

Champion paddles his way out of obscurity

By Dan Parker Staff writer

Most avid sports followers know that Almer Donahedy was credited with the invention of baseball in Cooperstown, N.Y., in 1839. A few know that James A. Naughton invented basketball in 1891. In Springfield, Mass., and that Major Walter C. Wingfield fathered the modern game of tennis in Wales, in 1877.

But what sport originated in Michigan in 1930?

Stumped? A clue is that Earl Fitzky developed the game at the University of Michigan to keep the tennis team active over the long, cold winters.

That's right, the game of paddleball — which, incidentally, is the cornerstone of the modern day game of racquetball — was invented right here in Michigan by Fitzky, who at the time was an avid handball player and member of the physical education staff at U-M.

"MICHIGAN IS the paddleball hot bed. This is where it all started," said Mark Kozub, the 1985 National Mens Singles Paddleball Champion from Livonia. "Fitzky developed the game mostly for the tennis team. Originally, players used tennis balls and cut off tennis rackets, and they played on the handball or squash courts. It didn't work out real well, so Fitzky soaked the balls in gasoline to remove the fumes and stretch out a wooden paddle."

Everything else is history. U-M soon worked the game into its curriculum, and by 1942 Marcraft had begun to mass produce the balls and Penn had started to manufacture the wooden paddles.

Around the same time the United States military unknowingly took an active role in promoting the game.

"The University of Michigan had an officers training program during World War II and during that time the officers were introduced to paddleball," said Kozub. "It went over

people in sports

really well, and the officers took the game back to their troops and their home towns. That really helped to popularize the game."

THE NATIONAL Paddleball Association was founded in 1950, while at the same time, other colleges began to incorporate paddleball into their curricula.

Kozub, who works as an accountant for the Livonia Public School system, began playing the game on a steady basis in 1976 after taking a paddleball class at Schoolcraft College.

"Paddleball is a great recreational sport for people of all ages," said Kozub. "The rules are basically the same as racquetball. But unlike racquetball, paddleball puts the athlete's ability to test because you not

only need a good forehand shot, but you also need a good backhand. The biggest distinction between the two is that paddleball is more of a finesse and control game. In paddleball you have the opportunity to use a variety of different shots. Shots you wouldn't ordinarily use in racquetball because racquetball is more of a speed and power game. But both games take a tremendous amount of athletic ability."

KOZUB'S SUCCESS culminated in March of 1985 when he won the national championship in Flint. It was the first year paddleball was offered at a professional level. But Kozub admits the sport hasn't progressed quite far enough to make a living on the professional circuit.

"Paddleball has always been a gentleman's sport," explained Ko-

sub. "We've always just played for trophies. When racquetball came along it just about buried us. All the publicity and new facilities were geared toward racquetball. A lot of the paddleball champions even switched to racquetball because of the popularity of the sport and the opportunity to win money. (Racquetball) had the big sponsors. It's not bad when you can make a living playing racquetball."

Kozub also won the Fall Singles title last year at U-M, and the State Singles title at the University Racquetball Club in Pontiac. He received \$750 for winning the national title.

"It was a pretty good year for me, winning three titles," said Kozub.

THIS YEAR the 33-year-old Livonian competed in the 1987 Coors National Paddleball Singles Tournament March 7-9 at the Ann Arbor Court Club. Kozub lost in the semifinals to racquetball sensation Marty Hogan of St. Louis, Mo. Kozub finished

second in the tournament in third place. "I didn't want to go to win the championship, and a check for \$1,000."

Tournaments feature both men's and women's competition in the Open division (18-25 years-old), Senior division (26-35) Masters division (46-55) and Golden Masters division (over 55). Tournaments are run on both state and national levels for both women and men.

"In an effort to better promote paddleball, Marty Hogan and the NPA are working together to hold paddleball tournaments at the same time and site as some of the big racquetball tournaments," said Kozub. "This will give us an opportunity to expose paddleball to the public."

Schoolcraft College currently offers a class in paddleball. The national doubles championships are scheduled for April 19-21 at the Dearborn Athletic Club.

Anyone interested in finding out more about paddleball and paddleball competitions should contact Kozub at 591-1776.

Ocelot hoop stars move on

For his first year on the job, Jack Grenan had to be satisfied. His Schoolcraft College women basketball team reached the state tournament semifinals before losing, and as Grenan pointed out, "That's as far as Schoolcraft has gone."

He also managed to keep the Lady Ocelots string of Eastern Conference titles alive, although it wasn't easy. They had to beat third-place Highland Park CC and co-champion Oakland CC in back-to-back games on the final two regular season dates to earn a share of their fourth-straight title.

"That was definitely the highlight of the season," admitted Grenan, who guided SC to a 20-8 overall record and an 11-3 conference mark.

HE ALSO HELPED put three of

Schoolcraft sports

his stars into four-year college programs. Sophomores Lori Abbas, Tracy Ladouceur and Sue Lubbe will take their considerable basketball skills elsewhere next year.

Abbas, a 5-foot-6 guard from Dearborn Fordson who averaged 14 points and four steals a game for SC, has accepted a full-ride scholarship at Eastern Michigan University. An all-conference honorable mention selection, Abbas will study elementary education at EMU.

Tracy Ladouceur and Sue Lubbe,

three scorers, Grenan will have a solid nucleus returning. Sixth-player Lisa Kline (nine points, six rebounds), Sharon Miller, a 6-1 center who scored in double-figures in 10 games and reached double-figures in rebounding 14 times, 6-2 center Tina Ostanowski, who's recovering from a knee injury, and point guards Tammy Adkins and Debbie Georgevich should all be back.

In addition, Grenan has gotten commitments from several high school prospects: Darlene Razer, a 5-4 guard from Dearborn Heights Crestwood; Penny Figgott, a 6-1 center from Plymouth Canton; Virginia Angela, a 5-8 forward from Redford Thurston; Michelle Dykynski, a 6-0 forward from Harper Woods Regina; and Anna Carolis, a 5-7 forward from Royal Oak Shirine.

a pair of 5-10 forwards whom Grenan called "the bookends," have both signed to attend Wayne State. Ladouceur, from Livonia, Ladywood, averaged 18 points and a team-leading 10.2 rebounds and was selected to the all-Michigan Community College Athletic Association team.

Lubbe, from Dearborn Divine Child, averaged a team-high 15.5 points a game and seven rebounds. She was named to the all-Eastern Conference first team.

Despite losing the team's top

Stingrays roll in Junior Olympics

The Michigan Stingrays, who won the girls' state championship earlier this month, continued their sparkling swimming performance with nine team members collecting firsts in the Michigan Junior Olympics March 13-15 at Livonia Clarenceville.

The meet was strictly on an individual basis. There were no relays, and no team scores were kept.

Three of the Stingrays' champions came in the 15-18 girls division. Lesli Frye won three events: the 200-yard freestyle (3:07.23), the 100 butterfly (1:07.15) and the 200 backstroke (2:32.73). Frye was also second in the 100 free (59.20) and 400 individual medley (5:16.78).

Laura Frye was another 15-18 winner, capturing the 100 back (1:11.64). Kristin Kraus took the 400 IM (5:08.54) and was second in the 200 free (2:08.14) and Karen Paynter was second in the 200 fly (2:38.64).

In the 15-18 boys' division, Jim McCaffrey was a winner in the 500 free (8:19.97) and second in the 200 free (1:58.24). Jim Nitekiewicz was first in the 200 free (1:58.20) and third in the 100 free (53.55).

Leading the 13-14 Stingray girls was Michelle McCaffrey, who cap-

swimming

tured the 200 free (2:09.50) and placed second in the 400 IM (5:20.40). Karrie Kraus was second in the 200 breaststroke (2:50.14) and Melissa Hen placed third in the 50 free (27.38).

Other winners were, for the 11-12 girls, Jodi Shapiro in the 100 IM (1:10.74). Shapiro also took second in the 500 free (6:09.26) and third in the 50 fly (52.11).

Keith Lee had two wins for the 11-12 boys, the 50 breast (56.31) and the 100 IM (1:08.90), and Bill Wedneski was a winner in the 100 free (1:02.24).

Other top-three finishers for the Stingrays were: for the 10 and under girls, Shannon O'Brien, second in both the 200 free (2:33.55) and 100 free (1:14.39); and for the 13-14 boys, David Nisurka, third in the 200 (2:03.63) and 400 (5:30.19) freestyle, and Ross Novack, third in the 400 IM (6:57.31).

The meet attracted 751 swimmers from 48 state U.S.S.M. teams.

Michigan gets 2 spots in nationals

Although the state's high school hockey champions have been crowned, it isn't time to tuck away the puck and sticks just yet.

Two important events remain for high school senior players.

First, the third annual Michigan High School All-State game will take place at 1 p.m. Sunday, March 22, at University of Michigan-Dearborn. The game will feature 40 of the state's best prep players, including 11 from the Observer & Eccentric coverage area.

These 41 players are: Tim Olschanski from Livonia Franklin, Lee Ziegler from Redford Catholic Central, Fred Calkins, Sean Skinner and Bob Tamborini from Livonia Steven-

hockey

son, Brian Chopot from Southfield, Todd MacCallum and Sean Flynn from Cranbrook, Bill Dorrough from Livonia Churchill, and Matt Eyo and Mark Spaso from Detroit Country Day.

Tickets are \$5 and \$3.

THE SECOND major event is the United States High School Invitational, April 19-19 in Chicago. The tournament, in its third year,

features 20 high school all-star teams from across the country, Michigan. For the first time ever, will have two teams in the tournament.

"This is a once in a lifetime opportunity for us to have two teams in the tournament," said A.J. Baker. "Some regions get two automatically and that's what we're hoping for in the future."

The top 17 players in the state — as selected by a committee headed up by Baker, Adam Mitchell, Wally Engels and Dave Whitman — will play for Team Michigan. Team Michigan, coached by Mitchell, will compete in the 12-team A Division.

A second group of 17 will play for the Great Lakes squad coached by Baker. Great Lakes will compete in the eight-team B Division.

The least number of Division and one from the B Division will advance to the semifinals.

The committee will select the two teams March 29 after the All-State game.

sports shorts

SOFTBALL SIGNUP

The Farmington Hills Recreation Division has openings available for new teams for the 1987 adult softball season in resident, open and industrial leagues.

Reservations can be made at the recreation office, 31555 11 Mile. A \$50 non-refundable deposit is required.

Call 473-9579 for more information.

MENS GOLF LEAGUE

The Farmington-Farmington Hills Men's Senior Golf League will begin play Friday, May 1. Registration is Monday, April 6.

Contact the Senior Adult Division of the Farmington Hills Special Services Department for more information.

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FARMINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS ADVERTISEMENT FOR BIDS

OWNER: Farmington Public Schools
31500 Shawwassee
Farmington, Michigan 48024

PROJECT: Roof Renovation 1987
Harrison High School
North Farmington High School
Dunkirk Middle School
Farmington High School

ARCHITECT: Desmond P. Hamill
6243 Potomac Circle
West Bloomfield, MI 48093

PROPOSAL TO BE SUBMITTED: General Contract - Roofing

DUE DATE AND PLACE: Proposals will be received at the Administration Building, 31500 Shawwassee, Farmington, Michigan, 48024, addressed to Beverly Hausman, until the following time:
4:00 p.m., Tuesday, April 7, 1987
to be publicly opened at 7:30 p.m. that evening.

ISSUE OF DRAWINGS AND SPECIFICATIONS: Drawings and Specifications may be obtained at the Job Meeting at Harrison High School at 10:00 a.m. on Wednesday, March 23, 1987. The school is located on Twelve Mile Road, west of Middlefield Road.

DEPOSIT: \$10.00 per set.
Deposits will be refunded in full, providing the Drawings and Specifications, including any addenda, are returned in good condition within fifteen (15) days after the bid opening.

LOCATION OF PLANS: Drawings and Specifications will be on file for bidding reference at the maintenance office, Dodge Reports, and Builders & Traders.

ISSUE OF THE OWNER: The Owner reserves the right to reject any and all bids and to waive any information thereon.

JANICE BOLYNEK
School Board Secretary

Public March 18 and 23, 1987

ADVERTISEMENT FOR PUBLIC HEARING AND AVAILABILITY OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT FOR THE FOURTEEN MILE ROAD REHABILITATION/WIDENING PROJECT - CITY OF FARMINGTON HILLS OAKLAND COUNTY, MICHIGAN

The City of Farmington Hills is calling a public hearing at 7:00 p.m., on April 13, 1987 in the City of Farmington Hills Council Chambers.

The purpose of this hearing is to provide the opportunity for a public discussion of the alternative treatment and consideration for the proposed improvements of Fourteen Mile Road between Farmington and Orchard Lake Roads. The proposed project includes the widening and reconstruction of Fourteen Mile Road to 4 lanes with curb and gutter from Farmington Road to the intersection of Gatehouse Lane and Slaves with curb and gutter from Gatehouse Lane to Orchard Lake Road.

As required by Federal regulations, an environmental assessment has been prepared, evaluating the social, economic and environmental aspects of the project. The environmental assessment demonstrates that implementation of the proposed action will not have a significant impact on the quality of the human environment. Copies of the environmental assessment are available for public inspection, or may be obtained at the Engineering Office of the City of Farmington Hills, 31555 Eleven Mile Road.

This public hearing is called in accordance with the most current Federal, State and local public involvement/public hearing procedures. A tentative schedule for this project and information concerning the right-of-way acquisition will be provided at the public hearing. This public hearing is held to hear testimony of interested citizens regarding the economic, social and environmental impacts of the proposed alternatives and/or the right-of-way acquisition and other exhibits in place of, or in addition to, oral statements at the public hearing as well as requests for copies of the environmental assessment and/or the responses to the testimony received, may be submitted to the Engineering Division of the City of Farmington Hills, 31555 Eleven Mile Road, Farmington Hills, Michigan 48018 at any time up to 10 days after the public hearing.

JOAN REYNOLDS
City Clerk

Public March 23, 1987

FARMINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS ADVERTISEMENT FOR BIDS

OWNER: Farmington Public Schools
31500 Shawwassee
Farmington, Michigan 48024

PROJECT: Window Replacement
Harrison High School
Stevie Sewer
Larkshire Elementary
New Water Service
Storage Enclosure
Bus Maintenance Garage
Paving Improvements
William Grace Elementary
Dunkirk Elementary
Forest Elementary
Eugene Middle School

ARCHITECT: Desmond P. Hamill
6243 Potomac Circle
West Bloomfield, MI 48093

PROPOSAL TO BE SUBMITTED: Individual Contracts

DUE DATE AND PLACE: Proposals will be received at the Administration Building, 31500 Shawwassee, Farmington, Michigan, 48024, addressed to Beverly Hausman, until the following time: (to be publicly opened at 7:30 p.m. that evening)
4:00 p.m., Tuesday, April 7, 1987

ISSUE OF DRAWINGS AND SPECIFICATIONS: Drawings and Specifications may be obtained after March 17, 1987, at the maintenance office, 31555 West 7th Mile Road, Farmington Hills, Michigan, 471-6411.

DEPOSIT: \$10.00 per set.
Deposits will be refunded in full providing the Drawings and Specifications, including any addenda, are returned in good condition within fifteen (15) days after the bid opening.

LOCATION OF PLANS: Drawings and Specifications will be on file for bidding reference at the maintenance office, Dodge Reports, and Builders & Traders.

ISSUE OF THE OWNER: The Owner reserves the right to reject any and all bids and to waive any information thereon.

JANICE BOLYNEK
School Board Secretary

Public March 18 and 23, 1987