

Thursday, August 6, 1991



By Doug Funke

## Prep gridders kick off season with 1st classic

Football practice has begun unusually early for 72 prospective college freshmen who graduated from Michigan high schools last spring. Chances are that none of them mind a bit.

The select 72 — among the premier players in the state last autumn — have been preparing for the first Michigan High School East-West All-Star Football Game.

Kickoff is 1:30 p.m. Saturday in Spartan Stadium at Michigan State University. Tickets, at \$3 per person, will be available at the stadium.

The game was conceived by the Michigan High School Football Coaches Association (MHSFCA) in the mid-70s.

It took a couple of years to get the OK from the Michigan High School Athletic Association and the National Collegiate Athletic Association and to iron out all the details.

Michigan, for all of its tradition with 654 high schools fielding football teams, with two universities belonging to the Big 10 and with a franchise in the National Football League, is one of the last states in the country to showcase a high-school all-star football game.

Don Lessner, secretary-treasurer of the MHSFCA and varsity coach at Riverview High School, is hoping for a crowd of 30,000 or more.

**THE PLAYERS** have been living together the past week in a dormitory on campus. Twice-a-day workouts and team meetings have occupied much of their time.

At Fracassa, the soft-spoken coach from Birmingham Brother Rice, will help guide the East squad. He is not approaching the game as a lark.

"I want to make it a good experience rather than a fun experience," Fracassa said. "When you go out for football, it's a lot of hard work. I'm going to work my tail off on good execution."

"I love football. It's a great part of my life," he continued. "Since I love it so much, I coach it like I love it. You can't go out there and say 'let's line up.' You have to line up this way, look good, do it right."

Fracassa said that because most of these players earned all-state recognition and are college prospects, he has to assume they know the fundamentals of the sport.

Therefore, he figured to spend much of his time on execution. A couple of other familiar names on the Observer & Eccentric football scene — John Herrington, coach at Farmington Harrison, and Ron Holland, North Farmington — are working with Fracassa.

**THE O&E** area is also well represented by the stars of the production, the players.

Ten of the 36 players on the East squad have area connections. They are:

- John Penders, Plymouth Salem, offensive lineman.
- Dale Boone, Westland John Glenn, offensive lineman.
- Greg Humphries, Auburn Heights Avondale, offensive lineman.
- Steve Mazur, Bloomfield Hills Andover, offensive back.
- Doug Schulte, North Farmington, punter.
- Ken Kaszubinski, Rochester Adams, linebacker.
- Alex Clark, Bloomfield Hills Lahser, defensive back.
- Ken Granader, Birmingham Groves, defensive back.
- Mark Kuney, Auburn Heights Avondale, defensive back.
- Tim MacLean, Birmingham Brother Rice, defensive back.

Penders, a two-way player at Salem, was looking forward to the festivities prior to leaving for the nine-day camp. He plans to attend Albion College.

Hopefully, by playing in the game, I will have a little jump playing against college freshmen," he said. "Just the experience itself, just being there, is good in itself."

The camaraderie should be interesting in itself. Penders said he was hoping to enjoy off-the-field activities such as a barbecue, a dance and a banquet planned for the all-stars.

Each head coach who belongs to the MHSFCA could nominate two players for the all-star teams. A panel of 12 coaches then reviewed the credentials and finalized the squads.

Lessner said that because few coaches in the Detroit Public School League belong to the MHSFCA, few Detroit players are represented on the East team.

**THE GAME** will be played according to high-school rules even though all the participants have graduated and will be moving on to college ball.

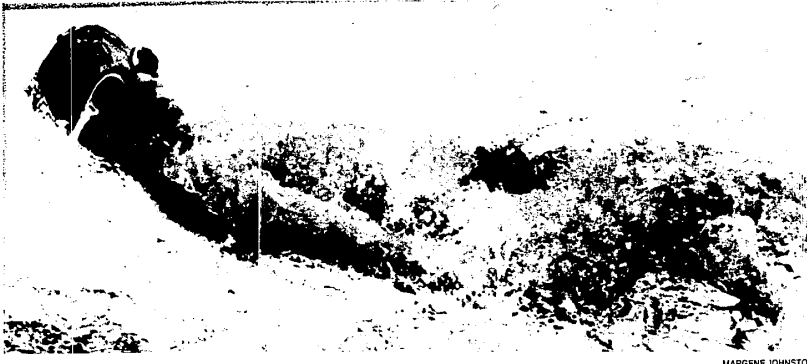
"The kids are much more familiar with them (prep rules)," Lessner said. "We want to make sure there are no injuries. It can be quite hot — 100 degrees — on the floor of the stadium."

Because the players have had only a little over a week to prepare, several twists have been added.

The athletes will be platooned and play on either the offensive unit or the defensive unit but not both. Everyone must play at least half the game.

Coaches, limited to five offensive formations, had to make their playbook available to the other team in advance. Three trick plays may be kept secret.

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Eric Neeb competes in an individual medley event for Troy's Beach-Wood Recreation during the Northwest Suburban Swim League's conference meet.

## Surf swimmers slam foes

By Marty Budner  
staff writer

Bloomfield Surf's annual summer swim show was another big hit.

Mike Lane's talented squad successfully defended its Northwest Suburban Swim League age-group championship over the weekend at the Southfield Beech Woods pool. It marks the fifth straight year that the Bloomfield Surf Club has won the two-day post-season meet.

Bloomfield Surf paced the 16-team field with 775 points, and Beverly Hills Woodside Athletic Club was second with 714. Woodside's effort was the closest any team has gotten to Bloomfield Surf during its championship streak.

Rochester's Heart of the Hills Swim Club was a distant third with 541 points. (Complete details can be found inside today's sports section.)

"We're pretty strong all the way through (the swim roster), and our biggest asset is our depth," said Lane, who has coached Surf since 1967. "We didn't take as many first places as Woodside, but we had the depth."

"I figured Woodside and Heart of the Hills would supply the most competition. We have some great swimmers with a lot of consistency at the Surf Club, plus we have a lot of parental support. They all contribute to the success we've had at Surf."

**FARMINGTON** Beachview Swim Club and Cranbrook Swim Club moved into 'A' Division competition next year by placing among the top eight teams. Troy's Beach-Wood Swim Club — which stepped up the ladder to 'A' just last year — and Farmington Hills' Woodbrooke Hills Swim Club fell to the 'B' Division.

Surf, which had 24 different swimmers reach the Sunday finals, was paced by eight individual winners and three winning relays.

Guy DeFranco, competing in the 15-17 age division, broke league records in both the 50-meter backstroke (28.90) and 100-meter freestyle (54.47). Teammate Bob Mackle won the 15-17 butterfly

(28.06), and was second to DeFranco in the 100-meter freestyle (55.22).

In the 11-12 division, Surf's Lynn Jaworski won the 50-meter backstroke, and Lisa Beni won the 50-meter butterfly. Jaworski was second in the 50-meter freestyle.

Liz Cooper (13-14 50-meter breaststroke) and Teresa Dallas (9-10 50-meter backstroke) were Surf's other individual winners.

Woodside's Doug Waffan and Kara McGrath were double winners.

Competing in the 7-8-year-old division, Waffan won the 25-meter backstroke (20.37) and the 25-meter butterfly (19.28). McGrath took the 100-meter freestyle in a record time of 59.55, and the 100-meter IM in 1:09.44.

**WOODSIDE** finished first and second in the girls' 9-10 50-meter freestyle. Kari Kovach won in 32.81, and Heather Horne was second at 33.26. Molly Ames and Dan Fitzgerald both finished second for Woodside in their respective 11-12 50-meter breaststroke races.

Woodside won the girls' 40-year 100-meter freestyle relay, and was second in three other relay events.

Heart of the Hills, which finished with a 5-2 dual-meet record, had a number of strong performances.



Liz Cooper (left) and Bloomfield Surf teammate Shelly Sirich share the joy.

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## Half past December is no time to start your tax swapping.

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## Legion bows out

Bloomfield Hills' baseball season ended in extra innings over the weekend after defeating national Connie Mack champion MEANS from Saginaw.

Despite a tremendous pitching performance by Eric Girdler, Bloomfield Hills dropped a 4-3 nine-inning decision to the host team MEANS in the championship finals.

Coach Norm Kaplan's team opened the double-elimination tournament with a loss to Saginaw Eisenhower, then defeated Saginaw MacArthur 22-9 and Saginaw Wicks Engineering Materials 8-7 to gain a berth in the finals.

Bloomfield Hills won a see-saw battle Saturday over previously undefeated MEANS 8-7 forcing the final fateful showdown on Sunday.

"They're a powerhouse, and our second-year legion team almost did them in," said Kaplan, whose team finished with a 2-4-3

overall record. MEANS took a 1-0 lead on a disputed bases-loaded walk in the third inning.

Bloomfield then took a 2-1 lead in the fourth with a two-out rally. Girdler beat out a single to deep short for Bloomfield's first hit of the game, then Matt Joseph clawed a single to left that sent Girdler to third. Bloomfield then successfully completed a double steal for its first run.

Bill Rankin brought home his team's second run with a sharp single to left field.

But, MEANS tied the game in the fifth. Bloomfield Hills threatened in both the fifth and eighth innings, but could not push home a run.

**FINALLY**, in the ninth, Brett Luplow hit a home run for MEANS, and two singles plus a sacrifice fly produced another run. Bloomfield Hills was held scoreless in its half of the ninth.

"Girdler pitched his heart out, it was his

best performance of the season," said Kaplan.

Bloomfield Hills pounded out 19 hits in the lopsided win over MacArthur.

Rankin led the potent offense with three consecutive home runs good for six runs batted in. Tony Bruce, Brad Remer, Chad Switzer and Girdler — the winning pitcher in that game — each contributed two hits.

Chip Vaughan was the winning pitcher against Wicks. Bloomfield Hills was ahead 8-3 after five innings, and held off WEM in the late innings.

Rankin was intentionally walked his first time up, but procured another home run — his fourth straight — his next time up to account for the eventual winning margin. Right fielder B.J. Cameron had two hits in that game.

Bloomfield exploded for five runs in the fifth inning in its first encounter with MEANS.



Mike Pelon plunges along for Farmington Glen Aquatic Club.