrestling," he says. Because of the nature of the sport, he doesn't think coed wrestling would work.

"The woman's weight is centered in the lower part of the body, while the man's is in the torso. She just isn't designed to wrestle with a man," he says.

He admits to another concern as well.

"When you're wrestling, you're thinking about scoring points. The difference in sex might take over."

If a woman could physically compete, she'd have to abide by the rules, he says.

FORMER Farmington track coach Pat Riley believes the law is attempting to force what should be in operation.

"If we really had an affirmative action program to include girls on all levels, this type of ruling wouldn't be necessary," she charges.

Discrimination is the cause for court battles, she adds.

"And it's not limited to sports. Girls from a very, very young age are not encouraged to excel at math or physical education," she says. Counselors fail to encourage women in typically male careers such as drafting.

"We have to make sure that girls are encouraged to excel at an elementary level and alter the way we put kids into departments. You always hear about why Johnny can't read. Why can't Jean do math?"

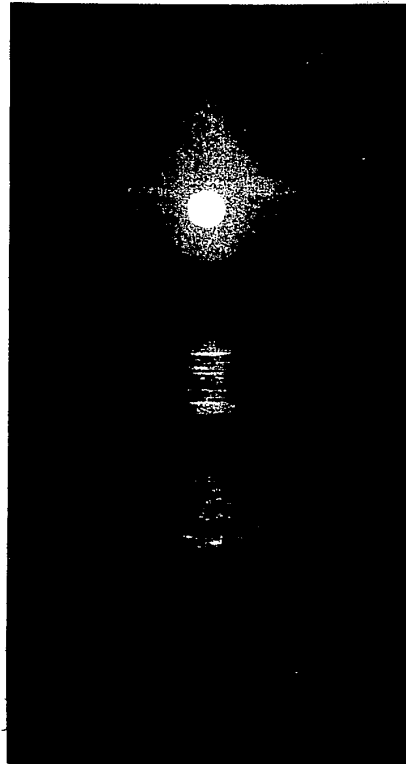
Along with the sometimes unconscious lack of encouragement, girls' sports programs suffer from the overall money squeeze in education, she adds.

"There's an old saying—when you scratch a program, it turns green—because you need the money."

The mental discipline of competitive sports is often difficult for women to understand, since they haven't been trained for it, both Ms. Riley and Mrs. Lubieniecki agree.

"The competitive spirit grows a little each year," Mrs. Lubieniecki says. "You have fun but you have to practice really hard—and that's the hardest thing to get across."

"I think it will change as the years go on and girls participate in more competitive sports. They can handle competitive situations, but the mental discipline and dedication have to be learned."



Soft sunset

As the sun dips down over an icy Orchard Lake, a contrast is struck between the bluish cold of a winter day and the bright warmth of a sunset. Poet Madison Julius Cawein exclaimed of a sunset, "What magic shall solve us the secret of beauty that's born for an hour?" (Staff photo by Charlie Kidd)

Senior housing contemplated

The Farmington Board of Education may pave the way for a six-story senior citizen housing complex in downtown Farmington.

The board is expected to authorize the sale of 3.24 acres of school district property on the old Farmington Junior High site on Thomas Street to Forest City Dillion, Inc., a private development firm.

The building and sites committee's unanimous recommendation to endorse the concept of the sale and authorize the firm to begin appraisals will go before the full board of education at Tuesday night's board meeting.

If approved, the district would retain ownership of the western building now the Farmington Training Center, a special education facility. The old building, the original Farmington High School, would be demolished to make way for the senior citizen project, expected to be about 50 feet in height. The development firm already has received a federal Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) rent subsidy grant, subject to site approval. The City of Farmington Planning Commission, as well as the city council, also would have to approve the project before construction could begin.

THE FIRM, which currently is constructing the Ziegler Place senior citizen project in Livonia, is willing to pay the fair market price of the property, estimated at about \$150,000-200,000, sources say.

Although a Forest City spokesperson was unavailable for comment, the project is expected to contain about 150 units, according to city officials. The proposed building complies with the city's height limitation ordinance. It would be no higher than the Holiday Inn, adjacent to the Industrial Park in Farmington Hills, officials say.

City officials appear to be backing the proposed project, particularly since the HUD rent subsidy would assist senior citizens in paying rent. Although the units probably would rent for about \$350 and up, the HUD subsidy pays the difference between 25

percent of a senior citizen's income and the rental fee.

THE DOWNTOWN site was in competition with about 100 sites for HUD rent subsidy, according to City Mgr. Robert Deadman.

The Thomas Street property provides nearby access to supermarkets, drugstores and medical facilities—all of which are required for HUD grants, Deadman says.

Since the City of Farmington lacks available space for cottage-style senior citizen housing, the complex also would meet the needs of area senior citizens.

"We have a lot of people who don't want to or aren't capable of maintaining larger homes, but can't afford paying higher rents for apartments, but they want to stay in Farmington," Deadman says.

The development firm will have to receive the city's approval of the project in the next few weeks, since the HUD grant has been extended twice and it's unlikely that another extension will be forthcoming.

The firm originally applied for the HUD grant with another nearby site in mind, but the deal fell through. It is expected, however, that HUD would approve the school district site which is similar to the original proposed site.

The building would probably be completed within nine months after construction begins and would probably be occupied primarily by Farmington and Farmington Hills residents, Deadman says.

"That's the history of senior citizen housing, contrary to popular opinion," he says.

Unlike Michigan State Housing Development Authority (MSHDA) grants which mandate low-income housing, the HUD rent subsidy only provides for the rent subsidies if the senior citizens need it, Deadman says.

Forest City Dillion, Inc., also constructed River Rouge Place, a senior citizen housing project, and a project in San Marino, Calif. The firm is considered one of the nation's largest builders of senior citizen housing, in operation since the early 1960s.

Hills agenda set

Following is a list of agenda items scheduled for tonight's meeting of the Farmington Hills City Council to be at 8 p.m. in city hall, southwest corner of Eleven Mile and Orchard Lake.

•A public hearing on the establishment of a show-cause hearing for a dangerous building on Howard.

•A request to remove land bounded by Ruth, Lundy, Freedom and Nine Mile from RC-2 to RC3 increasing the density of multiple development.

•A request to rezone property located at lot 107, Farmington Acres Subdivision No. 2 at 3403 Eight Mile, between Farmington and Cass, from single family to office use.

•A request to rezone property located at 29324 Twelve Mile between Rulcrest and Middlebelt, from single family to multiple.

•Request to rezone lot 49 of Brookside Park Subdivision on the northeast corner of Eight Mile and Kenwood from light industrial to business services.

•Request to pay the auditing bill for the Farmington Area Arts Commission.

•A report regarding political signs.

•Appointments to boards and commissions.

•Consideration of a request for a

dance permit at Be My Guest restaurant, 25605 Nine Mile.

•Consideration of approval for building an addition to the Thompson-Brown building approval of which is recommended by the planning commission.

•Consideration of an agreement regarding a seven-community mutual aid pact for firefighting.

•Consideration of a traffic control order for Hopkins and Old Homestead.

•Consideration of extension for one year of employment of a building inspector.

•Resolution approving the transfer of Grand River, from Halshead to 210 feet east of Cora, from the State Highway Commission to Oakland County.

•Resolution approving traffic signal modernization at eight locations on Middlebelt and 17 locations on Orchard Lake.

•Consideration of establishment of a special assessment district for Stone-wood Court paving.

•Introduction of an amendatory ordinance to the Farmington Hills city code pertaining to intoxication.

•Consideration of a resolution designating a local agent to file for federal disaster relief.

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Tinkering Around's Louise Okrusky hits a delicate cord when she discusses the age-old debate between the night and day persons. To see how she assesses the situation, turn to Page 6B.