Kazoo puts record on line

By Larry O'Connor
staff writer

It sticks out like a piece of lint on William "the Refrigerator" Perry's sweater.

The loss.

It's the only thing that has kept Kalamazoo from attaining perfection in the Michigan Intercollegiate Athletic Association tennis circuit in the last 50 years. The Hornets are 295-1 in the MIAA since 1935, with a conference championship to show for every year.

Hope College applied the blemish with a 4-3 win in 1962.

Yes, 1962. John Kennedy was president and Cuban missiles were a pointed topic of discussion.

Yet, coach George Acker remembers it like it just happened a couple of hours ago.

"Two trustees followed me home," joked Acker, who's accumulated a 162-1 mark in 28 years as coach. "That's how much they trusted me."

IF HIS JOB was on the line then, it's certainly secure now 140 wins later. The Hornets are ranked No. 2 in NCAA Division III.

Kalamazoo returned from its spring trip to Florida with an 8-1 record. There were wins over Division I schools like Vanderbilt and Southern Florida.

The school's success on the tennis court, though, is not the main reason players like Bloomfield Hills' Ed Garcia and Rochester Hills' David Borski flock there. Their books are more important than their rackets.

"It's great academically," said Borski, a freshman whose brother, Bob, is a member of the Rochester Adams' tennis team. "I wanted to play tennis but I didn't think I was good enough to make a Division I team.

"This is perfect for me."

Garcia, a sophomore who played No. 2 singles at Birmingham Brother Rice, echoes similar feelings. "I came here mainly for the academics and secondly the tennis team," he said.

This leaves a number of questions about how Kalamazoo has achieved so much success. Kalamazoo College doesn't offer athletic scholarships. The tuition at the "K" is steep. And most of the state's top tennis players head to Division I schools instead of Division III colleges.

"FIRST OF ALL, we have a quality school to sell," said Acker, who

college sports

played tennis at Northern Illinois. "Secondly, we have a quality tennis program. And we work hard at it."

Those closely associated with the program, like Borski and Garcia, say it's a bit more than that.

Acker, who doesn't cut players from the team, works with everyone, from No. 1 to No. 20. It's not uncommon for him to find someone in the lower rungs and turn them into a gem.

With an abundance of hard work, a player can make his way up the ladder.

Garcia, who was No. 15 last season as a freshman, has worked up to No. 12 singles.

"He's an excellent motivating force," said Garcia of Acker. "He doesn't just help those players who do well. He helps everyone.

"He's pointed out various things I was weak in," added Garcia. "It helped me in certain mental and physical aspects of my game."

"HE'S REALLY great," said Borski, who's slated to play No. 6 singles this season as a freshman. "He can take a high school player who's not very good and make him into a good player.

"He's the main reason for the success."

The success, though, has a good number of teams in the MIAA gunning for the Hornets this season. Hope, which finished second last season, has always been a nemesis.

"I think the rest of us (in the MIAA) just decide who's going to finish second," said Hope men's tennis coach Bill Japinga, who played under Acker at Kalamazoo. "I hate to say that but that's the way it works around here."

Albion College, with four state champions on its squad, could provide the biggest challenge this season to the Hornets' MIAA string of 49-straight titles. Kalamazoo doesn't have any state champions.

"We'll have to give them a lesson," said Acker.

It's the same one the Hornets have given 295 times before.

All-star cage talent exhibited at Lathrup

If you can't make it downtown to catch the McDonald's All-American High School East-West All-Star game Friday, April 11, you can catch of glimpse of these talented basketball players at Southfield-Lathrup High School.

Terry Mills of Romulus, Derrick Coleman of Detroit Northern and Anthony Pendleton of Flint Northwestern will be among the 25 all-stars scheduled to participate in a slam-dunk basketball contest from 7-9 p.m. Wednesday, April 9, at Lathrup (12 Mile, between Southfield and Evergreen roads).

An exhibition game is slated to follow the slam-dunk contest.

"I think it's an appeal to all basketball fans to see some of the country's top basketball players," said Lathrup basketball coach Jim Kourtakis, who may serve as a judge for the slam-dunk contest.

"The thing is these are the players you'll be seeing at the major colleges over the next four years," he said. "They're the Magic Johnson-type kids."

Tickets for the slam-dunk contest at Lathrup are $1. All proceeds will benefit the athletic programs at Southfield-Lathrup High School.

Tip-off for the McDonald's All-American High School basketball game is 8 p.m. at Joe Louis Arena. Tickets are $12.50, $10 and $8 and are available at the Joe Louis Arena Box Office and all Hudson's and Ticket World outlets.

Gilles: from preps to Big 10 in a hurry

Continued from Page 1

was hit hard by the first exam. I've been in the library a lot since."

Helping ease the pressure, though, is the fact that Wendy spent a lot of time with the Badger team last season, watching her sister play.

"I knew four of the girls really well before I came here," she said. "It's been super. They've helped me a lot."

AND WENDY'S emergence, as well as the return of a healthy Lisa Fortman, has boosted the Badger's stock in the Big 10 title chase.

Wisconsin is 13-8 and 2-0 in the Big 10. Ferguson said she plans on rotating the Gilles sisters and Fortman in the top three singles spots. For example, last weekend Chris played No. 1 against Northern Illinois, Wendy played No. 2 and Fortman played No. 3.

"I'm switching them for two reasons," Ferguson said. "For the competition, and we're trying to get all three of them into nationals."

Right now, all three are ranked in the top eight in the region. Ferguson wants to see all three within the top six.

A highly probable expectation.

the week ahead

PREP BASEBALL

Tuesday, April 8
Romulus at Garden City, 3:30 p.m.
Bishop Borgess vs. Mt. Bishop Foley at Redford's Capitol Park (2), 3:30 p.m.

Wednesday, April 9
Clarenceville at D.H. Annapolis, 4 p.m.
Red. Thurston at Ply. Salem, 3:30 p.m.
Catholic Cent. vs. Ypsi (Capitol), 4 p.m.

Thursday, April 10
Garden City at Liv. Churchill, 4 p.m.
Redford Union at Liv. Stevenson, 4 p.m.
N. Farmington at S'field (CMc), 3:30 p.m.
Bishop Borgess vs. Red. St. Mary's at Redford's Capitol Park (2), 4 p.m.

Friday, April 11
Liv. Stevenson at Red. Thurston, 3:30 p.m.
Farmington at Redford Union, 4 p.m.
W. Bloomfield at Farm. Harrison, 4 p.m.
Clarenceville at D.H. Crestwood, 4 p.m.

Saturday, April 12
(All double-headers)
Wayne Memorial at Garden City, 11 a.m.
Redford St. Agatha vs. St. Clement at Redford's Capitol Park, 11 a.m.

Sunday, April 13
CC vs. Borgess (Capitol Pk.), 1 p.m.

GIRLS SOFTBALL

Monday, April 7
Taylor Center at Red. Thurston, 4 p.m.

Tuesday, April 8
Romulus at Garden City, 3:30 p.m.
Farm. Mercy at Dear. Divine Child, 4 p.m.

Wednesday, April 9
Red. Thurston at Taylor Truman, 4 p.m.
D.H. Annapolis at Clarenceville, 4 p.m.

Thursday, April 10
Liv. Churchill at Garden City, 4 p.m.
Redford Union at Liv. Stevenson, 4 p.m.
Southfield at Farmington, 3:30 p.m.
Farm. Mercy at Waterford Our Lady (2), 4 p.m.
St. Agatha at St. Alphonsus (2), 4 p.m.

Friday, April 11
D.H. Crestwood at Clarenceville, 4 p.m.
Farm. Harrison at W. Bloomfield, 3:30 p.m.

Saturday, April 12
(All double-headers)
Red. Thurston at N. Farmington, 10 a.m.
Wayne Memorial at Garden City, 11 a.m.
Farm. Mercy at St. Agatha, 11 a.m.

GIRLS TRACK

Tuesday, April 8
Bish. Borgess at Liv. Churchill, 3:30 p.m.
Garden City at Wayne Memorial, 4 p.m.
Ypsilanti at Weld. John Glenn, 4 p.m.
D.H. Annapolis at Clarenceville, 3:30 p.m.

Thursday, April 10
Bish. Borgess at Liv. Franklin, 3:30 p.m.
Redford Union at Liv. Stevenson, 4 p.m.
Red. Thurston at Clarenceville, 4 p.m.
Bam. Marian at Garden City, 3:30 p.m.
Ferndale at Farm. Harrison, 4 p.m.

Friday, April 11
Farm. Mercy at A.A. Huron, 4 p.m.

BOYS TRACK

Tuesday, April 8
D.H. Annapolis at Clarenceville, 3:30 p.m.
Garden City at Wayne Memorial, 4 p.m.
Ypsilanti at Weld. John Glenn, 4 p.m.

Thursday, April 10
Bish. Borgess at Liv. Churchill, 3:30 p.m.
Liv. Stevenson at Redford Union, 4 p.m.
Garden City at Weld. John Glenn, 4 p.m.
Ferndale at Farmington, 4 p.m.
Farm. Harrison at Novi, 4 p.m.
Clarenceville at Red. Thurston, 4 p.m.

GIRLS SOCCER

Monday, April 7
Farm. Mercy at Liv. Churchill, 7 p.m.

Tuesday, April 8
Liv. Churchill at Edsel Ford, 4 p.m.

Wednesday, April 9
Farm. Harrison at Liv. Stevenson, 7 p.m.
Liv. Churchill at Farmington, 4 p.m.
W.L. Central at Liv. Franklin, 4:30 p.m.
W.L. Western at N. Farmington, 4 p.m.
Ply. Salem at Northville, 7 p.m.

Thursday, April 10
Belleville at Garden City, 4 p.m.

Friday, April 11
Liv. Franklin at Farm. Harrison, 4 p.m.
Northville at Liv. Churchill, 7 p.m.
W.L. Central at Farmington, 4 p.m.
W.L. Western at Ply. Canton, 7 p.m.
Plymouth at Liv. Stevenson, 7 p.m.

Saturday, April 12
N. Farmington at Ply. Salem, 2 p.m.
Plymouth at Farm. Mercy, 1:30 p.m.

Judo brothers win

Johnny (11) and Jacob Kaufman (10), members of the Farmington Judo Club, placed second and third respectively in their age groups at the Kalamazoo Open Judo Tournament recently at Western Michigan University.

Dick Van Patten

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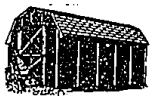
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