

# On the shelf

## Madonna basketball program cancelled

By C.J. Rieck  
staff writer

According to Madonna College athletic director Ray Summers, "In two days, the whole program unraveled."

What Summers said, in reference to the women's basketball program, is accurate. Injuries suffered by several players before the season was a few weeks old, combined with academic eligibility problems for two others, trimmed an already slim roster to four and resulted in the cancellation of this year's schedule.

What Summers said, however, doesn't shed much light on why the program was in a situation like this to begin with.

Summers refused to point fingers. "The only thing we can do is bow out (of the season) as politely as we can and start over next year," said Summers. He added emphatically, "We are not folding our program."

AND YET, the fate of women's basketball always seems to be in question at Madonna. As late as August, the program's future was in a doubt because of a misunderstanding between Summers and coach Bob Belf on how much scholarship money was available.

That problem was resolved, but more trouble was just around the next corner for Madonna.

First came bad news on the academic front. A starter from last season,

### college sports

Michelle Dykinski, and a top recruit, Renee Bennett, were both declared ineligible for the season. Dykinski hadn't completed enough credit hours according to NAIA standards; Bennett had played previously for Madonna, prior to its joining the NAIA, leaving her in limbo. An NAIA District 23 committee was to rule on her eligibility.

All of which trimmed Belf's roster from 11 to nine. After school started, Belf found out another player from last season's 6-15 team, Holly Murphy, decided against returning. That left eight players.

Then came the injuries: Teresa Ternes suffered a broken collarbone last summer and hasn't recovered; Lyndell Ingalls injured her shin playing softball and it became infected, slowing her recovery; Lisa Kline had ankle surgery; Stephanie Niebauer was slowed by tendinitis in her knee; and in a game against Albion Nov. 17, the clincher came — Lori Creten broke her wrist.

WITH THE SEASON three games old, the Fighting Crusaders found themselves with precious little left to fight with. Only Becky Edinger, Jill Burt and Alice Williams were entirely fit.

"We put it up to the girls, whether

they wanted to play or not," said Summers. Their decision wasn't easy, but Madonna's options were exhausted.

Other problems seemed imminent. Edinger was a walk-on who was leaving school in January. It was hoped Ternes and Kline would be able to return by then, but it wasn't certain. Niebauer could play with her knee, said Belf, but for how long? And there was a possibility Bennett might become eligible; but that was definitely in question.

Belf claimed he could have put five players on the floor for the rest of this semester: Edinger, Burt, Williams, Niebauer and Ingalls, who has recovered sufficiently from her shin injury.

But what chance would a five-player team have?

Through all the problems of the past few years, one factor has remained consistent for Madonna's women's team: It's uncertain future. Summers was adamant that the program would remain. He blamed no one for the current troubles: "It's a nightmare no coach wants to ever face. I would never blame Bob (Belf). Injuries like this can't be blamed on coaches."

STILL, THE PROGRAM'S cancell-

lation was due to a lack of players — whatever the reason. And there are people who share the blame for that.

Belf admitted he channeled most of his recruiting funds into signing Niebauer, Williams and Creten. With just five eligible returnees (after Murphy's defection), that left him with eight players. He hoped to add some walk-ons, but had little money to offer other quality recruits. So he knew he was going into the season short-handed.

The pre-season problems regarding the budget, even after they were ironed out, didn't help Belf's recruiting efforts. Neither did Summers, who quarreled with Belf over money he committed to recruits, adding to the program's uncertainty.

The turn of events has made Belf's status tenuous, at best. "I was going into the season by the skin of my teeth, no question about it," the third-year coach admitted. Now, he has just one objective: his players. "I'm going to take care of those kids, first and foremost. Whatever it takes, whether it's here or somewhere else."

Belf added, "Right now, I'm not planning on coaching again at Madonna." He is convinced, Summers wants to replace him, although Summers says no. "Bob and I get along very well," said Summers. "Technically, Bob's probably the finest coach we've ever had here."

Still, the future of women's basketball at Madonna is hardly optimistic.

## Old-timers still rolling along

THE OLD-TIMER Bowling Association held its annual Association and party on Sunday, Nov. 20 at Thunderbowl Lanes in Allen Park.

Thomas Fegan, of East Detroit, won the overall championship.

Ed Wright, of Farmington Hills, took second place with 626, while Rudy Pittaway of Canton wound up second in the 50-59 year-old division with 628. West Bloomfield's Phillip Horowitz took third with 624.

In the 60-64 group, yours truly came in second place with 609. Robert Hase, of Troy, took third place in the 70-74 division with 598, with 67-year-old Joe Norris taking the 80 and over division.

Norris, now living in San Diego, Calif., was the top bowler in the Detroit area nearly 25 years ago. He was perhaps one of the all-time great bowlers, a national Hall of Fame member and a member of the great Stroh's teams back in the '40 and '50s.

• Bruce Falcon, of Rochester Hills, a former bowler for the Cecil Ward youth travel team, is a member of the Saginaw Valley State University bowling team. The Cardinals set a new all-time record high game record while competing in the Collegiate Match Championships recently in St. Louis, Mo.

The team rolled a one-game score of 1310, with Falcon contributing a 265 game.

• The Dunkin' Donuts winners at Wonderland Lanes in Livonia were Mark Serpuck, who shot a 180 game, and Vickie DeCamillo who shot a 149. Both players earned trips to the National Championships, Dec. 13 in Reno, Nev.

• Many of the local bowling establishments are now looking the New Year's parties. Anyone interested in making ar-

### 10-pin alley

AI Harrison

rangements for New Year's Eve should make reservations early.

The format usually consists of a mixed bowling no-top event and buffet dinner with prize and party favors. Some also provide entertainment, including DJ's. Some of the notables will be listed in this column in weeks to come.

• If you've ever wondered what the word dedication means, how about the Thompson family. Al Thompson, 70, is an avid bowler in several senior men's leagues, averaging 208 and 203 at Mayflower Lanes. His sons, Alan, 23, and Brian, 35, bowl together in the Wonderland Junior Classic at Town & Country Lanes. Brian resides in Leesburg, Va., and comes in on Tuesday and returns by airplane on Wednesday. That's dedication.

BOWLING HONOR ROLL

Country Lanes (Farmington Hills) won't have a New Year's Eve party until 1991. The team rolled a one-game score of 1310, with Falcon contributing a 265 game.

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## St. Mary's cruises

It was hardly an inspired performance, but St. Mary's College of Orchard Lake did add another school to its list of basketball victims Wednesday, clobbering the University of Windsor 118-95 in Windsor.

Five Eagles reached double-figures in scoring: James Gillespie (23), Jeff Suspek (18), Garth Howard (16), Kevin Nicfield (15) and Brian Smith (10). Nicfield topped the St. Mary's rebounders with 10, and Howard and Jimmy Bolden each dished out six assists. Bolden

finished with nine points.

The Eagles were up by 18 points in the first half, but a Windsor comeback trimmed the deficit to 58-51 at the half. Dennis Byrne led the Windsor rally, scoring 16 points in the half, including four baskets in the comeback. But St. Mary's defense limited Byrne to just two second-half points; his 18 led Windsor.

The victory improved the Eagles' record to 6-2: Windsor fell to 1-11. St. Mary's hosts Oakland University at 7:30 p.m. Wednesday.

## the week ahead

### BOYS BASKETBALL

Tuesday, Dec. 4

Redford CC at Wayne Memorial 7 p.m.

Novi at Livonia 7:30 p.m.

Liv. Stevenson at Garden City 7:30 p.m.

Liv. Churchville at Livonia 7:30 p.m.

Westland CC at A. A. Brewer 7:30 p.m.

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Redford Union at W.L. Central 7:30 p.m.

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### PREP HOCKEY

Monday, Dec. 3

Liv. Churchville vs. B.Y. Anderson

Liv. Stevenson vs. Southfield-Lathrup

Liv. Churchville vs. Livonia

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