

Paint ball store opens with flying colors

By James Radebaugh
staff writer

Paint ball is getting serious.

Practitioners of the game, in which grown men in army fatigues chase each other through the woods, shooting at one another with carbon dioxide gas-powered paint-filled plastic pellets, now have a store all their own.

Splatz, on Cooley Lake Road in Union Lake, opened last month and sells just about everything you could want to get decked out for a round of paint ball.

The basics, though, are all you need to get started, according to store owner Lee Keiser.

"You need a gun, you need paint, you have to have goggles, goggles are absolutely necessary, and face protection is good, and that's about it," he said.

Keiser, 22, said he began playing paint ball three years ago and spent over \$1,000 the first year. He decided it made sense to get into the business.

"PAINT BALL in this area is big, but there aren't that many stores," he said. "In California there are all kinds of stores, in Florida there are all kinds of stores."

Various guns line the walls of Splatz, including the .68-caliber semi-automatic Phantom, which shoots paint balls at a speed of 300 feet per second (it's accurate up to 50 yards), a machine gun that shoots 20 rounds faster than you can blink, and assorted handguns.

The Phantom is about the size and shape of a real assault weapon, but looks different enough so that you're not likely to confuse one with the other. The Coz tank that powers the gun, a cylinder about eight inches long and 2 1/2 inches in diameter, doubles as the gun's stock and attaches to the end of a long, black barrel.

Splatz sells the phantom for \$345; the machine gun sells for a little more.

Keiser keeps other toys behind the counter, like a paint-filled grenade, which is constructed of surgical tubing, has a pin like a real grenade, and spews paint in scattered patterns when it hits a target.

"These are great," Keiser said. "They're good for bunkers and foxholes."

Splatz also sells camouflage gear, helmets, face masks, goggles, T-shirts and other paraphernalia associated with paint ball. Among them, some mammoth smoke bombs that Keiser said he sells only to people over 18. At least once, he said, one ended up in the possession of a high school student inclined toward playing pranks.

Customers who want to try out a gun before buying it don't have to go far. Keiser has a shooting range along a side wall, separated from the rest of the store with burlap and a camouflage net hanging from the ceiling.

At the far end a white, plastic-coated wall with numbers on it serves as a target. Keiser demonstrated the machine gun, which he filled with orange pellets. He pulled the trigger, causing an explosion of rapid pops, like those of a loud air gun. In seconds the wall was covered with orange blotches.

The pellets fly fast enough and hit with enough force to make the uninitiated wonder how getting hit can not hurt, a question Keiser said he's asked all the time.

"They can leave welts. In rare occasions they can break skin. Typically, it's no big deal."

Compared to other sports, paint ball really isn't dangerous, he said.

"I had a guy in here the other day who had bruises all over his face from a softball — you don't get that in paint ball."



Helping hand

State Rep. Jan Dolan (right), R-Farmington Hills, spends the morning with Bobby Hinchman, a registered nurse at Botsford General Hospital, Farmington Hills. Dolan was participating in "Walk a Mile in My Shoes," sponsored by Botsford during National Nurses

Week May 6-13. The program paired community leaders, hospital administrators and physicians with hospital nurses so they could see first-hand the daily challenges of the nursing profession.

YMCA highlights

These YMCA highlights appear courtesy of the Farmington YMCA, 28100 Farmington Road, Farmington Hills. For information, call 553-4020.

SUMMER MEMBERSHIPS

The YMCA will be selling Summer Memberships this summer. Membership categories include: college students, graduating high school seniors, adults, and families. The memberships will be good through Saturday, Sept. 1.

POOL PROGRAM

The YMCA offers a variety of off-site backyard pools for interested parents. Call Jean Warren at 553-

4020 if interested in establishing a backyard pool program or for more details related to available sites already scheduled.

WALKERS CLUB

The Farmington Area YMCA in cooperation with the Farmington Downtown Development Authority is sponsoring a Walkers Club that meets each Wednesday evening. More information is available from Mary Fletcher at the YMCA.

CORPORATE MEMBERSHIP

The YMCA has established a corporate membership program for local businesses. The program includes a discount off regular membership rates as well as a variety of

on-site programming. The YMCA is also available to provide businesses with guest speakers on topics related to stress management, weight management and lifestyle assessment. Contact Greg Voss for more information related to these exciting programs at 553-4020.

VIP TOURS

The public is invited to tour one of the most comprehensive wellness facilities in the area. The Farmington Area YMCA offers a large facility with a wide variety of adult, youth and family programs. Located on Farmington Rd. 1 1/2 mile North of 12 Mile Rd, you've invited to discover the Y. VIP tours are available by appointment. Call 553-4020.

AS A
MEETING LOCATION
BOTSFORD INN
IS BETTER THAN EVER!

Over-night visitors and meeting coordinators tell us not to change a thing but we insist on continually improving our services and facilities. We invite you to join us for a luncheon/tour of our newly redecorated rooms. Let us discuss your specific lodging and meeting concerns. Call (313) 474-4500 and find out what we can do for you!



BE A PART OF
THE FESTIVITIES
Join us at the
FAMILY FUN FEST
with live entertainment,
clowns, puppets, crafts, activities
and a whole lot more!!

SATURDAY, JUNE 30th 10 a.m.-4 p.m.

Prudential Town Center, Southfield
Sponsored by:

MANUFACTURERS BANK

ALL KIDS CONSIDERED
THE FAMILY MAGAZINE FOR SOUTHEASTERN MICHIGAN

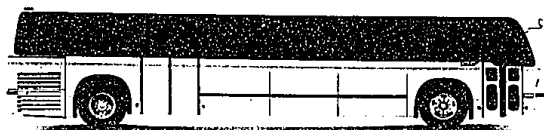
In Cooperation with the City of Southfield
CALL 352-0990 for information

An exciting part of the Mini Grand Prix for Athletes presented by the City of Southfield and the Prudential Town Center.

2
WJBK-TV
DETROIT

FREE FARE ON JUNE 29, 1990 ROUTE 285

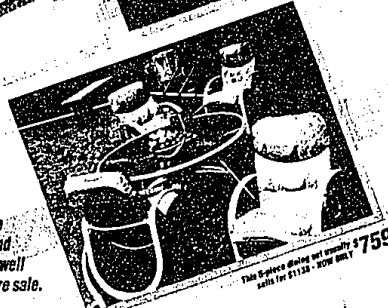
(Farmington Hills to Metro Airport via Grand River-Middlebelt Rd.)



Riding SMART buses is always the SMART thing to do. Especially when you consider the cost of gas, parking and maintenance. The more you ride, the more you save. But it's even smarter on June 29th. Whether traveling to work, to Metro Airport, shopping at Wonderland or Livonia Mall or any of the shops along the way, or just riding around — on June 29th, you ride FREE. Transfers are .10 and there is free shuttle service between the SMART bus stop and the Metro Airport terminals. For schedule information and/or requests for wheelchair accessible buses, call 962-5515. TDD call: 256-8663.

SMART

Dining to Reclining
Outdoor Delights



For the largest selection of patio furniture that even the smallest pocketbook will find refreshing... come to Cornwell Pool & Patio's patio furniture sale.

**CORNWELL
Pool & Patio**
Guaranteed Lowest Prices!

- Patio Furniture
- Swimming Pools
- Pool Supplies
- Spas & Tubs
- Accessories
- More

STORE HOURS
Mon.-Fri. 10-6:30 pm
Sat. 10-6 pm
Sun. 10-4 pm
closed Wed.

TWO GREAT LOCATIONS
ANN ARBOR
3500 Pioneer Trail
Ann Arbor, MI 48106
313-662-3111
PLYMOUTH
874 W. Ann Arbor Rd.
Plymouth, MI 48170
313-439-7410