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there is no place for the kind of stick swinging that took place last summer during a recreational game at the Detroit Skating Club. A player now faces assault charges in Oakland County Circuit Court.

"It's a pretty good group of guys," said 39-year-old Mark Sarevich, a Farmington Hills resident and manager at his family-run Vladimir's Catering. "In three years, I've never seen a fight. If someone's stick accidentally rides up, they apologize."

"Vander Velde said there's no room for out-of-control players. 'We all have families and we all have careers,' he said. 'This is for fun. None of us are going for careers in hockey.'"

According to Pietka, there are occasions when "you get guys bumping. But these guys are going to work that day. So we have respect for each other. All in all, it's pretty clean."

Pietka, meanwhile, said the level of play fluctuates. Some weeks, when high schools and colleges are on hiatus, younger hot-shot players come out. Mostly, the group is made up of men ages 25-40, with a wide variety of skills.

"Sometimes, you get some minor leaguers out here for conditioning," Pietka said. "So they make you feel real humble."

The beauty of open hockey, Vander Velde explained, is that a player's skill level really doesn't matter. Everybody gets significant ice time.

"I'm sure as hell not one of the better skaters," said Vander Velde, who plays in an over-40 league at Lakeland Arena. "But I sure have a good time. There are a few weak skaters, but everybody takes their turn."

Sarevich is among the core group of players who regularly come out to the arena for the 9-10:50 a.m. sessions on Tuesdays and Thursdays.

"It's fun," he said, between shifts. "You come out for two hours and skate. It's a great workout."

The pace slowed down considerably during the final hour, with some players leaving early



STAFF PHOTO BY BRIAN MITCHELL

Ice duel: Farmington resident Brian Ratliff (left) battles Luke Murphy of White Lake in the game.

to go to work or home. But, those who stuck it out were happy they had two goalies throughout.

Unfortunately, one drawback of drop-in hockey – wherever it's played – is there are occasions when only one netminder shows up to face the rising slapshots and breakaways.

"It makes a big difference when you have two goalies," Vander Velde said. "It takes the competitiveness out of it if you don't."

BY TIM SMITH
STAFF WRITER

One by one during the second half of Tuesday's two-hour open hockey session at the Farmington Hills Ice Arena, tired skaters grabbed their equipment and headed for the locker room.

Goalkeepers Sue Wise and Ron Rogowicz, conversely, stayed in their nets until the bitter end. But that's the flip side for goalies, who are not required to pay for the drop-in session. Skaters are hit up for \$6.50.

After leaving the ice, both goaltenders said they enjoy the exercise and competitiveness of drop-in hockey – even though, unlike actual league play, skaters usually ignore defense and try to score as many goals as possible.

Wise, a 43-year-old Brighton resident who took up goaltending five years ago, said she had an off game. But she didn't seem too discouraged, stressing that the speed and style of men's hockey differs from women's. Still, ice time is ice time.

"It's about a half-step faster," Wise said. "I do well in the women's level. Actually, if I'm playing well here, I know I'm too fast (for women's hockey). I'm out of rhythm ... Today, I was a

half-step off, so it was perfect for me. I know it's frustrating for the other guys."

Wise, retired from her job as an insurance agent, said she makes it out to the Farmington Hills sessions about once a week. Sometimes, she's the only goaltender on the ice.

She said she enjoys the camaraderie of the group and feels welcomed. That isn't always the case for a female goalie.

"I've been at pickup games at other rinks," Wise said. "Some guys just don't want chicks on the ice. That's not how it is here."

According to Wise, she was virtually ordered not to come back for drop-in hockey at the Howell arena. "They told me flat out that they'd rather have no goalie than a woman goalie."

But she's "one of the guys" at Farmington Hills. After giving up a goal Tuesday, an opponent skated by and jokingly rubbed the top of her helmet.

The netminder at the other end of the rink, Rogowicz, also noted the easygoing nature of most of the guys who regularly come out to the arena on Eight Mile Road between Gill-Halsted.

That doesn't mean guys don't want to do well.

"This is a little less organized and the defense isn't as tight as it would be in a league game," said Rogowicz, 26, on his off day from his job as a White Lake Township police officer. "More people are trying to score on breakaways and one-timers."

Despite an ailing knee, Rogowicz said he enjoys goaltending but gets easily frustrated. After giving up one goal Tuesday, he angrily swatted the goal post with his paddle.

"I want to stone everyone," said the Livonia resident, laughing. "I get down on myself."

Rogowicz actually is in his first year as a goaltender. He switched from defense after being injured during a game last year at Lakeland Arena.

"In the league I played in there was a lot of hacking," he said. "I split my eye open right to the skull from a high stick."

After hoisting up, he bought some netminding equipment from a friend and took up the position. He said his experience as a defenseman enables him to be "a little more comfortable on my skates. This does take some getting used to, though."

GRIP seminar moves to weeknight

Registration by mail is under way for a Thursday, March 19, workshop, "Get a Kick Out of G.R.I.P." The free workshop is scheduled from 6:30-9 p.m. at Farmington High School.

The workshop, hosted by Farmington Families in Action, is designed to help parents and students get a "grip" on dealing with the problems facing today's youth including drug and alcohol use, violence and coping with the day-to-day pressures of school and home life.

Farmington Families in Action designed the G.R.I.P. program, an acronym representing "Generations Responding to Issues and Problems," to help parents get more involved as a positive influence in their children's lives.

This year's workshop will feature

Fran Kick, an educational consultant, speaker, published writer and television host of TEENTALK.

Last year, more than 400 Farmington area students attended the G.R.I.P. presentation.

"We decided to offer this special program on a weeknight so that active students and parents would have a better opportunity to attend," said FFIA President Terry Kloneczar. "Additionally, we know that so many families have busy schedules and other weekend obligations, and we didn't want anyone to miss out on this terrific opportunity."

"That's why the Farmington Public Schools is making accommodations for special assemblies throughout the school day as well."

Besides the evening workshop, every middle school student in the Farmington district will get a chance to benefit from the program through special presentations during the school day on March 18 and 19.

There will be no charge for this event thanks to the support of FFIA, Farmington Public Schools, Hudson's, a Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities Grant, TRW, the Farmington Exchange Club, Farmington Hills Police Department and the Farmington Public Safety Department.

Register by mail at Farmington Public Schools, 32500 Shawansee St., Farmington, MI, 48336 or by fax at (248) 489-3314.

Due to the response, phone registration cannot be accepted.

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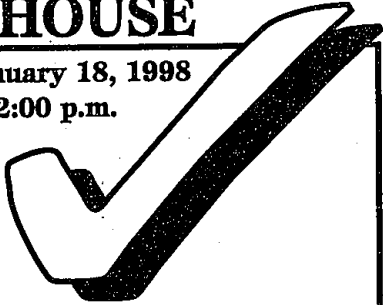
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Michael Gatt, M.D.

Karol Otteman, D.O.

James Brown III, M.D.

Wednesday, January 21 and 28, 1998
7 to 9 p.m.

St. Mary Hospital Auditorium

(Please use the Five Mile entrance)

This free, two-part program on menopause will be presented by a panel of St. Mary Hospital obstetrician/gynecologists. On January 21, the physicians will define perimenopause and menopause, discuss signs and symptoms, and review the anatomy and physiology of the menopausal woman. On January 28, the panel will talk about treatment options, such as hormone replacement therapy, risk factors for chronic illness that may occur at menopause, and various health screening tests available to women today.



Marian Women's Center
St. Mary Hospital
36473 Five Mile Rd.
Livonia, MI 48154

Registration is requested as seating is limited.

To register, call the
Marian Women's Center
toll-free at 1-800-494-1617.