

200 teams clash in tourney

By Brad Emons  
staff writer

Who can argue with Walt Peterman. "This year Schoolcraft College is the soccer capitol of the U.S.," said the director of the upcoming Wolverine V tournament.

It all begins at 8 a.m. Saturday. Some 200 teams, 3,000 boys and girls ages 10 to 19 to be exact, will play 350 games of soccer on 21 fields. The event, which concludes with the championship games on Monday, is sanctioned by the Michigan State Youth Soccer Association (MSYSA).

Teams from Minnesota, Wisconsin, Illinois, Ohio, Missouri, Maryland, Indiana and Ontario will invade the Schoolcraft soccer complex in search of the coveted Wolverine title.

soccer

"This is a quality tournament," said Peterman, now in his fourth year as chairman. The brand of soccer played here is at a higher level than any other state tournament.

"There are two big tournaments in the Midwest, the Wolverine and the Buckeye in Ohio. This is what the people want to see."

PETERMAN said he refused entry to 50 teams this year.

"We decide who comes through their applications," Peterman said. "It's based on records and the type of competition they've played."

All of Michigan's state championship teams are expected to compete. They include the FLAP Rowdies, a team comprised of the area's top girls high school players, who captured the 19 and under Midwest Regional title two weeks ago at Schoolcraft.

Other state champion clubs on hand include the Spirit of '83 of Warren, boys 19 and under; Livonia Hawks, girls 16; Carpathia Kickers, boys 16; WSSL Singers, girls 14; Troy United, boys 14; Northville United, girls 12; and Vardar III (comprised primarily of Livonia

players), boys 12.

Boys and girls across the state and the Midwest will also vie in the 10 and under division.

"We've got the same caliber of teams in every age group," Peterman said.

IT WAS ONLY last weekend that Schoolcraft hosted 44 teams, 14 and under to 8 and under, in its annual Tournament of Champions.

On July 31 and 32, Schoolcraft will host the Midwest Regionals for boys and girls in the 16, 14 and 12 and under age divisions.

Admission is \$1 per day for parking. In addition to Schoolcraft (located on Haggerty between Six and Seven Mile roads in Livonia), games will be played at Bicentennial and Jaycee parks in Livonia.

Ignasiak a Junior Olympian

By Rich Swenson  
staff writer

Orchard Lake St. Mary All-State pitcher Mike Ignasiak couldn't believe it when he found out last week that he had been named to the U.S. Junior Olympic baseball team.

The 18-year-old senior was one of 24 players selected from across the country that will represent the United States at the World Youth Baseball Championships in Kindersley, Saskatchewan, Canada from July 18 to July 29.

"I think it's great," he said. "It will be a privilege to represent my country. I almost fainted when my parents told me. I never crossed my mind that I'd make the team. I had to sleep."

IGNASIAK, WHO lives in Anchor-

ville, had an outstanding prep career at St. Mary's. This season, he compiled a 6-1 record, despite limited mound duty due to a sore arm. He fanned 100 batters in 57 innings. He also played a fine second base and batted .350 while cracking three homers and knocking in 23 runs. He led the Eagles to a second place finish in the Class C state tournament.

Ignasiak's statistics were good enough to earn him Eccentric All-Area and Class C All-State honors.

His junior season was even more impressive. The 5-foot-11, 165-pound fireballer had a perfect 8-0 record with a .000 ERA. He also struck out 120 batters in 63 innings.

The U.S. Junior Olympic final selection committee took the stats of the finest 17 and 18-year-old players in the country and processed them in a com-

baseball

puter. The categories included batting, pitching, base-running and defensive skills.

"I HAVE GOOD location on my pitches," said Ignasiak, who throws a fastball, curve and slider. "Speed is also one of my assets. I'm quick for my size, and I think I'm pretty good defensively."

The youngest of 12 children, Ignasiak hopes to follow in the footsteps of his older brother Gary, who pitched for the Detroit Tigers.

"I'd love to become a professional player some day," he said. "If I had the chance, I'd grab it in a minute."

But first, he wants to get a good education. He will take his 90-plus mph fastball to the University of Michigan on a scholarship next fall.

Ignasiak left Sunday for Rapid City, S.D., where the team will conduct a camp to get ready for the World Championships.

THE 10-TEAM field includes teams from Australia, Belgium, Taiwan, Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Korea, Canada, Panama and Puerto Rico.

Ignasiak left with just one goal in mind.

"I'd love to bring home the gold," he said.

Super athlete 'wheels' for gold

By Rich Swenson  
staff writer

Southfield's Kris Lenzo accomplished what he set out to do at the International Games for the Disabled - he won an "Olympic" gold medal.

The 24-year-old double amputee, who represented the United States in track events, cruised to victory in the 400-meter dash with a time of 1:06:12, last week in Nassau County, N.Y.

He also wheeled his way to a silver medal in the 100 and finished a respectable fifth in the 800.

"It was a big thrill," he said. "I was somewhat satisfied with my performance, considering I wasn't in top condition."

LENZO SUSTAINED an injury to his elbow last winter, and he wasn't able to start training until April, just two months before the games began.

"I had to push myself a little harder - it took me more time to get back into shape," he said. "I didn't have much time to get myself ready and I don't think I prepared myself as well as I could've. But I did about as well as I expected."

The International Games are run Olympic-style and feature the world's top amputee, blind, cerebral palsy and other physically disabled athletes. Athletes from 50 countries competed for two weeks (June 16-30) to determine world champions in a series of events, including track, swimming, wrestling, weightlifting and wheelchair soccer.

"It was nice - I had a good time," Lenzo said. "I met a lot of friends from across the country."

HIS TIMES, including his sprint for the gold, were well off his personal bests, but so were those of the other athletes.

"It was hot and the track was very soft," he said. "Actually, it was to my advantage to race on a soft track."

"I haven't raced all year," he said. "I needed more practice time to reach top speed. I usually get a good jump from the start, but my starts were just OK. I'm just glad I got my gold."

A three-time winner of the Detroit Free Press

Marathon (wheelchair division), Lenzo will try to win it for a fourth time in October. He'll begin training soon.

"I'll have to get myself in condition for endurance," he said. "I want to set a new course record."

What's expected anything less from a guy who strives for perfection as much as Kris Lenzo?

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