

# Fast breaks

## More at stake than a game

By Casey Hana  
staff writer

A special basketball program in the Detroit metro area gives physically handicapped young people a chance to make new friends and participate in a sports activity.

More important, it brings a team spirit of understanding and support from their families and friends, according to the coach of a wheelchair basketball team for children and young adults.

"These kids are bright, articulate, able to express their needs and desires," said coach Arthur



Harrison High School student Tom Neff, 16, takes to the court in his wheelchair.

**'We want to make the kids compete in the arena of sports, but more importantly in the arena of life.'**

— Arthur Humphrey, coach

Humphrey. "We want to make the kids compete in the arena of sports, but more importantly in the arena of life."

**WHEELCHAIR-BOUND** and a member of a national champion adult wheelchair team, Humphrey spends his free time shuttling between the west side practice center at Warner Middle School on 14 Mile at the West Bloomfield/Farmington Hills border, and the east side center at Helen Fields Vocational Center in Detroit.

During the day, Humphrey is special projects director for Home CARE, Inc., a Dearborn-based medical equipment supplier which sponsors the team. "We have a commitment to wheelchair or adaptive sports," he said. "We like to give something back to those we support."

Of the 40 mostly Oakland and Wayne County residents in the program, some were handicapped at birth, and others are the victims of car accidents, gunshots and other misfortunes.

They range in age from five to 19, and do not have to be confined to a wheelchair to scrimmage with the group.

On a recent night Humphrey was teaching his special brand of competitive spirit during a practice at Warner.

**"THIS SPIRIT** can be transferred over to the classroom and their personal life," Humphrey explained. "I think when you can spark that competitive spirit, you can do so much."

He deals not only with the han-

dicap, but with the discipline, medical, self-image and academic problems that often come with the handicap.

The group travels to games out of town, which helps some deal with the fear of being separated from their families, Humphrey said.

Mike Lolbi of Farmington Hills and Sean Norman of Southfield were just two of the team members who attended a recent competition in Minnesota. The Junior Wheelchair Pistons came home with the B Division title from the Courage Center Fifth Annual Junior Invitational Basketball Tournament, an international competition held in November.

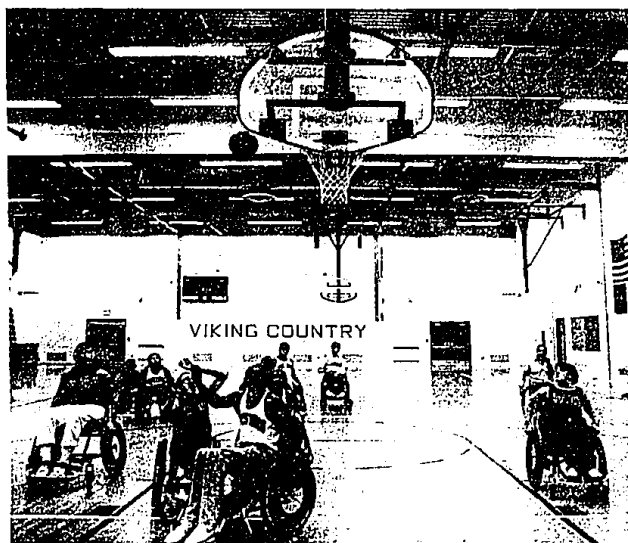
**HUMPHREY SAID** all the students who have "graduated" from his program are now attending college.

Mike Logan, a junior at Harrison High School in Farmington Hills, was one of the first participants in the program.

Logan said the program has taught him self discipline and the importance of placing priorities on different parts of his life, including getting his homework done.

Humphrey places a strong value on good grades; participants must keep their grades up to continue to be in the program.

**"HE'S COME A long way,"** said Joe Lolbi, whose son Mike is a program participant. Joe, who sits on the Oakland County Special Education Committee, said many of the participants have increased their self esteem.



RANDY BORST/staff photographer

All eyes are on the basket during a weekly scrimmage at the Warner Middle School gym in Farmington Hills (above). At right, Sheila Clayton, 16, a Harrison High School student, maneuvers past Mike Lolbi, a seventh grader at the Warner school.



"He's met a lot of new friends here," Linda Neff said of her son Tom. "It builds a closeness with the kids here."

The youth wheelchair basketball group scrimmages Monday from 6-9 p.m. at Warner Middle School on 14 Mile between Northwestern Highway and Middlebelt Road, and on Wednesdays from 6:30-9 p.m. at the Helen Fields Vocational Center, 19870 Cameron near Eight Mile and I-75 in Detroit.

Humphrey can be reached at 271-8120.

## 2 schools leading in drug fight

Continued from Page 1

The two Farmington Hills high schools are at the forefront of the drug awareness competition, with schools earning points for various types of awareness programs, according to Thompson. High schools in Berkley and Lake Orion are also close to first place in the competition.

**THE PROGRAM** is co-sponsored by prosecuting attorneys in Oakland, Wayne, Macomb and Genesee counties, plus Detroit professional sports figures, including Isiah Thomas of the Pistons, Dave Lewis of the Red Wings and Eddie Murray of the Lions. The Detroit Tigers also joined

the effort recently, Thompson said.

"The prosecutors in these four counties in the Southeast Michigan corridor decided they wanted to do something," he added.

Final points will be tallied in February and the winners announced, he said. Seven schools will be lauded for their drug awareness efforts, including three in Wayne, two in Oakland and one each in Genesee and Macomb counties. One hundred students from each winning school will attend a professional sporting event, where the school will be recognized.

"Sports figures can have a very positive impact on kids as role models," Thompson added.

As law enforcement officers,

county prosecutors commonly attack the drug problem by going after suppliers. Thompson said this program is an effort to make drug users in high school aware of the dangers and problems with drug use.

"Where there is a demand and high profits, there are still people willing to take the risks," he said.

**HARRISON'S STUDENTS** Against Driving Drunk Chapter is behind the awareness effort which began in October at the Farmington Hills school. The program is just one of the group's projects for the 1987-88 school year, according to SADD coordinator and Harrison teacher Maria Schneider.

## on the agenda

Agenda details for government meetings scheduled for this week follow. All meetings are open to the public.

**Farmington Hills City Council**  
Council Chambers  
31555 11 Mile  
7:30 p.m. Monday, Jan. 4

The meeting will be highlighted with the swearing in of the new mayor, Jody Soronen, and new mayor pro tem, Terry Sever. The meeting also will be devoted to announcing the Employee of the Year award and other city, board and commission awards and accolades.

**Farmington City Council**  
Council Chambers  
23600 Liberty  
8 p.m. Monday, Jan. 4  
The regular meeting of the Farmington City Council is scheduled for this evening. No agenda information

was available at press time.

**Downtown Development Authority**  
City of Farmington  
Council Chambers  
23600 Liberty  
8 a.m. Tuesday, Jan. 5

Guidelines which would allow community groups to use banners installed recently in the downtown Farmington will be discussed. Also on the agenda is the discussion of future banners, appointment of the DDA executive director to a review committee for county GAP funds, and appointment of a sub-committee on streetscape phasing for the renovation project.

**Farmington Board of Education**

The regular meeting of the Farmington school board scheduled for this week has been rescheduled to Tuesday, Jan. 12.

**Cultural Awareness Committee**  
Conference room A  
Farmington Hills City Hall  
31555 11 Mile

7:30 p.m. Wednesday, Jan. 6  
The committee will discuss the recent painting of racial slurs on a residence in Farmington. Committee assignments, such as finding a home for a foreign exchange student, corporate funding and plans for a flag display at the Farmington Community Library, will be discussed.

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## police/fire calls

Listed below are some of the Farmington-area police incidents, fire calls and court cases reported during the past week:

### BOMB THREAT

Employees at Tally Hall at Hunters Square, 31005 Orchard Lake Road, reported they received two telephone calls Dec. 29 from an unidentified man saying there was a bomb in the mall, according to a Farmington Hills police report. "You have a half-hour boom," one employee reported the caller saying.

### THEFTS REPORTED

A 1984 black Pontiac Fiero valued at \$8,000 was reported stolen from the 12th Estate Condominiums on 12 Mile, west of Middlebelt, Dec. 29. A snowmobile and trailer valued at \$4,100 were reported stolen from the Professional Associated Leasing Company, Inc., 31513 Northwestern Highway, Dec. 29.

Two minutes later the caller telephoned again. No bomb was found, police said.

# JANUARY

# clearance

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