

# S'craft begins national quest

By C.J. Rilek  
staff writer

The trek toward a possible National Junior College Athletic Association women's soccer title has a start shrouded in mystery for Schoolcraft College.

The Lady Ocelots, who captured the NJCAA championship in 1987, open their quest for this season's crown today at Mercer Community College in Trenton, N.J. Their opponent, Lees McRae CC.

There were two things that troubled SC coach Nick O'Shea about his opening-round opponent. First, Lees McRae posted a 19-1 record this season, second, other than its record, O'Shea doesn't know much about Lees McRae.

"I don't know what to expect of them because we don't see them," said O'Shea. "Typically, they score a lot of goals. We'll know their top scorers from the (NJCAA) rankings, so we'll know who we have to mark closely. What we won't know is what style they like to play. If they play long ball or short ball."

THE UNEXPECTED always concerns coaches. Still, in previous years Lees McRae has qualified for the NJCAA tournament and never done well in it. Its record may be impressive, but the North Carolina-based school's schedule is not. It has avoided the better east coast JC teams.

"They're 19-1, but they haven't played a lot of tough games," said O'Shea. "Any time a team goes from easy games to tough ones, it's hard to adjust."

Which makes O'Shea's strategy a simple one: attack. "We have to go out and apply pressure," he said. "If we stay on 'em the whole time, I don't know if they'll have the mental toughness to stay with us."

"There'll be no sitting back on (Lees McRae), that's for sure." Although O'Shea is unfamiliar with SC's first-round opponent, he likes his team's touring draw. If the Lady Ocelots, who posted a 10-3-2 record this season, get past Lees McRae, they will play the Monroe (N.Y.) CC-Anne Arundel (Md.) CC winner in the semifinals Friday.

A victory Friday catapults SC into the NJCAA championship match at 11 a.m. Sunday.

BOTH MONROE and Anne Arundel

del are excellent teams, but as O'Shea noted, at this stage who isn't? Besides, the other bracket appears more formidable. It features last year's finalists, Mercer and Florissant Valley CC, clashing in the opening round. The other opening round match plus Farmington (N.Y.) CC against Massachusetts (N.Y.) CC.

The team O'Shea picked as the tournament favorite is defending champ Florissant Valley, which lost to just one junior college team this season — SC, by a 2-1 score, in a match played in Livonia.

"I still think Flo Valley would be the favorite," insisted O'Shea, whose team lost to a pair of JC teams, Monroe and Meramec (St. Louis) CC. "Even though we beat them."

One of Florissant Valley's better midfielders missed the SC match for disciplinary reasons, which means a team strength will be further fortified. "All five of their front players (forwards and midfielders) are tough," said O'Shea.

OF COURSE, the Lady Ocelots are hardly weaponless. The offense has performed exceptionally behind forwards Shannon Meath (from Plymouth Canton), Joan Arndt (Livonia Ladywood) and Cindy Bowman (Dawn Gabriel (Livonia Churchill) anchors the midfield. Top defensive players include Rose Halley (Churchill), Kellie Davis (Churchill) and Donna O'Brien (North Farmington). Tisha Guido (Garden City) is in goal.

Should SC handle Lees McRae in its opener, chances are good it will meet Monroe in Friday's semifinal. And several SC players figure they still have a score to settle with Monroe, which was picked to go to last year's tournament over the Lady Ocelots. SC defeated Anne Arundel, its other possible semifinal foe, 3-0 earlier this season.

There was one major concern for SC prior to the tournament. Arndt was hobbled by a pulled hamstring muscle. But in hard practices last week, she appeared to have recovered.

"I ran 'em real hard last week," said O'Shea. "We scrimmaged the Livonia Hawks Saturday and looked good."

"Our attitude is good, and that's half the battle." The other half consists of games against a mystery team and an object of vengeance. Conquer those, and SC will be fighting for the NJCAA championship Sunday.

# Time seems right for pro soccer

THE TIMING APPEARS to be right for three local investors, who are bringing professional soccer back to Detroit. It's a team without a name, but when the 1990-91 American Indoor Soccer Association season is launched next October, this expansion club will be quartered in downtown Detroit at Cobo and Joe Louis arenas.

It's not a novel idea. Detroit has had outdoor professional teams in the past — namely the Cougars and the Express.

But it's novel in the fact that club's three principal investors — Livonian Paul Scicluna, Rochester's Brian Tinnion and Farmington Hills' Angus Moffat — are sold on the AISA's commitment to American players only.

The concept, they believe, will attract this new generation of soccer enthusiasts. "We talked about it for three years and this has always been one of our goals to bring a franchise here," said Tinnion, a former player (1978-80) and coach (1981-83) with the Express. "We're just elated to get the opportunity."

THE AISA is expanding next season, possibly to 10 or 12 teams.

The league currently consists of eight teams — Canton Invaders, Atlanta Attack, Hershey Impact and Memphis Hognes of the American Division; along with Milwaukee Wave, Chicago Power, Dayton Dynamo and Indiana Kick of the National Division.

Milwaukee, which plays in the new Bradley Center, has already pulled in a crowd of 13,000. Atlanta and Chicago have each approached 10,000 fans on a night.

Scicluna, Tinnion and Moffat — partners in the successful Total Soccer Inc., an indoor venture which houses hundreds of youth and adult leagues in Farmington Hills, Southfield, St. Clair Shores and Royal Oak — hope to feed off the growing interest locally in the indoor game.

That made their decision to join the AISA that much easier, according to Tinnion.

"Our philosophy was in tune with the AISA, which develops and promotes American play-



Brad Emons

ers," Tinnion said.

That means you could see players, perhaps some recent graduates from Michigan universities, filling up spots on the 16-man roster.

"I'm sure there will be some ex-NASL and MISL players, but we feel there are enough players coming through the Michigan colleges, that will be graduating, who can also help us," said Tinnion. "And I'm sure there are two or three players in the local leagues we can use."

TINNION POINTS OUT that indoor soccer (six on a side) promotes scoring. (They use a 1-2-3 point system.) The AISA rules have a few added twists. For instance, goals scored outside the red line, or blue line as it is called in hockey, count as three points.

"It's like the three-point shot in basketball," Tinnion said.

The caliber of play among American-born players has picked up, but a 0-0 tie recently between the United States and El Salvador in a World Cup qualifier in St. Louis, Mo., was judged as a setback to the sport in this country.

The United States now needs a win Sunday at Trinidad and Tobago to qualify for the 1990 World Cup. (The United States will gain an automatic bid when it hosts the 1994 World Cup.)

"There are a number of high-caliber players coming up in the U.S., but nobody could score in that game and it was disappointing to a lot of people," Tinnion said. "What better way to develop natural goal-scoring talent than to play this type of soccer in an indoor game?"

SCICLUNA, a longtime youth and high school

coach, will be the president of the team. Moffat will be the general manager. Tinnion is the coach. Livonian Jim Duggan, a former high school coach at Redford Catholic Central and North Farmington highs, is in charge of promotions and marketing.

"If this thing goes through, I'll be in heaven," said Scicluna. "I can guarantee you that as long as I'm around, the best (players) will be dressed. It's also American soccer. I want to emphasize that."

Detroit will play 20 games at home and 20 away. The season culminates with the playoffs in April (1991).

With the option of playing at either Cobo, with a seating capacity of 10,000, or Joe Louis (close to 21,000), the new franchise will have a flexible schedule. The plan right now, according to the investors, is to play Friday nights, Saturday afternoons or Sundays.

Fans can get a sneak preview of the indoor game when AISA All-Stars meet the Soviet Red Army team, beginning at 2:05 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 20, at Joe Louis.

"We almost jumped in two-feet first for this season," Tinnion said. "But now we have almost 11 1/2 months to promote and market our product. We want to do it right."

FANS HAVE BEEN invited to participate in a drawing to name the new team.

Entries (one per family) should include name, address, phone number and team-name suggestion (by Dec. 8) by sending to: Pro Soccer, Joe Louis Arena, 600 Civic Center Drive, Detroit, Mich. 48226.

In the event that more than one contestant chooses the winning name, the new franchise will hold a random drawing to determine the winner of the following prizes: a pair of season tickets to the 1990-91 season, or VIP tickets to the AISA All-Star Game (Jan. 20, 1990), complete with dinner and limousine transportation that day.

It sounds like the fun has already begun.

As for my suggestion, how about the Detroit Axles?

# Farley's goal leaves Athens on top

By Jim Toth  
staff writer

The play seemed innocent enough — a high lob down the field heading toward an opposing defender — but Troy Athens soccer coach Tim Storch decided to take time to deliver some instructions on the sideline.

No problem. All the veteran Red Hawk coach missed was the deciding goal in Saturday's boys Class A state championship game played at Bloomfield Hills. Andover. Fortunately for Storch, it was one of his Red Hawks, John Farley, doing the scoring.

The senior forward, no stranger to scoring goals, pulled the ball loose from a Plymouth Salem defender 14 minutes into the first half and calmly deposited the ball behind Rocks goalkeeper Matt Tudor to provide the difference in the Red Hawks 1-0 triumph.

"I saw it was a long ball from our sweeper that was going to one of our defenders," began Farley of the winning tally and his 19th goal of the season. "I just stepped in front of a lazy pass he made and I knew I had it."

"I DIDN'T SEE the goal," said Storch. "I turned my back and was giving instructions. All of a sudden I heard some yelling — I turned around and saw the ball in the back of the net."

The state title was the fourth for the Red Hawks this decade and completed a sweep of high school soccer for Athens in 1989. The girls squad,

also coached by Storch, claimed the Class A crown in June with a 1-0 victory over Northville.

"This is a super win for us," beamed Storch after the game. "We beat a quality team by playing superb defense. I don't think they (Salem) have seen a defense like ours."

Salem coach Ken Johnson echoed Storch's assessments.

"Troy Athens put us out of our style by pressuring us," explained Johnson, who watched his high-powered offense come up empty for the fourth time this season. "They are tall, quick and very physical."

THE RED HAWKS, who finished

the season with a 20-2-3 ledger, kept Salem's offensive stalwarts Jeff Gold and Greg Christensen, for the most part, in check.

Shaun Childress, Chris Miller, Todd Peterson and Tyrone Schindler continuously applied pressure on the Salem forwards, forcing the Rocks to cough up possession.

When the Rocks managed to maintain control, Athens senior goalkeeper Mark Slimak proved equal to the task. Slimak was credited with eight saves, including a diving stop in front of the net off a Brad Fisch boot with less than one minute to

play.

"I thought we would do it in the second half," said Johnson, who watched his team drop a 2-1 decision to the Red Hawks during the regular season. "We wanted to come out and score a goal, but we couldn't. Losing to a team like Athens is a good way to go down, if you're going to lose."

The final stats proved the game to be as close as the final score. Both teams fired 10 shots and Athens held a slim 4-3 advantage in corner kicks.

"BEING A FORMER goalkeeper, I have always said that defense wins you state titles," said Storch.

## sports shorts

● **ALUMNI HOOPS**  
Farmington Hills Mercy will have its second annual alumni basketball game at 7 p.m. Wednesday, Nov. 22, at the high school. Admission is \$1. Players from 1970 to 1989 will compete. For information, call the Mercy athletic office at 476-2836.

● **GYMNASTS WIN MEET**  
The Farmington Gymnastics Center team won the Sunrise Invitational in Sylva (Ohio) on Sunday, Nov. 5.

The Farmington girls who competed were Jennifer Erick, Mary Whalen, Jennelle Kiernan, Erin McVatt, Stacey Williamson, Shelley Moore, Heidi Taggata, Gina Bradley, Missy McRae, Kelly Misch and Holly Davis. The team is coached by Diane van Mierlo.

The Level IV gymnasts competed against other gymnastics clubs from Michigan and Ohio in their first official competition. The team members ranged in age from 8 to 11.

● **USED EQUIPMENT**  
The Farmington Hills Recreation Department will sponsor a used winter sports equipment sale on from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 2, in the East Middle School cafeteria. Items to be sold will be accepted at the school from 5:30-8:30 p.m. on Friday, Dec. 1. East Middle is on Middlebelt Road between 10 and 11 Mile roads.

All sales are final and there will be a 20-percent service charge on all items sold. For information, call the recreation division office at 473-9570.

● **SKATING REGIONAL**  
More than 30 figure skaters from the Detroit area will perform their competitive routines on Saturday, Nov. 18, in a send-off exhibition to prepare for the Eastern Great Lakes Regional Championships in Midland from Nov. 25 to Dec. 2.

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