

Ocelot men open with fury

By C.J. Risak
staff writer

Schoolcraft College's mens soccer team warmed up for Friday's featured match against Michigan State University by besting DuPage College 3-2 Sunday and Eastern Michigan University 4-3 Wednesday, Aug. 28.

The games provided coach Van Dimitriou with just what he wanted for his Ocelot team: playing time under game conditions, a chance to evaluate abilities and momentum gathered from two victories going into Friday's game.

"There's no question our players

are looking forward to playing in front of a hometown crowd against some of their former teammates," said Dimitriou of Friday's MSU game.

THE MSU contest will be under the lights at Livonia Stevenson, starting at 7 p.m. There will be a \$2 admission fee, with proceeds benefitting both the Schoolcraft and Stevenson athletic funds.

"It's not going to be an easy ball-game," Dimitriou said. "It will be a hard-fought game. Defense is (MSU's) forte, definitely."

Dimitriou had a chance to see

many of the Spartan players this summer. They were members of the Lansing Arsenal under-19 squad that won its division at the Wolverine Soccer Tournament at Schoolcraft in July.

Against DuPage, the Ocelots overcame a sluggish first half to score three straight goals in the second. John Gelmini, from Stevenson, headed in the first on a crossing pass from Matt Pace (Kent County, England).

Randy Johnson, a Plymouth Salem grad who transferred from Florida Southern, assisted on the next two Schoolcraft scores. A perfectly placed corner kick to halfback Rob Costanza

(Stevenson) resulted in an easy head-in goal. Pace then fired a bullet past the DuPage goalie after a pass from Johnson.

DUPAGE SCORED twice in the waning minutes to make the score close. Sam Matovski (Livonia Church-ill) started in goal, splitting time with Jeff Vakratsis (Livonia Clarenceville) and Jeff Guido (Garden City).

"We dominated in the first half but couldn't finish the play," said Dimitriou. "We lacked intensity. In the second half, we made a couple of adjustments. We sent players through on a more direct attack.

Farmington runners rule Serenity Run

The Farmington-Farmington Hills area has its honor to uphold at the second annual Serenity Run, sponsored by Brighton Hospital.

At last year's inaugural event, seven runners from Farmington and Farmington Hills captured division medals, more than any other community. Included in that number was Nicole Jolley, the women's overall winner in the 10-kilometer race.

This year's Serenity Run will be at 9 a.m. Saturday, Sept. 18. There will be three different events: races covering five-kilometers and 10-kilometers and

a one-mile fun walk.

Medals will be presented to the top four male and female finishers in each of six age groups (ranging from 18 and under to 60 and over) for both the 5K and 10K races. The overall male and female champions in each race will be awarded trophies. All one-mile walkers will receive ribbons.

The races will be at Brighton Hospital, 12851 East Grand River in Brighton. The entry fee is \$8.

For additional information, contact the Brighton Hospital community relations department at 237-1911, Ext. 276.

At age 9 she's Olympic-bound

By Chris McCooley
staff writer

From the Westland Go-Fer Gymnastics Club's Novice team to Bela Karolyi's National Elite Team in less than two years.

Amanda Uherek's gymnastics climb has been, to say the least, meteoric.

It began in January 1985 when Robert and Linda Uherek of Canton Township enrolled their 7-year-old daughter, Amanda, in the Go-Fer Gymnastics Club.

"When she started, we saw this tiny, thin gutsy girl — extremely competitive," said Robert Westerman, who along with his wife, Cindy, run the Go-Fer gym. "We felt all along she was special. She had a lot going for her."

The Westermans were in no small way responsible for Uherek's rapid development.

"THE NOVICE program was developed was really a pet project of ours," Westerman said. "It was our idea that the younger kids in the program should get more out of gymnastics than just the activity. It should be more like a real sport."

"As a coach, it's easy to get wrapped up in your high-level kids and lose interest in the low-level kids. We looked at our younger kids as the future of our team."

Thus, the Go-Fer Novice program, for kids ages 5 through 9, teaches every phase of gymnastics and stressed competition.

"Our first group of novice kids really shocked the state," Westerman said. "People couldn't believe how competitive and talented they were at such a young age."

Such a talent was Amanda. She earned a spot on the Go-Fer Novice A Team in 1984 and won the all-around championship at the Hartland Invitational that year.

SHE ALSO became the youngest United States Gymnastics Federation performer in the state to qualify for the state sectional meet.

This summer, 16 gymnasts from Michigan attended Bela Karolyi's summer camp in Houston. Karolyi, you may know, coached Nadia Comaneci and Mary Lou Retton in addition to coaching the U.S. Olympic Team in 1984.

After seeing Uherek, Karolyi selected her for his Olympic Hope Team, a group of the nation's top junior gymnasts.

Two weeks later, Uherek was put on Karolyi's Elite Team with the likes of Mary Lou Retton and other Olympic gymnasts.

"For a 9-year-old to be on his Elite Team is a tremendous honor," Westerman said. "We're obviously very proud and honored ourselves."

It's been a grueling change of events for the Uherek family — more so for Robert and Linda than Amanda. The family had to leave their Canton home of 10 years and relocate in Houston. Robert owns a business in Michigan and must commute.

"I MISS Canton," were Linda Uherek's first words when reached by telephone in Houston. "I really liked it up there. But this is a one-of-a-kind time shot for a gymnast. It's just something we had to do for Amanda."

Amanda, she said, was adjusting well to her new environment. She is attending third grade in the Houston public school district and attends 9 1/2 hours of gymnastics classes weekly.

"Her day goes from 5 a.m. to 9 p.m., but she loves it," Linda said.

Amanda is being groomed for the 1992 Olympic games.

"She'll only be 12 in 1988 and that's the minimum age for competition," Linda said. "She is the youngest member of the Elite Team. She'll compete as a Class II gymnast this year."

The relationship between Amanda and Karolyi is cordial, Linda said.

"He's a great man," she said. "It's a myth about him being so hard to get along with. He's very nice and he's strict. When you work hard for him, he's very affectionate. He gets upset when he thinks you aren't working as hard as you should."

From Go-Fer Novice to Karolyi Elite — Amanda Uherek's meteor continues strong. As for Linda Uherek, the hope is the meteor burns at least through 1992.

"It's going to be a hectic life for the next seven years."

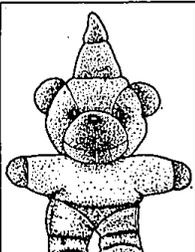
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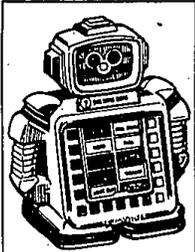
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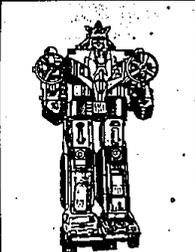
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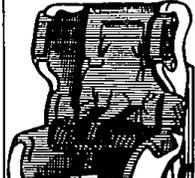
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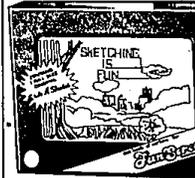
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