

Break is welcomed...Central cagers need it

The holiday break couldn't have come at a better time for coach Steve Emert and his Walled Lake Central basketball team.

It's not that the Vikings have played that badly in their first five games. In fact, the young Central squad has already surpassed last season's victory total (one).

But the Vikes have fallen into some bad habits in compiling their 2-3 record and Emert is glad that he and his troops were able to enjoy the time off during the Christmas break.

"I think a break will do us a world of

good," the first-year coach said last week after watching his team lose twice.

"It's been frustrating for us at times, especially since we've had the same problem in every game so far."

Emert was referring to Central's difficulty in getting started in its first five games. Inexplicably, the Vikings fall far behind after the opening tip, leaving them in a position where it's too tough to catch up.

That depressing trend was in evidence once more in Central's last contest before the holiday break. The Vik-

ings fell into an early 23-8 hole against Waterford Township and couldn't climb out, as they dropped a 79-63 decision.

It was Central's second loss in a row, the first coming on a last-second shot by Walled Lake Western's Mike Xenos in a 46-45 defeat.

THE VIKINGS never really got back into the Township game after the early deficit, as it faced a 49-26 disadvantage at halftime.

The margin grew to 27 points at one stage, and by then not even a 26-point

fourth quarter (which equalled Central's entire first half production) was enough.

"It's just war to get back in it when you get behind like that," Emert said. "And we've been in that spot all season. Against Township, we were only getting on a shot, and things kept going against us. We couldn't execute."

"FOR SOME reason, we're having trouble reaching the right intensity at the beginning of a halfgame," the coach continued. "The stats show it — in every game, each quarter is stronger than

the one before."

So what's the answer? "I think the team isn't quite sure of its capabilities. We never really had a consistent kind of a program with any winning tradition. The boys need to believe in themselves and the program more so that they can play to the best of their abilities all the time without worrying."

"I think that will come to pass eventually."

"There have been some parents lately who have been very encouraging to me about the direction we're headed in.

They say to me, 'Be patient, coach. Our time is coming.'

"It's nice to have them saying that to me instead of me saying that to them."

DESPITE LOSING to Township, the Vikings' Tom Phelps and Erin Hill continued to impress Emert. Phelps netted 26 points while Hill scored 16.

The loss dropped Central to 1-1 in the Inter Lakes League. The Vikings beat Farmington in their initial league contest Dec. 14.

Central is idle until Jan. 8, when it travels to Waterford Kettering.



Rodger Moy is Michigan Tech's team captain, and a multi-purpose player for coach John MacInness. (Staff photos by Mindy Saunders)



Sports highlights of the '70s

The '70s... a decade in which we witnessed radical changes in the sports world. But, while the changes occurred in the '70s, the seed for these new developments was planted in the '60s.

Just as the cold war and arms race were in part results of the first atom bomb dropped on Hiroshima, the growth of sports in the '70s was brought about by the explosion of the '60s. The four major professional sports all experienced growing pains in the '60s, and that feeling filtered down into all levels in the '70s.

High school sports of a decade ago consisted of football, basketball, baseball, track, cross country and swimming — all for boys. Since that time, the number of sports doubled and now includes the same number for both boys and girls in most school districts.

The development of girls sports is the significant happening in prep athletics in the '70s. Although many districts lagged in getting the new programs in gear, by the end of the decade girls' sports were getting more support, better coaching and greater news coverage; consequently, girls' athletics improved rapidly.

BUT GIRLS' SPORTS were not the only new development in sports in the '70s. Playoffs designed to decide state champions were initiated for baseball, football, cross country and track. The football playoffs were the most significant, as they stretched the season an additional three weeks. All these developments had a great effect on the local high school sports programs. Both Farmington Harrison (in 1976) and North Farmington (in 1978) had chances to win the state football championship with the start of the playoffs.

New heroes emerged in athletic events that didn't even exist 10 years ago. Many came from Farmington Our Lady of Mercy, a Catholic all-girls

school which had had girls competition for years, giving it a head start on its public school rivals.

Mercy made its mark for the first two-thirds of the decade, but as the competition improved, Mercy's dominance faded.

Every school had its sports stars and bright moments during the '70s. Though not all the biggest stars or brightest moments are recorded here, these are the ones I thought were the highlights of the decade.

NORTH FARMINGTON FOOTBALL — Ron Holland put together some of the finest teams in the state during the last 10 years. The two most outstanding squads were his 1970 and 1978 teams.

The '70 team, led by halfback Mike Gow and quarterback Drew Mahalic, won the state championship — at least in the newspaper polls.

The '78 team had a chance to win the undisputed prep title, since the playoffs had started three years earlier. The Raiders couldn't do it, however, losing to Traverse City in the final game, 20-14.

FARMINGTON HARRISON FOOTBALL —

North wasn't the first local team to make it into the state football finals. Harrison was there two years earlier, but the Hawks suffered the same fate, losing to Midland Dow, 36-27.

Harrison's stars that year were Mike Bowden, Jeff Thorne and Brett Homover. They couldn't help Harrison overcome the speedy Dow team, however.

Harrison High School opened in 1970 and John Herrington was their first and only coach. Herrington, who was an assistant under Holland, surprised everyone by going 4-1 in his first season with a team of all sophomores and juniors. In his second season, he won the Western Six League title.

Harrison had its share of stars in the decade. Besides Bowden, Thorne and Homover, there was Paul Rogind, a soccer-style kicker who went on to

set every University of Minnesota placekicking record and tie the Big Ten mark for career field goals.

MERCY BASKETBALL — Rose Swidzinski was Mercy's coach when the first state tournament was held in 1973. In the next two years, Swidzinski guided Mercy into the semifinals (in 1973) and the finals (in 1974).

But the Marlinas were unable to win the championship until 1977. After three straight years of making it into the state finals and losing, Larry Baker took Mercy to a state crown in '77.

Katie McNamara and Diane Dietz were the big guns on the team. McNamara poured in 21 points and Dietz had 14 in the final win, a 63-52 triumph over Detroit Mumford.

BEST SINGLE YEAR IN SPORTS — Without doubt, this distinction belongs to Orchard Lake St. Mary. The Eagles raced to perfect records in both football and basketball during the same school year.

OLSM's key performer on both teams was Jim Paciorek. He was an All-State pick as quarterback for the Class C football champs and was a high-scoring forward for the Class D basketball titlists.

Dave Kay was also an important part in both perfect seasons. Art Paddy guided the football team to its perfect record in his final season at the helm. Bob Shoemaker coached the OLSM cagers to their 27-0 mark.

BEST INDIVIDUAL ACCOMPLISHMENT — This title has to go to West Bloomfield's Mark Pincioff, who worked his way to a Class A No. 1 singles tennis championship in 1977.

Pincioff, who graduated in January 1978, is now

(Continued on page 5C)

For Great Lakes tourney

Hockey star is home

By BRIAN PATTERSON

For Rodger Moy, coming home to play in his fourth and final Great Lakes Invitational Tournament is a sentimental journey.

The Michigan Technological University senior led his Huskie teammates as captain this year, but the Great Lakes tournaments, played before family and friends, will always stand out as his fondest memories.

"I've got lots of family and friends here. I'm always excited playing in front of them," Moy said. "Plus most of the kids from Tech live in the Detroit area and a lot come to the tournament. With all of the noise they make, I feel like I'm at home."

Michigan Tech has won the tournament seven times in the past 14 years. Tech has won it the last three years in row, but the University of Michigan is favored this year.

"It's such a balanced league this year that favorites don't mean much," Moy said. "God only knows who'll take it this year."

This was the first time since 1968 that all four teams in the tournament are members of the Western Collegiate Hockey Association (WCHA).

Moy was speaking late last week in the lobby of the Plaza Hotel in Detroit's Renaissance Center where the Huskies were lodged for the tournament.

Later that evening Moy and his teammates would face off against the University of Wisconsin in the second game of the tournament.

The night before, the Huskies were guests at the Red Wings' historical first game in the Joe Louis Arena. The team practiced there following the Wings game.

Moy had the opportunity to relax at his parents' Rochester home over the Christmas holidays, but when game time is near, he is "probably the most nervous guy on the team."

"I miss Olympia. The first time I played there was with the Junior Red Wings against the Wings' Old-timers. When I stepped on the ice, I just said 'Oh wow!' and never forgot the experience," Moy said.

Although impressed by the size and appearance of the new arena, Moy

agreed with critics who say the ice is not up to par.

"The ice is kind of soft; I hope it will be better tonight. We play the second game, so it might be kind of chewed up, but I've played on worse."

One of six children, Moy's youngest sister Laura is a graduate of Rochester Adams High School. His brother Howard is a senior there now.

MOY GRADUATED from Lamphere High School in Madison Heights in 1974. His family moved to Rochester later that year.

The 23-year-old waited two years before going to college. A Tech assistant coach spotted him playing with the Oakland Chiefs of the Oakland "A" League. And while Moy didn't think he would ever have the opportunity, he was soon on his way to the Upper Peninsula school on a full scholarship.

Tech head coach John MacInness said Moy's experience and leadership are vital to the Huskies, who own a 6-5 record and fourth place in the WCHA. They are 10-7-1 overall.

Small for a hockey player (5-8, 175 pounds), Moy is the "number two biter" on the squad. He has played

center, both wings and defense.

"He's wearing a captain's jersey and showing his leadership, even though I'd like to see him put the puck in the net more often," MacInness chuckled.

"We've shuffled him around the lineup and used his defensive skills more this year. Last year was probably his worst year, but he's much better this year."

Moy said he feels he has been skating better than he ever has. He had scored five goals as of last week.

Playing predominantly on the fourth line, Moy has been used most as a penalty killer and on power plays.

"THE NUMBER of the line doesn't matter in college hockey. Coach MacInness plays the best combinations and tries to balance out the team. I say I play the fourth line with pride," Moy said.

One of his biggest thrills came last summer when he was one of 80 players invited to pre-Olympic trials at the Sports Festival in Colorado.

He failed to make the cut, but called it "the chance of a lifetime."

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