

Seals set for CP regional

By C.J. Risk
staff writer

The Cerebral Palsy (CP) Games are expanding. Or maybe shrinking. It depends upon your viewpoint, but this year for the first time the National CP Games, slated for Aug. 7-14 at Michigan State University, will include a separate competition for Les Autres athletes.

Les Autres is French for "the others." It refers to those athletes not eligible to compete in any other national organization's sports for physically impaired.

In the past, Les Autres athletes — those with muscular dystrophy, multiple sclerosis and a handful of other conditions — competed along with the CP athletes.

THIS YEAR they'll have a separate competition. Just like the CP athletes, the Les Autres (LA) competitors will be classified according to severity of disability — Class 1 for most severe, Class 8 for least.

And also, just like the CP athletes, members of the LA division will have to qualify for the nationals at the Michigan regional games, scheduled for May 17-20 at Eastern Michigan University.

More than 300 athletes, mostly from Michigan, on 13 teams will participate in the regionals. Those bettering national qualifying standards for their events in their class will advance to the National

CP/LA Games at MSU. And likewise, the best national athletes will be selected to represent the United States at the International Games next year in Belgium.

SO THERE'S a lot at stake, but the Observer coverage area will be well represented by members of the Tri-City Seals, which operates out of Westland's Parks and Recreation building. "As far as regionals go, ours is a very competitive meet," said Mary Beth Jones, head coach and director of the Seals, which operates out of Westland's Parks and Recreation building. "Those athletes put in a lot of time and they have a lot of talent."

"But it's at nationals where the real strong competition is," Jones added. "Those athletes put in a lot of time and they have a lot of talent."

ONE SEAL who made it to last year's International CP Games in Nassau, New York, was Erik Benjamin of Westland. Benjamin, 20, a Class 6 CP athlete (has use of one hand), had a best finish in the 200-meter dash (43.95).

"She's got great potential in track," said Jones of Benjamin. "I definitely she's improved her times. I know she'll do quite well at nationals."

Benjamin will compete in the 50-meter, 200-meter and 400-meter runs and the 1,500-meter cross country run.

Athletes are restricted to five events.

OTHER POTENTIAL national medal-winners for the Seals include:

• Dawn Darlington, 18, from Plymouth. As a Class 7 CP athlete (slightly impaired), Darlington is up against "very, very strong competition," according to Jones. "She's going to have to do a lot of fighting and training to make it to the International Games."

Darlington's best events are the 100, 400 and the long jump. • David Larson, 15, from Plymouth, a Class 8 CP athlete. "He needs a little more training," Jones said, "but he's a natural athlete. He should make nationals, no problem." A member of the Michigan team that traveled to the 1983 nationals in Ft. Worth, Texas, Larson's best chances are in the shot put, club throw and table tennis.

• David Marcy, 18, from Livonia, a Class 3 LA athlete (needs wheelchair for mobility). A six-year Seal veteran, Marcy has been to the 1981 Rhode Island nationals and was a medal-winner at the Texas nationals. The shot put, discus and javelin are his best events. He'll also be in the 50-meter and slalom races.

• Terri Rohrig, 31, from Livonia, a Class 6 CP athlete. "A very gutsy athlete," according to Jones, Rohrig will compete in a pair of new events: the 1,500-meter and 3,000-meter tri-cycling. She'll also be in the powerlifting and, according to Jones, "has a great

chance" to make nationals in each.

• Tony Stroia, 14, from Livonia, a Class 5 CP athlete (uses some device to assist in walking). Stroia will compete in the junior division, which is divided into three age categories: 9 and under, 10-14 and 15-18. "He'll do great there," predicted Jones. Stroia's events are the club throw, shot put, 100-meter race and powerlifting.

• Eric Smith, 12, from Livonia, a Class 1 LA athlete (a muscular dystrophy competitor who uses an electric wheelchair). Smith is in his first year as a Seal who "should do very well" in the slalom, according to Jones. He'll also compete in the 50-meter race, bocce and precision (a contest of accuracy with points scored for bean bags thrown on a target).

• Steve Dell, 17, of Livonia, a Class 1 CP athlete (using an electric wheelchair). A six-year veteran who competed at the Rhode Island and Texas nationals, Dell's top events are in swimming: the 25-meter freestyle and 25-meter backstroke. He'll also compete in the soft shot distance throw and soft discus.

The Seals chances for claiming a team regional title are not as strong this year. With 29 team members, they'll compete in the large team division against much larger squads (the downriver contingent has 48 members, while Oakland County has 34).

"We're going to have a struggle," admitted Jones.

Cougars pick new football coach

By Rich Swenson
staff writer

Garden City High School has a new head football coach.

Bob Lusk, the Cougars' defensive coordinator last year under Dean Shipman, takes the reins of a team that's coming off a fine 7-2 season. Garden City finished second in the Northwest Suburban League (NSL) behind North Farmington.

Shipman resigned last month after accepting the position of associate principal at the high school.

Better known for his career as a wrestling coach at Westland, John Glenn where his teams were perennial NSL champs, the 52-year-old Lusk returns as a head football coach after a 10-year hiatus.

"I've been out of coaching for a few years," the longtime John Glenn phys-

football

ical education teacher said. "But it's something I've always enjoyed. There was a little void in my life. My children have grown up and it (the offer) came at a good time. I'm pleased that I was selected."

LUSK IS no stranger to the gridiron. In the 1960s and early '70s, he piloted teams at Lincoln Park and John Glenn for 14 years (the last nine at Glenn). Lusk also has served stints as an assistant coach at Western and Eastern Michigan universities.

A defensive specialist, Lusk believes in teaching solid, fundamental football

— stressing good blocking and tackling. But he isn't afraid to put the ball in the air on offense.

"More games are won with a good defense, but you need balance," he said. "I like to score points too. We'll throw the ball 20 to 25 times a game if we can. But you have to take the material you have and play accordingly."

Though the Cougars return only eight players from last year's senior dominated team, Lusk is optimistic.

"We have a fair nucleus — especially on the line," he said. "There's a drop in quality (from last year), but we have enough to build on."

GARDEN CITY faces a tough non-league schedule in the upcoming season, including games with Wayne Memorial, Belleville and two Catholic schools — Harper Woods Bishop Gallagher and Jackson Lumen Christi.

"It's a decent schedule," Lusk said. "But we're optimistic. We haven't played anybody yet, but we'll be respectable. People will have to beat us." Lusk's big concern is not with winning — but in playing the game to win.

"It's an educational experience for the kids — otherwise I wouldn't be interested in the job," he said. "I couldn't coach just to win, but we'll play as hard as we can."

Lusk will retain most of last year's coaching staff, including assistant coaches Len Natowski, Gary Novak and Jim Kozlowski.



Harrison's Heidi Royst had three key hits as the Hawks split a pair of games with Southfield Saturday.

Garden City spoils Greenberg's game

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Stevenson used 8 hits, 3 walks and a pair of Falcon errors to score the 11 runs in the sixth. Bokovoy's 3-run double was the big blow.

Donna Canzonieri went 3-for-4 and Carolyn Kunz 2-for-4 for the Spartans (3-0). Farmington falls to 1-4.

SOUTHFIELD 16-9, HARRISON 10-10: A bases-loaded walk in the bottom of the eighth inning to Kristi Rugh enabled Farmington Harrison to escape Saturday's double-header with a split.

The Hawks trailed the Jays 9-3 in the bottom of the fifth inning of game two but rallied for 5 runs in the fifth, tied it in the sixth and won it in the eighth.

Dana Dinkins had the big bat for the Hawks in game two going 3-for-4 with a double and 2 RBI. Theresa Splaz had a hit and stole 3 bases. Heidi Royst had a key 2-run single in the fifth.

Sophomore pitcher Dawn Culbertson went the distance for the win.

Harrison's rally fell short in game one. Trailing 16-4 the Hawks scored 6 times in the seventh before bowing out.

Dinkins went 2-for-4 with a 3-run double and Royst went 2-for-4 with a 3-run triple.

Junior Barbie Blackmer absorbed the loss for Harrison in game one.

GARDEN CITY 3, N. FARMINGTON 2: North Farmington pitcher Suzette Greenberg struck out 12 batters and allowed just 4 hits Tuesday — and lost the game.

"It's a shame," said North coach Dennis Mikel. "Suzette pitched such a

softball

great game and got nothing to show for it. That's two tough losses in a row. It's too bad we couldn't get her some runs."

North led 1-0 going into the fifth. But an error and a walk, followed by 3 straight hits accounted for the Cougars' 3 runs. It was all they needed.

North got 1 run back in the bottom of the fifth off winning pitcher Shelley Malone.

Greenberg tried to help her own cause by bunting out a pair of hits. Leah Damiani also had a pair of hits — those were the only 4 hits North could muster.

GC is now 5-0 on the season, 3-0 in the Northwest Suburban League. North falls to 1-4, 0-3 in the NSL.

LADYWOOD 14, MERCY 7: A 5-run seventh inning by Livonia Ladywood quelled a valiant comeback attempt by the Marlins Tuesday in this Catholic League battle.

Ladywood jumped all over Mercy hurler Terry Nalodka for 3 runs in each of the first three innings to take a 9-3 lead.

But Mercy chipped away. A 2-run home run by Sue Scott helped pull the Marlins to within a run, 9-8 after six innings.

A home run by Ladywood's Lisa Plonka triggered the Blazers' 5-run seventh to pull Mercy away.

Ladywood is 4-0 on the season. Mercy is 1-3.

Judo tourney at OCC

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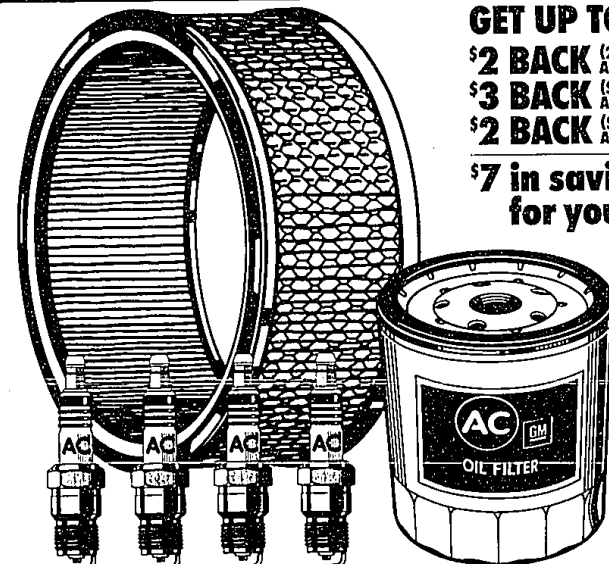
ington Woods, William Clark of Essexville, Don Catell of Adrian, and Robert Noble of Kalamazoo have placed high in statewide competitions.

Jan Robichaud of Roseville and Paul Uyemura of Sterling Heights are both former National Masters champs.

The competition will begin at 9:30 a.m. on Friday and at 9 a.m. Saturday. Finals will take place at 5 p.m. both Friday and Saturday. Opening ceremonies, which will feature an entrance parade of athletes carrying state banners, will commence at 11:30 a.m. Friday.

This is the first National Senior Judo Championship ever held in the metro Detroit area.

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