

Prep pucksters 'buck' system in Southfield

By Tom Baer
staff writer

Checks are part of high school hockey strategy both on and off the ice in Southfield this winter.

While the players may be throwing body checks into the opposition, their parents have already written the checks which make the game possible. Play high school hockey in Southfield, and you'll pay for it — something like \$200, as a matter of fact.

Some 17 hockey players, all bused to make Southfield High's team, turned out for the first practices last fall. Coach John MacFarlan kept all 17, and each player (or more likely his parents) came up with \$200 to cover ice time for practices and games at Southfield's Beechwoods Arena.

A similar pay-to-play situation exists at Southfield-Lathrup, where 18 players pay more than \$200 each for their ice time.

"If an activity takes place off school property — like golf, skiing or hockey — they make the participants pay to use the facilities," MacFarlan explained.

"In past years, this was not so. But last year the (Southfield) board of education said that the boys had to come up with \$200. A lot of them didn't have it, so they quit the high school team and went to the (recreation) travel leagues."

As a result of the light turnout, Southfield High Scholop dropped hockey last season, although Lathrup continued to offer the sport.

This season, both schools are back

with teams on the ice, continuing a sport started in 1972. Both Southfield and Lathrup are members of the nine-school Suburban Hockey League.

SOUTHFIELD WAS sporting a 6-5-1 record as of Jan. 17 and was tied with Bloomfield Hills Andover for second place in the SHL. Livonia Stevenson — "the class of the league" in MacFarlan's words — holds down first place.

"We're starting from scratch," said MacFarlan, a physical education teacher at Southfield's MacArthur Elementary School, "so we have nowhere to go but up."

Southfield has been counting on the excellent play of Ken Chaput, a smallish (5-foot-2, 130-pound) junior center. As of Jan. 17, Chaput led the team in scoring with 28 points — 13 goals and 15 assists.

"He's the smallest guy on the team, but he has the biggest heart," MacFarlan said. "He's aggressive and very smart. He's tenacious, too. He just never gives up on the puck."

John Galardi, another junior center, is the Blue Jays' next-best scorer with seven goals and 15 assists. Two other Southfield mainstays are senior defenseman Darin Porter and junior center Rob Sorge. Starting goalie Sean Rose, a junior, didn't play hockey at all last year.

"We've been scoring quite well," said MacFarlan, who played amateur hockey in Canada, "but our defense has been a little lax, and our goaltending hasn't been the greatest. Rose laid off from hockey last year, and it's hard to come back."

Southfield's return to hockey has been accomplished on-the-cheap. The team uses car pools instead of buses to travel, and the players often use their own equipment when the school's is lacking.

"We're trying to save this program by keeping costs down," MacFarlan said. "Let's face it: We're catering to 17 kids here. It's not like football where you have 133, and you're getting money all the time."

AT LATHRUP, first-year coach Ken Berke has watched his Chargers slide

to 2-8-0 and into eighth place in the SHL.

"One problem is that I came in about two weeks before the opening game, and I had to select a team," said Berke, a science teacher in a Detroit middle school and a longtime recreation hockey coach in Oak Park. "I never got a chance to look at all the kids I would have liked to look at."

"This is an assessment year for me. I'm really looking forward to next season."

Lathrup's top scorer this season has been senior center Dan Lorigan, who

had accumulated 14 points as of Jan. 17. Berke also counts on center Mark Katzman, defenseman Mark Herschelman, Adam Harris and Phil Greenblatt and goalie Mark Wojcikowski. All are seniors.

"Most of our players are good skaters, and we have kids who can put the puck in the net," Berke said. "Our goaltending has been outstanding. Experience and depth are our big problems right now."

Southfield holds daily practices 6-7 a.m. at Beechwoods. Lathrup practices afternoons in the Civic Center Arena.

Both teams play their home games at Beechwoods.

"Our kids seem to like the early practices," Southfield's MacFarlan said. "They get it over with in the morning and then have the rest of the day free for school, jobs, whatever."

Both squads are active on Wednesday night. Southfield takes on Livonia Stevenson at 6 p.m. at Livonia's Edgar Ice Arena, Farmington and Lyndon roads. Lathrup travels to Wyandotte for an 8 p.m. game with Roosevelt at the Yak Arena.



Southfield forward Jim Myeinski (18) is pressured by Lathrup's Mark Herschelman and Mark Katzman during last Wednesday's prep hockey game.

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Lathrup tankers cream Dondero

Mike Schuler and Doug Johnston each won two events Thursday to help Southfield-Lathrup gain its first swimming victory in four tries with a 50-34 decision over Royal Oak Dondero in the Metro Suburban Activities Association. Schuler won the 200-yard freestyle (2:00.5) and the 500 free (5:23.1), and Johnston finished first in the 50 freestyle (24.1) and the 100 breaststroke (1:09.3).

Lathrup's 200 medley relay (Mike Lafferty, Tom Grubba, Dave Finzel and Johnston) won with a time of 1:51.3, and its 400 freestyle relay (Schuler, Berlin, Sam Pogats and Finzel) won in 3:48.7. Finzel won the 100 freestyle (53.7). Lafferty took the 100 back (1:03.1), and Mike Kenny finished first in diving (124.90 points). Lathrup swims next on Tuesday at Ferndale. The non-league meet has a 7 p.m. start.

SOUTHFIELD LOST to Royal Oak Kimball, 74-52, Thursday in a Southeastern Michigan Association swimming meet. Southfield is 4-3 overall and 1-2 in the SMA. Southfield had first-place swimmers in Rich Lampcar (1:58.7 in the 200-yard freestyle) and Frank Jewett (209.40 points, diving). Southfield's Jeff Landgraf placed second in the 100 breaststroke (1:08.4), and teammate Bill Salo was runner-up in the 200 individual medley (2:17.0). Kimball's Dave Kerns established Southfield pool records in the 50 free (22.12) and the 100 freestyle (48.68). Southfield is home to Berkley on Thursday evening.

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