

Bass opener arrives early

IT MAY seem a little early to be thinking about bass fishing, but opening day is a little closer than you think. True, the traditional season opener, the Saturday before Memorial Day, is still 101 days away.

So what's the big deal, you ask. Why are local bass anglers so excited? The answer is simple, and it's not because Bass-a-rama is coming to the Waterford Community Center March 4-6. The reason for all the excitement is because bass season opens nearly two months early this year... well, sort of.

Through pressure and support from the Michigan Bass Chapter Federation (MBCF) and the Michigan United Conservation Clubs (MUCC), the Department of Natural Resources submitted a proposal for a catch and release bass season to the Natural Resources Commission. The NRC approved the proposal initiating an early bass season for catch and release (or no kill) bass fishing on six southern Michigan lakes, including three in Oakland County.

THROUGH THE proposal, the DNR will conduct a five-year experiment allowing catch and release bass fishing on Cass, Pontiac and Kent lakes in Oakland County, Muskegon Lake in Muskegon County, Hardy Pond in Newaygo County and the Holloway Reservoir in Genesee County, from April 1 to the Friday before Memorial Day each year.



outdoors
Bill Parker

The DNR will keep a close eye on the activity on each of the lakes through the use of a crew census and interviews with anglers and lake property owners.

The regular bass season remains the Saturday before Memorial Day (May 28 this year) to Dec. 31 on non-trout streams and inland lakes. The season runs the Saturday before Memorial Day to Sept. 30 on trout streams and designated trout lakes and the third Saturday in June to Dec. 31 on the Detroit and St. Clair Rivers and Lake St. Clair.

"WHAT WE'RE hoping the experiment will show is that the bass (in these lakes) will continue to grow and the bass population will continue to increase," said Lewis Borer Jr., vice president of MBCF. "If things go well maybe we can have an earlier season opener, like the first of April or May. Then, down the road, maybe we can have a season that's open year-round."

According to Borer, the MBCF has been trying to persuade the DNR to begin a catch and release program since MBCF's inception in 1976.

"We've been trying for years, but

the DNR has always held fast to the old rule and wouldn't budge," said Borer. "Through the efforts of Dan Kimmell and the board of directors of the federation, we arranged a meeting with the directors of all the divisions of the DNR and presented our case. They finally came out and agreed to a catch and release program."

CURRENTLY 38 states are open to bass fishing year round. Indiana is one of those states and in past years bass clubs from Michigan have traveled to the Hoosier State in early spring to hold their bass tournaments. Borer feels this may have had some impact on the NRC's decision.

"Many, many bass clubs travel to Indiana in April and May for bass

tournaments," said Borer. "With two people in each boat, 30-40 boats and each boat staying for two or three days, it provides quite a boost to the local economy. Maybe the State of Michigan realized this and wanted to keep some of those fishermen home."

Regardless of the reason, the decision was made and bass anglers will be able to enjoy an extended season for the next five years.

"The basic idea is that there will be no real harm to the fish," said Ron Spiller, fisheries biologist with the DNR. "Many bass fishermen use catch and release tactics year round anyway. The Bass Federation and the MUCC promoted the idea and we decided, why not."

"We're encouraging artificial bait for catch and release fishing so the bass don't swallow the hooks. If they do swallow we recommend the anglers cut the line and release the fish. If they try to pull the hook out they may kill the fish. We're anticipating between a 1 and 15 percent mortality, but we hope it won't be very high."



exercising options

Myrna Partrich

This ailment is a heel of a problem

Dear Myrna: I have a pain at the bottom of my foot. I've been to a doctor — he calls it plantar fasciitis. I've already heard his lengthy description. Can you describe it simply?

Being that I'm not a doctor, I can only describe it in simple terms. We have what is called plantar fascia — a band of tough connective tissue that supports the bottom of our feet. It starts at the base of your toes, runs along the bottom of your foot and attaches on a spot on the middle bottom of your heel bone. The pain that you're feeling is usually due to the tearing away of the band where it attaches on the heel. This is called plantar fasciitis. I'm sure the doctor has told you to rest your feet. It will take some time to heal. Have patience.

(Myrna Partrich, co-owner of The Workout Company of Bloomfield Township, is happy to answer any questions readers may have regarding exercise. Please send your signed letters to: Sports Department, Myrna Partrich, 1225 Bowers, Birmingham 48012.)

sports shorts

● SAILOR TO SPEAK

Buddy Meiges, skipper of the Heart of America, America's Cup challenger, Olympic gold medalist and national champion in numerous one-design sailboat classes, will address local sailors at 3 p.m. on Sunday, Feb. 21, at Bloomfield Hills Andover High School. The event features a discussion of the 1988-87 America's Cup campaign and an audio-visual seminar on small boat sailing and sail trim.

Meiges' sailboat racing career had a late start, but he learned fast and continues today as one of the world's most-recognized competitive sailors. Among his prizes are an Olympic gold in Soling, a bronze in Flying Dutchman, two Star Class world championships, three North American Flying Dutchman championships and three Martini-Rossi trophies as the foremost racing sailor of the year.

For more information contact Esther Callahan at 623-6500 or John Scott at 259-0500.

● STATE HOCKEY DATES

The Michigan Middle A state hockey championship will be played March 3-6 at the Southfield Beech Woods and Civic Center arenas. One team from each of the eight Michigan Amateur Hockey Association districts will compete for the title. The tournament opens with games at 6 and 7:30 p.m. on March 3 at Beech Woods and culminates with the final championship game at 5 p.m., March 6 at the Civic Center.

● GLOBETROTTERS RETURN

The Harlem Globetrotters bring their basketball magic back to Detroit with two performances at Joe Louis Arena, Feb. 27 at 2 and 7:30 p.m.

The legendary Trotter squad features Detroit's own Dedrick Reffittes, along with two new female teammates — Sandra "Sweetness" Hodge and Joyce "The Juice" Walker.

The Trotters, who hold a world-record 6,043-game winning streak, have played in over 100 countries, becoming known as the world's "Ambassadors of Goodwill."

● RECREATION SOFTBALL

The Southfield parks and recreation is conducting registration for both girls youth softball and adult softball.

The girls youth softball program is for Southfield girls, grades first through ninth. The adult program is designed for men, women, co-rec and men's 35-and-over.

Registration continues through February. Registration forms are available at the parks and recreation office. For more information, call the office at 354-9503.

● SENIOR SOFTBALL

Southfield will be a new entry in the Ascot Senior Softball Association for the 1988 summer season.

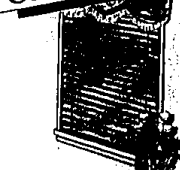
The league, in its third season, has grown from six cities to an anticipated 18 for 1988. The travel league is divided into two divisions (Southfield will be in the East Division along with Port Huron, Algonac, Clinton Township, Warren, Oak Park, Redford, Canton, Dearborn and possibly Clarkston or Milford). Players must be 35 and over. The league stresses fellowship and good sportsmanship and plays double-headers every other Saturday beginning in May.

Team sponsors are needed. Any one wishing to play or sponsor may call Graham at 356-1121.

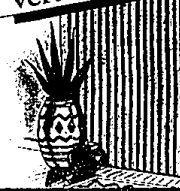
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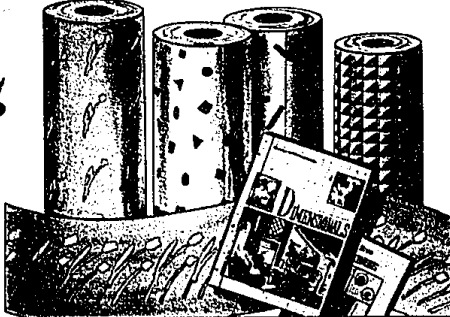
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*Open Sunday.