

Sports

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Chris McCosky

MHSAA ruling could shut down kick classic

SORRY, MARY KAY Hussey. Sorry, Katy Andreea. Sorry to all past and future All-Area girls soccer players. It looks like the Michigan High School Athletic Association is going to take away your game — the Observer & Eccentric All-Star Classic. Or at least alter it drastically. Sorry, Jim Hughes and Dennis O'Connor. They are taking your baby away.

The decision-making body of the MHSA, the representative council, has declared that underclassmen may not participate in any all-star game at any time. Those underclassmen who compete will be ineligible for the following sports season.

The state's all-star rule has been on the books a long time. But in the past, it affected only basketball, football and hockey. Last month, the council agreed to limit the rule on all MHSA-sponsored sports beginning Aug. 1.

The original reason for the all-star rule was that kids were never in school. They were out playing in one all-star game after another," said Fred Sible, assistant director of the MHSA. "Magie Johnson, when he was in high school, played in something like 13 or 14 all-star games. Now, the other sports are starting to have all-star games."

ON THE SURFACE, the state's all-star ruling is a good one. It is designed to control potential exploitation of high school student athletes (big corporations like McDonald's and 7-Up have had great success using all-star games as tax write-offs) and to keep the athletes in school.

You can't dispute the validity or reality of those concerns.

But the MHSA has spread the blanket of this rule too far. To simply wipe out all-star games or make them just for graduating high school seniors is a disservice to the high school athlete.

Think about this. Which sports are conducive to all-star games? Football, certainly, and basketball. Baseball, yes, and I suppose, hockey.

But how many all-star volleyball matches have you been to? How many all-star gymnastics meets or wrestling tournaments? Have you seen us publicize the O&E all-star swim meet?

Of course not. There aren't any such events. As far as we can tell, ours was the only all-star soccer

game in the state.

You just aren't going to have an overabundance of all-star games with the so-called "minor sports."

LET'S TALK about who sponsors all-star games and why.

Certainly, the corporations who sponsor the events are interested in boosting their public image and in legal tax shelters — not the most altruistic of motives.

Coaches' associations are prolific sponsors of all-star games. Their motives are genuine. Their primary interest is to provide a showcase for the athletes, a chance for them to gain extra recognition on a statewide platform. Profit, generally, is not an issue.

Then there are media groups, such as the Observer & Eccentric. I'll speak only for the O&E. We consider our newspaper a community service and part of that service is to support the athletes within our community.

We do not sponsor the soccer classic, but a mens and womens golf tournament, a junior bowling tournament, and we help sponsor several 5K and 10K runs.

We do not sponsor these events for profit; we've never made a profit on anything we've sponsored. We do not, as one MHSA official suggested, sponsor these events to boost our circulation. That's plain silly.

WHEN HUGHES and O'Connor began formulating plans for the O&E Soccer Classic, we talked about the ethics and practicalities involved. We took our plan to the MHSA for approval. The MHSA had no problems with it. We asked our coaches and our athletes about it, and all feedback was positive.

The game, now four years old, has been a success. The community has supported it by attending the games. The games themselves have been clean, well-played and enjoyable. And most importantly, the players love them.

Katy Andreea, the Birmingham Seaholm star, said the game provided her the chance to play with and against the very best players in the region and state — something she wouldn't have otherwise been able to do in her career at Seaholm.

Mary Kay Hussey, the three-time all-star from Livonia Stevenson, begged us not to let anyone take the classic away. "It's a great game for the players," she had said.

Diroff wins at Canton

Allan Cook of Canton and Peggy Diroff of Farmington were the big winners at the eighth annual Canton Country Festival 5-mile run Saturday.

The event attracted 122 runners. Cook, running in the 20-29 age division, came across first with a 26:27 clocking. Diroff, same age group, finished in 32:52.

It was a milestone day for Canton runners. Prior to the event, Canton residents Melba Hatch and Bill Boyd were honored for being named Michigan Runner Magazine's Runners of the Year.

Boyd.

Boyd proceeded to establish an event record in the 40-49 age group finishing in 27:37.

Here are the mens age group winners: Erik Opyko, Dearborn, 14-under; Michael Frampus, Redford, 15-19; Cook, Canton, 20-29; Thomas Taylor, Ypsilanti, 30-39; Boyd, Canton, 40-49; Paul Ettinger, Plymouth, 50-over.

The age group champs for the women were: Stacy Nield, Northville, 14-under; Lynda Schendel, Plymouth, 15-19; Diroff, Farmington, 20-29; Diane Rizik, Plymouth, 30-39; Dawn Teller, Canton, 40-49.

The winners



Peggy Diroff (left) of Farmington and Allan Cook of Plymouth were the individual winners Saturday at the Canton Country Festival 5-



Miller. Cook was the first person to cross the finish line. He ran a 26:27.

CANTON COUNTRY FESTIVAL
5-MILE RUN

1. Allan Cook, 26:27; 2. John Yatta, 26:44; 3. Bill Boyd, 27:37; 4. Thomas Taylor, 28:00; 5. Steve Baulaugh, 28:48; 6. Bill Pinck, 29:35; 7. Scott Harrison, 29:45; 8. John Keras, 29:47; 9. Ken Sova, 30:10; 10. Michael Frampus, 30:25; 11. Elmer Bohrens, 30:40; 12. John Walle, 30:45; 13. David Franz, 30:51; 14. Dave McColm, 30:57; 15. Harry Stoddard, 31:10; 16. Corneil Oiler, 32:06; 17. Terry Veneski, 32:15; 18. Buff Bruno, 32:30; 19. Dave Waskin, 32:50; 20. Dan Hodge, 32:42; 21. Pete Ves, 32:50; 22. Peggy Diroff, 32:51; 23. Paul Schmidt, 33:02.

26. John Listford, 33:10; 27. Dana Stellingworth, 33:10; 28. Jay Michelson, 33:10; 29. Thomas Jones, 33:19; 30. Ron Ziemba, 33:21; 31. Mark Vernon, 33:21; 32. Jack Pacenta, 33:21; 33. Mark Rizik, 33:40; 34. Mark Sudhoff, 33:40; 35. Keith Proctor, 33:50; 36. Randy Nostromo, 34:08; 37. Spiro Keras, 34:17; 38. William Tenney, 34:24; 39. Bill Smith, 34:27; 40. Rod Jenkins, 34:27; 41. James Modough, 34:38; 42. Charles Prucnal, 34:37; 43. Randy Doney, 34:54; 44. Scott Stryker, 34:55; 45. James Hudgins, 35:10; 46. Greg Nelson, 35:14; 47. Diane Rizik, 35:25; 48. Robb Woodard, 35:30; 49. Tom Kassel, 35:38; 50. Larry O'Connor, 35:42.

51. Steven Cunningham, 36:20; 52. Gail Buge, 36:24; 53. Bob Murphy, 36:24; 54. Richard Stydowski, 36:24; 55. Paul Ettinger, 36:30; 56. Gerald Mondoux, 36:35; 57. Fred Guro, 36:50; 58. Robert Cohen, 37:04; 59. Lynda Schendel, 37:10; 60. Sylvia Delage, 37:36; 61. Paul Balgo, 37:38; 62. Tom MacDonald, 37:41; 63. Jan Dinsley, 37:45; 64. Dennis Horvack, 37:55; 65. Mary Bruno, 37:55; 66. Kurt Simon, 37:58; 67. Richard Cole, 38:03; 68. Daniel Duchan, 38:11; 69. Gerald Heath, 38:11; 70. Gene George, 38:24; 71. Darryl Formis, 38:36; 72. Rick Thomas, 38:43; 73. Eric Goova, 38:12; 74. Dennis McEvoy, 38:42; 75. Bill Turney, 39:43.

76. Jim Bryne, 39:51; 77. William Murphy, 39:52; 78. Steven Hyquist, 39:56; 79. Jeff Bazzar, 40:15; 80. Larry Barton, 40:15; 81. Drex Morton, 40:20; 82. Dick Fisch, 40:38; 83. Thomas Lefler, 40:41; 84. Tim Oynaka, 41:00; 85. Matt Reesor, 41:10; 86. Rullano Trout, 41:26; 87. Kara Carlton, 41:40; 88. Susan Nyquist, 41:41; 89. John Roughton, 42:00; 90. Ted Senned, 42:05; 91. Richard Levy, 42:16; 92. Vito Caruso, 42:15; 93. Dean Wiley, 43:11; 94. Marjorie Dand, 43:21; 95. Sidney Hilly, 43:26; 96. Dawn Teller, 43:27; 97. Donna Sersch, 43:57; 98. Kenneth Clark, 45:06; 99. Jennifer Dagg, 45:06; 100. Daniel Baker, 45:06.

101. Thomas Bryne, 45:09; 102. Ronald Ziemba, 45:33; 103. Ron Kays, 45:48; 104. Gerald Riosol, 45:48; 105. Stephanie Ivory, 45:48; 106. Bethann Gyorko, 45:00; 107. Sharon Pfeiffer, 46:40; 108. Eric Jesu, 48:55; 109. Paul Vincamp, 47:00; 110. Shane Keough, 47:00; 111. Bill Keough, 47:05; 112. John Czerniacki, 47:30; 113. Jeanne Lenghan, 47:35; 114. Lyle Whipple, 48:53; 115. Carmine Dario, 50:14; 116. Leona Daldone, 51:21; 117. Sheila McEvoy, 51:30; 118. Teri Elinger, 53:35; 119. Elaine Riosol, 54:00; 120. Jennifer Kuchera, 55:37; 121. Susan Kuchera, 56:49; 122. William Kuchera, 56:48.

photos by RICK SMITH/staff photographer

Ex-Stevenson spiker Bokovoy big hit at U.S. Sports Festival

By Tom Henderson
Staff writer

Lisa Bokovoy, a former superstar in volleyball, softball and basketball at Livonia Stevenson, has taken a giant step toward her goal of playing volleyball for the U.S. team in the 1988 Olympics.

Bokovoy, who was a standout as a freshman last season at the University of Kentucky, has been selected to play for the north team in next month's National Sports Festival in Houston.

Bokovoy is recovering from an operation in April to remove bone spurs and fat deposits in her right foot and is currently undergoing rehabilitation, but she vows to be ready for the festival, which runs for two weeks beginning July 23.

"It's still a little tight. It feels like a big cramp," she said of her foot. "As it stands now, I'm going. I want to go desperately. I'll go even if I'm in pain because I want the experience."

"The Olympics are a goal. In Houston, I'll see what it's all about, playing with the top players in the country."

THERE WILL be 48 volleyball players divided into four teams — east, west, north and south — at the sports festival. They were chosen in a series of tryouts last spring. Bokovoy

successfully tried out in Florida while her Wildcats team was there for an unrelated tournament during spring break.

"I surprised myself at the tryouts," said Bokovoy by phone from Lexington, Ky., where she has a summer job in the school's food-engineering department. (She plans to major either in food engineering or civil engineering.)

"We'd been in the tournament all day and the tryouts were at night. But I decided to just be aggressive; I played all out. I surprised myself with my hitting and my defense, and when I walked out, I thought my chances were pretty good."

Two months later, the word came: She had been selected to represent the north team.

Bokovoy has been undergoing rehabilitation five days a week, an hour and a half a day. Two weeks ago, she resumed volleyball practice and she says doctors tell her she should be fine by the end of July.

By the end of the season, Bokovoy, a 6-foot-1 middle blocker, had played in 137 of the team's 141 games — the team played 37 matches, which are on a best-of-five-game format — and led the Wildcats in kill percentage and blocks. She had 398 kills in 1,068 attempts, or 37.3 percent, and added 50 solo blocks and 96 shared blocks for a young Kentucky team (three freshmen starters), which went 14-23.

"I've still got to work on my defense, but it's come a long way since the first days of August," she said.

She admitted there was a big adjustment from high school athletics to major college athletics, but she has been able to keep the fun in a game that is practically a job, too.

"I enjoy it," she said. "There are times you say, 'Oh, there's all this work and the pressure of school.' Trying to budget your time is what makes it not fun, but I don't get up in the morning and think, 'Gee, I gotta go to practice today.' But it is like a job."

In pre-season, it was eight hours a day, six days a week, and that wasn't any fun. After pre-season, I liked it a lot more — the traveling and the games."

Bokovoy, who has maintained a B average, is down to just one sport at Kentucky. "They don't have a volleyball team here and I'm kind of glad. I don't have to be tempted."



DAN DEAN/staff photographer

Lisa Bokovoy, the ex-Stevenson standout now at Kentucky, will represent the Midwest at the National Sports Festival.