

## Sports

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# State puts squeeze on big men

By Brad Emons  
staff writer

When it comes to high school wrestling, you won't see any Refrigerators on the mats these days.

The Michigan High School Athletic Association (MHSAA), following new guidelines set by the National Federation of State High School Associations, has established a 275-pound maximum for prep grapplers.

The rule has affected a pair of area heavyweights as big as the Chicago Bears' William (Refrigerator) Perry, Ed Miller of Garden City and Bill Critcher of Farmington.

The new limit has drawn criticism, particularly from Mount Clemens coach Larry Walters, who considered challenging the MHSAA through litigation.

Mount Clemens wrestler Lyle (Pooh) Burrell, who posted a 37-10-2 record last season, weighed 339 pounds at the end of football season and has since resorted to dieting in hopes

of reaching the limit.

Critcher, who weighed 337 pounds last year, has dropped below the standard and is wrestling this year.

FARMINGTON COACH Barry Walsh is an advocate of the new rule.

"Seeing it from Bill's standpoint, it was the best rule that ever happened to him," Walsh said. "Bill has a better outlook about himself. He carries himself better. He has better strength, agility and balance. He hasn't missed one practice and his injuries are down. Bill's a better wrestler."

When Walsh heard about the new rule change last spring, he sat down with Critcher's father and talked about establishing a regimented diet. Critcher tried Herbalife program and it worked. He lost the excess bulk.

"They've had the same rule in college now for two years," said Walsh. "You have weight limits in international competition. I like the new rule and I'd go and testify for them at the state (MHSAA)."

The rule, however, has prevented Miller, unable to cut the necessary weight, from competing this year.

The Garden City heavyweight tipped the scales at 330 pounds at the end of football season.

"I DON'T UNDERSTAND how a 300-pound kid can play football and hit a 125-pound kid, but he can't wrestle," said former GC coach Dean Shipman, now the school's assistant principal. "Nationally they made a rule and the state (the MHSAA) just went along with it. They did what's easiest. There's got to be a better way than jeopardizing a kid's chance."

Shipman would like to see the MHSAA establish a super-heavyweight class as an alternative.

"I've been fortunate in my coaching career to have big heavyweights," Shipman said. "Ed was a possible state qualifier and state placer."

Garden City first-year coach Phil Freeman calls the rule "arbitrary."

"I don't like the rule," he said. "I guess they (the MHSAA) wanted to stop a kid wrestling from somebody that was 75 pounds heavier. If they're worried about it being unsafe, they could give more authority to the referee. I think there are enough rules in the sport to make it safe."

FREEMAN SAID he is disappointed about the new ruling because Miller was only in his second year of wrestling. "Last year was his first year and he made great progress," said the GC coach. "He qualified for the regional, but broke his collarbone. He wrestled all summer and was looking forward to the season."

Although the 6-foot-5 Miller has dropped about 20 pounds, he hasn't been practicing with the team.

"I know there's a kid at Crestwood of that size and I know the Mount Clemens coach (Walters) has a list of seven or eight from around the state," Freeman said. "The thing that bothers me is that they took a kid out of wrestling."

## Season resumes in grand fashion

By Chris McCosky  
staff writer

Alright, so it's only the first week of the new year. So what if there are two months and some 14 Western Lakes basketball games left in the season.

Tuesday night's Farmington Harrison-North Farmington basketball tussle, at least in an immediate sense, is an important game. Right Tom Negoshian?

"Yeah, it's a big game. You know, cross-town rivalry and all that. You can't take away the emotional part of it. You just hope the kids handle it the right way," said the North Farmington coach.

The feeling may be a bit more intense on the Harrison side. After all, the Hawks have had a history of getting waxed by the Raiders.

"I'd say they have beaten us about two-thirds of the time," said Hawk coach Mike Teachman.

After the Hawks won the Western Lakes crown in dramatic fashion last year, the Raiders unconsciously dumped them in the first round of the district tournament. As far as Teachman can tell, Harrison hasn't beaten North in basketball since 1980.

"I FEEL pretty good about playing North right off the bat," Teachman said. "Last year we had to go over to Livonia Bentley after the break. I had a hard time getting anyone excited about that. That won't be a problem Tuesday. The kids have been talking about this one since I handed them the schedules."

Harrison will bring a perfect 5-0 record into the North Farmington gym Tuesday night. The Hawks are 3-0 in Western Lakes games. The Hawks may have been saddened to see 1985 leave.

Senior point guard Ken George is the heart and soul of the team. He has averaged 15 points a game this year, scoring 19 in each of the last two. But the impressive thing about the 6-0 guard is his proficiency in all aspects of the game: scoring, ballhandling, passing, defense and overall court sense.

What has made the Hawks so effective this year, though, has been the steady play of George's teammates.

Inside, strongmen Will Lund (6-3) and Rod Sarcevich (6-1) have been per-

forming so well on the boards it's tough to notice the teams' diminutive stature.

"REBOUNDING IS 90 percent position," Teachman said. "We try to do things to make the opposition shoot out of position. We're aggressive and we go to ball well."

Another plus for the Hawks this season has been Scott Blaseil. The junior has helped take some of the scoring load off George's shoulders. He is a dangerous weapon from the perimeter and he's strong enough to be a factor inside.

Jeff Hoskow, the team's second guard, plays an important role. He's the team's kamikaze player. He's the main pest on defense, a key to the success of Harrison's press and its zone defense.

The Hawks also have a deep bench. J.T. Quarles and Jon Welsberg are usually the first off the bench, but Teachman can go 10 or 11 players deep, and often does.

FOR NORTH Farmington, the end of 1985 wasn't as rosy. After winning its first three games, North lost to league foes Livonia Churchill and Westland John Glenn (a team that Harrison beat).

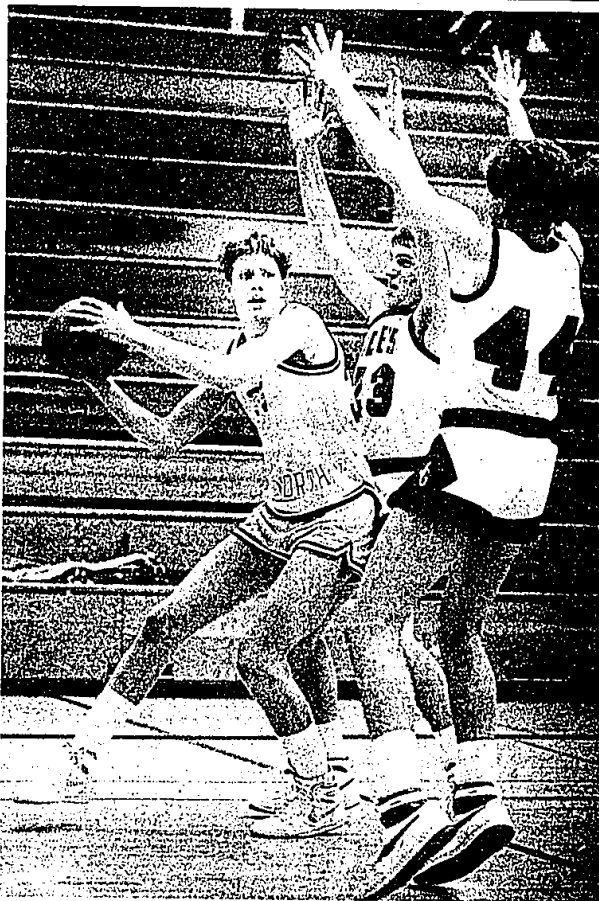
"Any time you lose you are disappointed," Negoshian said. "But I can't fault the kids' effort. They are playing hard. We shot bad against Glenn. But it's like I've said from the beginning, outside of two players, we're a young team and we've been making mistakes that young players will make."

The Raiders have two of the most talented players in Observeland in Paul Wahrman and Rick Anderson. Anderson has averaged 24 points and 14 rebounds through the first five games. Wahrman has averaged 25 points and almost 10 rebounds per game.

For non-math majors, that's 49 points and 24 rebounds a game from two players — there are full teams that would hope for as much production.

As Negoshian pointed out, the rest of the lineup is still searching for its groove. Jim Haglund has had good and bad days running the point for North. Mike Rudin and Rob Knapp, the other two starters, have had similar hot-cold moments.

Please turn to Page 2



Rick Anderson and teammate Paul Wahrman hope to help North kick off 1986 on a positive note. The Raiders host Harrison Tuesday.

## Howze keeps OU on a roll

After 13 years, Carvin Melsen, one of the inaugural members of OU's Hall of Honor, might have thought his basketball records at Oakland University would never fall.

By now he's wondering if any will be standing by the end of the season.

Melsen's single-game record for points was broken last month. Last Monday, his record for consecutive field goals tumbled, too.

The record-breaker in both cases was Chris Howze, the 6-foot-8 forward from Orchard Lake St. Mary's. Howze hit for 52 points in a win over University of Michigan-Dearborn Dec. 19, and last Monday he canned his first 13 floor shots en route to a 36-point performance as the Pioneers ripped Aquinas College 98-88 at OU.

THE VICTORY raised the Pioneers' overall record to 7-4 as they entered the bulk of the Great Lakes Intercollegiate Athletic Conference (GLIAC) season. OU played at Northwood Institute Saturday, and Thursday will host Ferris State at 8 p.m. Howze nailed all 12 of his first-half shots and his first second-half attempt before finally missing. His 13 straight baskets eclipsed Melsen's mark of 11 in a row, set in 1972.

His torrid shooting also enabled OU to break open a tight game late in the first half. Together with freshman Johnny Johnson, who contributed 10 of his 16 points and seven of his 12 assists in the opening half, the Pioneers built a 51-36 lead by intermission and were never again threatened.

By game's end, Howze had hit 16 of 20 from the field and six of nine free throws for 38 points and grabbed eight rebounds. Scott Bittinger and Rob Skinner added 12 points apiece, with Skinner nabbing 10 rebounds, and Randy Strunk collected nine points and 12 rebounds.

Larry Hardy paced Aquinas with 33 points.

OU'S FEMALE cagers had a more difficult task last Monday, but the Lady Pioneers prevailed over a tough Northern Kentucky University squad 59-55 at OU.

The game was tight throughout, with the Lady Pioneers clinging to a 29-25 halftime advantage. With 44 seconds left and OU ahead 55-53, NKU fouled Sonja Pearson and Kim McDowell, sending both to the line for one-and-one opportunities.

OU was 0-for-4 shooting free throws in the second half — until Pearson and McDowell connected on four straight to increase the Lady Pioneers' lead to 59-53 and ice the triumph.

Pearson topped OU with 12 points. Kris Brown and Margaret Boyle had 10 points each, and Boyle also dished out nine assists and had six steals. Lisa Quinn grabbed 13 rebounds and blocked four shots.

Pam King's 14 points was best for NKU, which fell to 6-2. The victory raised the Lady Pioneers' record to 9-2, with Ferris State invading Lepley Sports Center at 6 p.m. Thursday.



FILE PHOTO

Recreation statistics show that more skiers will take to the cross-country trails than the downhill slopes this season.

## Fewer spills and more thrills, cross-country skiing beats chill

By Larry O'Connor  
staff writer

COMPARED TO the downhill variety, cross-country skiing is literally more on the level.

Which might explain the recent increase in cross-country skiers. According to statistics, the number of cross-country skiers in Michigan is expected to reach 800,000 this year, compared to 770,000 downhillers.

The reasons for the legions of newcomers are many. For one, the injuries and high costs of skiing downhill are not associated with the cross-country sport.

Another factor is the aerobic exercise it provides. And, one of the more attractive features, cross-country skiing is a sport for everyone, including seniors and the blind.

"If you can walk, you can cross-country ski," said Dan Stencil, an Oakland County Parks and Recreation Department supervisor.

Stencil, who is involved with an array of cross-country skiing programs

offered by the county, believes one of the main reasons for the popularity of the sport is the cost factor. A person can get a complete package of poles, boots, bindings and skis from anywhere between \$75 — \$150. A pair of downhill boots, alone, can run up to \$150.

THE WORKOUT a person gets, according to Stencil, is pretty good also.

"You use all your muscles," said Stencil. "So it's a far better physical and cardiovascular workout."

Injuries are minimal, according to Stencil. Some bruises and sprains occur but the injuries are not as extensive as they can be in downhill.

cross-country skiing itself is fairly easy to comprehend. Participants, unlike downhill skiers, generate their own movement by pushing off their poles and gliding laterally across the snow.

The courses, which offer some hills, have trails that are either marked or groomed.

Some of the courses in the area include:

In Oakland County:

• Glen Oaks Golf Course, 13 Mile Road (between Orchard Lake and Middlebelt Roads), Farmington Hills.

• Red Oaks Golf Course, John R and 12 Mile Roads, Madison Heights.

• Independence Oaks County Park, Sashabaw Road (two miles north of Pine Knob), Clarkston.

• White Lake Oaks Golf Course, South Williams Lake Road (off M-59), Pontiac.

• Springfield Oaks Golf Course, Andersonville and Hall roads, Davisburg.

In Wayne County:

• Mayberry Park, Eight Mile Road, Northville.

• Warren Valley Golf Course, Warren and Beech Daly Roads, Dearborn Heights.

IN OAKLAND County, Glen Oaks and White Lake both have groomed trails. Red Oaks, Independence Oaks and Springfield Oaks all have marked

Please turn to Page 2