

# Sports

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## Ring return

### Former karate champ ends brief retirement

By Jim Toth  
staff writer

It appears retirement doesn't sit too well with Kerry Roop. Absent from the ring for the past two years, the former light-heavyweight champion of the world and middleweight and heavyweight champion of the United States in full-contact karate is staging a comeback. That initial ring appearance will be televised by ESPN on Friday, Jan. 16, as part of a show put on by ESPN and the Professional Karate Commission.

Roop, who enjoyed a great deal of success in his seven years of fighting, stayed away from the competition for approximately two years, but maintained contact with the sport by promoting shows.

"ESPN and the PKC called me looking to put on a show," began Roop, who held at least one title from 1982 to 1985. "I looked around, but I couldn't find a place suitable for them. I told them I could get a team of fighters together who would fight and that I could also be ready for a seven-round fight. They said to go ahead with it."

ROOP'S COMPETITION that evening will be Russ Wilson from Flint, the Professional Karate Association's current light-middleweight champion.

"I've been working real hard to get ready for this fight," explained Roop. "By the time of the fight, it will be six weeks that I've been getting in shape. The only difference

this time is that I'm going with a new approach. It's more scientific than the past and involves some new methods and machines. Instead of doing all the roadwork I've done in the past, I'm doing some swimming and bike work."

Roop said the decision to put an end to his retirement was based on his beliefs that the sport is gaining in popularity and receiving greater exposure every day.

"The fighters are getting better, much better," beamed Roop. "The caliber of fighters continues to improve, and I feel that I still have the ability to handle the top guys out there. I'm really eager and feel I'm totally prepared for it."

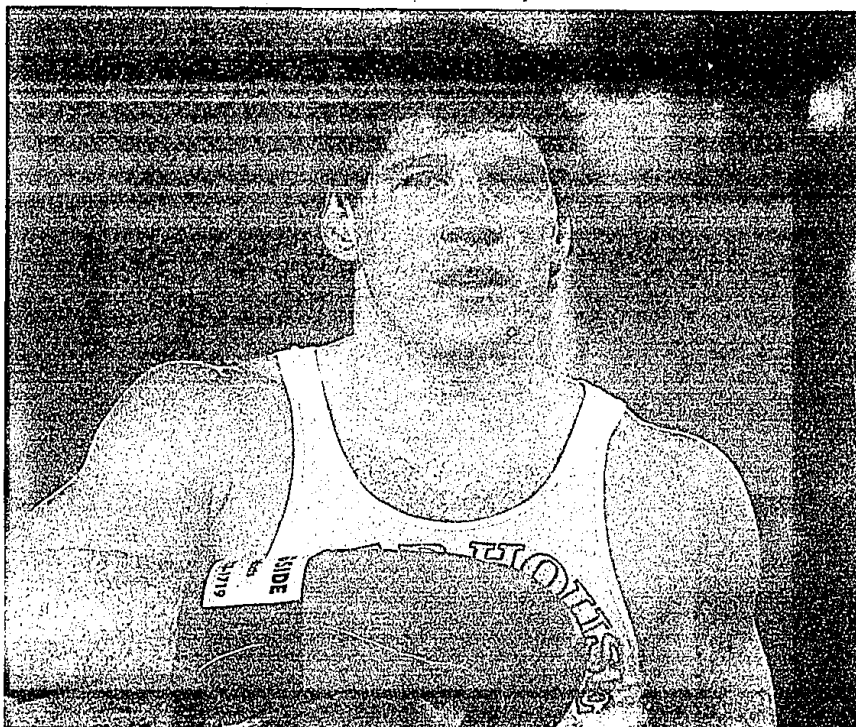
ROOP SAID he hopes to use the fight as a stepping stone for the Feb. 21 championship showdown with Terry Gay, the reigning world super-middleweight title-holder.

"I'll find out in the January bout how my stamina is," Roop said. "I know I can go seven rounds now, but it will give me a better idea of what I can expect of myself."

Battling opponents in the ring isn't the only thing on Roop's mind. He has a tournament featuring top kickboxing and karate competitors to deal with.

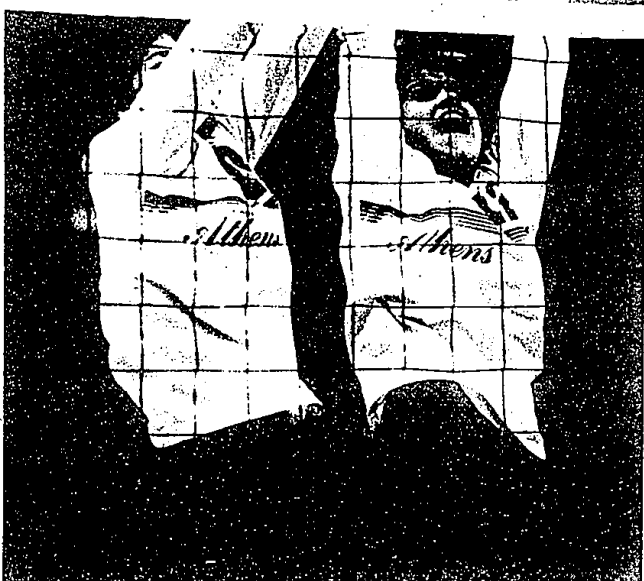
The tourney is called the Superkicks Open Karate Championships and will be held on Jan. 17 at Rochester High School. It will feature some 100 amateur kick-boxers and between 400 and 500 karate participants.

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Kerry Roop of Rochester, the former light-heavyweight champion of the world and middleweight and heavyweight champion of the United States in full-contact karate, is coming out of retirement to compete in a televised match later this month. Roop had been out of the sport on a competitive level for two years.

## Optimism running rampant for spikers



The beginning of the new year means one thing to many high school female athletes in Michigan.

It means the high school volleyball season shifts into full gear as local spikers begin battling it out on a regular basis.

Many teams got a head start on the 1987 season with tournament competition and head-to-head clashes in the closing days of 1986. For most teams, however, the season begins this week.

Birmingham Marian coach Ron Hebert enters his second season with perhaps the brightest outlook of local coaches. His Mustangs posted a 31-11 record last season while finishing second in the Catholic League.

Seven girls, all of whom saw at least part-time starting duties last year, return to action this season. So far that contingent has been unstoppable.

The Mustangs stand 13-0 and have won both the Livonia Ladywood Invitational and the Rochester Kiwanis Classic.

"We wanted to get a head start and get in some early games," said Hebert. "So far we've had pretty good success."

Of the seven returning players, the Mustangs have just one true setter in 5-foot senior Meghan Storen. Other returning seniors are Patty Condit, Noel Nagy, Molly Haffy and Laura Sullivan. Returning from the junior class are Kathy Phillips and Wendy Zdeb.

"We pretty much go with these seven girls," said Hebert. "Our strength is that Meghan is such an outstanding setter and the fact that we have so many strong hitters. What makes us different from other teams is that we always have three good hitters in the front line."

With this strong offense, Hebert feels his defense is what needs work. But already Hebert has seen improvement in the defensive work at practice.

The Catholic League champion has advanced to the final four in the state tournament for the past three years. So what about goals for the Mustangs? You guessed it. A Catholic League championship and to finish the season ranked in the state.

"Our goal is to win the Catholic League and finish in the top five in the state," said Hebert. "With the kids we have, I feel we have a good shot at it. I think we're ready. I'd like to play anybody in the state. I'm not saying we'd beat everybody in the state, but I feel we can play with anybody."

Locally, and in the league, Hebert

## volleyball

knows he will have some stiff competition.

"In the area Seaholm has always been a bugger for us. In the Catholic League usually everybody's tough. (Livonia) Ladywood is very, very tough. (Rochester) Bishop Borgess is always tough and (Harper Woods) Regina always seems to cause us some problems."

### SEAHOLM

Defending Southeastern Michigan Association champion Seaholm will have a new look this year, but the Maples should still be in contention for the top spot in the SMA.

Last year, Seaholm finished the season with a 30-5 overall record. Aside from winning the SMA title, the Maples captured the championship of the Royal Oak Kimball District tournament and the University of Michigan Invitational. Most of that success, however, can be attributed to the outstanding talents of Class A All-State selection and first team All-Eccentric pick Karen Marshall. Unfortunately for the Maples, Marshall graduated from Seaholm last spring.

"We certainly expect to be SMA champs again. That's our No. 1 goal," said Seaholm coach Midge Mills. "All-Eccentric (volleyball) Coach of the Year in 1986. But we'll be a different team this year. Last year we depended on Karen to do everything for us and she did. It's too bad that you only get a Karen Marshall once in a lifetime. A player like that spoils you."

"This year we'll have to rely on everybody. We'll have to keep the ball in play until we can put it away."

Returning seniors include setter Ann Holland, outside hitter Kim Roe, outside hitter Becky Lajek, outside hitter Jan Calvert and serving substitute Andrea Komives.

Returning to action from the junior class are setter Suzy Beagan and all-around player Jill Griffiths.

With such depth returning, Mills doesn't think the Maples will have a weakness on the court.

"Naturally I expect everything to improve a lot, but I don't really think we have any real weakness. I know I'm going to sound like Bo (Schembechler), but overall we're going to be stressing defense. We'll have to

play tough, tenacious defense and keep the ball in play."

In the SMA, Mills expects to get competition from Royal Oak Kimball, Ferndale and Troy.

### WEST BLOOMFIELD

Three "potential All-League players" expected to return to action for the Lakers this year didn't return, leaving the defending Metro Suburban Activities Association champions in a bit of a hole.

"Linda Bowman, Jennifer Tatham and Lisa Reynolds all moved away and all of them were potential All-League players," said fifth-year coach Mike Sopko. "We're in kind of a bind. We only have one starter returning."

Senior setter Laura Rankin is the lone returning starter. She'll get help from classmates Angie Lalreque, Christi Fischer, Wendy Schneider and Kathy Reed. Juniors expected to contribute include Michelle Poirier, Kimber Slipperly and Meredith LaBrecque.

"Our strength will be our setting," said Sopko. "I've got some good setters. We also keep the ball in play and serve very well. We'll have to work on our offensive attack. We're hurting for hitters."

"Overall, we're doing a little better than I expected we'd do. I'm a little encouraged."

In the MSA, Sopko feels Rochester Adams is the team to beat.

### TROY

The Colts will be trying to improve on last year's 8-15 record behind the guidance of third-year coach Kevin Wilson.

Two seniors return to lead the Colts along with five juniors and two sophomores.

Seniors Allecia Peterman and Michelle House will set the pace as Troy's co-captains. They will receive help from juniors Terri Bushoski, Pam Smith, Kathy Ryan, Sandi Hirsch and Christie Mollenhauer. Sophomore hopefuls include Jenny Holder and Crissy Rice.

"We don't have a lot of height," said Wilson. "We're stressing team play. We'll have to hustle a lot and keep the ball in play. We'll need to

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