

RECREATION CENTER

The Observer & Eccentric publishes the "Recreation Center" every Sunday in Sports. To submit results of competition, items for the Rec Roundup or local story ideas, call staff writer Chris Meyer at (248) 961-2589, fax him material at (248) 644-1314 or write to him at: The Observer & Eccentric Sports Department, 805 E. Maple, Birmingham, MI 48009.

Be prepared when hitting the ski slopes

Winter ski trips are hot topics for winter sports enthusiasts.

Since many residents plan ski vacations, let's consider some vital steps to insure a safe and happy time. Often, unprepared skiers suffer broken bones, muscle strains or knee injuries and spoil what had promised to be a most enjoyable experience.

While most ski-related injuries result from collision or falls on the slopes, cold-related conditions called hypothermia can also occur. Proper attire and frequent rest in the ski lodge can help prevent hypothermia and appropriate equipment can promote a safe and enjoyable vacation.

MAINTAIN SAFE EQUIPMENT

While it is noted that younger, less experienced skiers often suffer from

more injuries than older, more veteran athletes, all skiers can avoid injuries through the use of proper equipment. Lately in the news, we have seen the tragedies of Michael Kennedy and Sonny Bono that made us aware of the fact that no matter how much experience you have, common sense should be used while doing any outdoor sport.

Experts agree unanimously that ski bindings, the part of ski equipment that releases under stress to prevent injuries, are one of the most important tools for ski safety. So when you select equipment, you should examine your skill level and your needs.

For example, a beginner who tends to fall frequently should choose bindings that release in numerous directions. This type of binding can also be used for a skier who already has experienced a lower extremity strain such as an injury to the knees. To safe-guard against injuries, skiers should not set their bindings high if they believe that the equipment has released prematurely in the past. Inadvertent releases don't often occur and a tightening can lead to other injuries.

When selecting equipment, keep in

mind older, used equipment is often outdated in mechanical design and probably has been poorly maintained. Although a bargain in most instances, in the long run you are going to pay for it. As the old saying goes, "You get what you pay for."

Skiers should also consider safety and comfort when selecting boots. When testing a boot in the store, simulate skiing motions and look for pressure points. Though tempted to loosen the boot on the slopes to prevent pain, doing so can lead to less control and potential danger. Most knee injuries occur when stress is put on either the inside or outside of the knee.

Skis and ski poles are also part of the necessary equipment for skiing excursions that can lead to injuries. For example, the sharp edge of the ski can lead to cuts on the face or body during a fall. Maintaining the grasp of the ski pole can also lead to a thumb injury.

PRE-SEASON FITNESS PROGRAM

Considering the spectrum of potential injuries, it is important for Alpine

skiers to approach the slopes with an existing level of fitness. With Alpine skiing requiring cardiovascular fitness, sustained muscle contractions and overall flexibility, skiers who have a current exercise regimen can prevent unwanted injuries and fatigue.

Experts advise skiers to start a well-rounded fitness plan including components of endurance work, isometric muscle exercise, isokinetic exercises and flexibility protocols. Without proper training and practice of safety techniques skiers are susceptible to lower extremity injuries primarily in the knees. Skiers should avoid full-bending and flexing of the knees in attempt to keep the skis together during a fall. Overall, experts advise skiers to stay centered over their skis to prevent knee-related injuries.

Factors contributing to ski injuries include:

■ Experience and ability. Skiers with more experience seem to suffer from fewer injuries. However, sometimes people get carried away and "show-offs" can lead to permanent injuries, including death.

■ Type/function of ski equipment.

The selection of proper bindings is critical to injury.

■ Female skiers have a greater tendency toward lower extremity injuries because of laxity of the ligaments.

■ Fatigue from skiing extended periods can lead to injuries. Rests and breaks should be done when needed.

■ Snow conditions can influence the type of injury sustained.

With the proper preparation, all skiers planning winter excursions to slopes can avoid potential injuries. Remember that appropriate equipment and pre-season conditioning can attribute to an overall satisfying vacation experience.

Any skier who needs a consult can contact Alison Kapur, R.D., at Metro Fitness, (248) 584-0500, and a ski stretching sheet will be provided at no charge.

(Subhash Kapur is a physical therapist and owner of Metro Rehab. Kapur is happy to answer any questions readers may have regarding physical therapy and/or physical training. Readers should send their questions or comments to: Subhash Kapur, 805 E. Maple, Birmingham, MI 48009.)

RUNNING

R & D RACE DIRECTORS

R & D Race Directors kicks off its 1998 schedule May 3 with the First Annual Great Lakes State Games Regional event. Scheduled for 10 a.m. on the trails at Independence Oaks in Clarkston, this event features a 5/2-mile run, 2.4-mile walk and 2-mile Kidzie Run. It will be held in conjunction with the annual Great Lakes State Games in Lansing.

Call 1-800-763-9820 for more information regarding R & D's exciting 1998 schedule.

CLASSES

BIRMINGHAM POWER SQUADRON

The Birmingham Power Squadron, in conjunction with West Bloomfield schools, will conduct safe boating classes at West Bloomfield High School (4925 Orchard Lake Road) beginning Monday, Feb. 9. Classes run from 7:30 p.m.-9:30 p.m. The eight-week course covers all aspects of power and sail-boating, including rules of the road and navigation aids, emergency maintenance, charting, electronic instruments, marine radio and weather. Present and future boaters and operators of personal watercraft are encouraged to enroll.

For more information, call (810) 997-7427.

FUND-RAISERS

THE 1998 MS WALK

The annual MS Walk to help the fight against multiple sclerosis comes to Birmingham on Sunday, May 3. Featuring routes of five, 15 and 20 kilometers, the

Birmingham event will be conducted at Seaholm High School (2456 Lincoln). Check-in begins at 8 a.m. and the routes open at 9 a.m. Walks will also be held in Ann Arbor (Sunday, April 19), Dearborn (May 3), Grosse Pointe (May 3) and Monroe (May 3). For more information or a detailed brochure/registration form, call the National MS Society, Michigan Chapter at (248) 350-0020 or 1-800-247-7382.

CLEAN AIR CHALLENGE

Join the American Lung Association for the 6th annual Clean Air Challenge Bike Trek on Sunday, Sept. 7 at Island Lake Recreation Area. Proceeds benefit the American Lung Association of Michigan's Asthma Education Programs in Metropolitan Detroit.

To sign up or receive additional information, call 1-800-LUNG-USA.

INDOOR SPORTS

DROP-IN BASKETBALL

Basketball players looking for a pick-up game can stop by Abbott Middle School in West Bloomfield on Wednesday evenings. Half-court drop-in basketball games will be played each week from 6:30 to 9 p.m. Cost is \$4 per player at the door. The program is offered by West Bloomfield Schools Community Education. Call 639-2290 for more information.

SENIOR CITIZEN VOLLEYBALL

Senior citizens can get a little exercise and have an enjoyable time in the process by participating in senior citizen drop-in volleyball games.

The games are free to all seniors and is offered 7:00-9:30 a.m. Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays at the Administration and

Community Services, 5810 Commerce Road. The games are offered by West Bloomfield Schools Community Education. Call 639-2290 for more information.

TENNIS

The Suburban Tennis Association will present "Saturday Night Tennis" events in the next few weeks at Franklin Fitness & Racquet Club in Southfield. The next matches are scheduled for 7 p.m. on Feb. 14, March 7 and March 14. The night features doubles and mixed doubles play, a minimum of two hours court time, new tennis balls, soft drinks, sandwiches, salad and dessert. All players are welcome, and the cost is \$16. Call Marilyn at (248) 879-1673 or Al at (248) 648-4277 for more information. Franklin Fitness & Racquet Club is located at 29360 Northwestern Highway.

OUTINGS

SOUTHEAST MICHIGAN GROUP, SIERRA CLUB

SEMG will stage the following outings for those interested in outdoor activities:

Saturday, Feb. 14, Moonlight Ski. Valentine's Day hike or ski under the stars at Maybury State Park west of Northville. Meet at 7 p.m. in the horse barn parking lot off Beck Road, approximately 1/4 mile south of Eight Mile Road for this moderately paced adventure. Bring a flashlight. There is a \$1 trip fee and optional restaurant stop. Call trip leader Ed McAdams at 313-388-6645.

Sunday, Feb. 15, Bald Mountain Ski or Hike. The group will do the hilly trails of this area early in the day so bring trail snacks and the appropriate

for a moderately paced outing. Meet at 10 a.m. behind the Michigan National Bank on 14 Mile, 1/2 mile east of I-75 (on the south edge of Oakland Mall) in Troy. There is a \$1 trip fee. Call 313-385-6901 for more information.

Sunday, March 1, Pointe Pelee Ice Hike. Join the eighth annual winter outing to the Pointe in Ontario, Canada. Dress warmly for this five-mile walk and all-day adventure. Meet at 9:30 a.m. at the Ontario Tourist Info Center on the west side of Huron Church Road (Route 3), about 1/2 mile directly south of the Ambassador Bridge.

There is a \$1 trip fee and a restaurant stop afterward. Bring appropriate ID. Call trip leader Liz Allingham at 313-581-7579 for more information.

BIKE TREKKERS

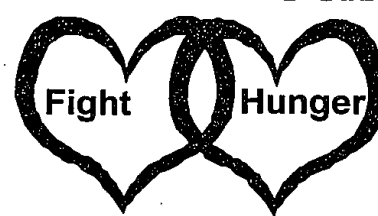
Serious bikers can get on the right track Sunday mornings by joining members of Bike Trekkers for a ride through West Bloomfield. Bike Trekkers meets at 8 a.m. each Sunday morning at the West Bloomfield Recreation Center and ride 10-15 miles on various routes through the subdivisions of West Bloomfield. Routes include both paved and

dirt roads as well as the West Bloomfield Trail Network. Bike treks may also take riders outside West Bloomfield.

The program is free and there are no residency requirements. Cyclists must be at least 16 years of age, have a bike with sturdy tires that can endure gravel roads, and must wear a helmet.

For more information call Doug McEwen at (248) 738-2500 or leave a message at (248) 758-3940. The Parks and Recreation Center is located at 4640 Walnut Lake Road, west of Orchard Lake Road.

Have a Heart!

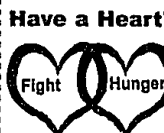


with Forgotten Harvest

This Valentine's Day -- a time when people show their love -- you can reach out with love and help hungry men, women and children in our community. Forgotten Harvest, metro Detroit's prepared and perishable food rescue program, announces its **"Have a Heart"** campaign. Give a "Valentine" to someone in need: your donation to Forgotten Harvest can make a difference in the life of a hungry person. With your support, Forgotten Harvest can continue to rescue nutritious food, that might otherwise be thrown away, and deliver it to the hands of hungry people.

Through a generous grant offered by a Rhode Island philanthropic foundation, **gifts received between February 4th and 14th may be eligible for a one-to-one match, doubling their value.** To qualify, the donations must be received between the 4th and 14th of February, 1998. For more information call the Forgotten Harvest Office at (248) 350-FOOD (3663).

So have a heart! Clip the attached coupon and send it to Forgotten Harvest with your heartfelt gift! Together, we can make a difference!



with Forgotten Harvest

Name _____
Address _____
City, State, Zip _____
Telephone Number _____
Enclosed is my check for \$ _____

Send all donations to: Forgotten Harvest, 21711 W. Ten Mile, Suite 200, Southfield, MI 48075
Our hearts go out to all our partners in relieving hunger! Your gift is TAX DEDUCTIBLE.

ADULT RECREATIONAL STANDINGS

NORTHWEST OVER-30 MEN'S HOCKEY STANDINGS									
TEAM	W	L	T	PTS	GP	GA			
Mr. D's	24	10	7	55	150	101			
OTT	18	13	10	46	98	93			
Ameritech	16	17	7	43	141	151			
PalmsWebber	17	18	8	42	97	102			
Sports	16	17	8	40	112	109			
Ace	16	20	5	37	98	94			
Coffee	13	18	10	36	102	122			
Midland	12	24	5	29	101	147			
Feb. Standings									
Ameritech 4, Sports 2									
OTT 1, Ace 1									
Mr. D's 3, Coffee 3									
Midland 2, PalmsWebber 1									
League scores (goals-points-goals)									
Drexler (Mr. D's)	41	30	37						
Cozzetti (Mr. D's)	37	37	74						
Midland (Ameritech)	38	30	68						
Cooper (Mr. D's)	10	41	51						
Hogers (Ameritech)	20	31	51						
Woolf (Midland)	23	24	47						
Kaczmarek (Mr. D's)	19	27	46						
Kilberg (Ace)	20	20	40						
Campbell (Coffee)	23	17	40						
Kalish (PalmsWebber)	19	27	46						
Morris (Sports)	20	18	38						
Vlasov (Coffee)	18	18	36						
Stason (Ameritech)	6	31	37						
Hiddle (Sports)	22	14	36						
Paley (Ameritech)	15	20	35						
Thomas (Ace)	12	22	35						

TROY PARKS AND RECREATION ADULT BASKETBALL STANDINGS

DOWNSIDE									
TEAM	W	L	T	PTS	GP	GA			
Papa Romano's	7	11	1	917					
Crew	7	6	5	563	4				
GMAC	7	5	5	563	4				
Standard Federal	5	7	4	417	6				
K & H Printing	3	9	2	250	8				
Credit Union One	2	10	1	167	9				
Week 12 results									
GMAC def. Standard Federal (forties)									
K & H Printing 66, Crew 44									
Papa Romano's 106, Credit Union One 67									
UPSIDE									
TEAM	W	L	T	PTS	GP	GA			
Return/Altitude	6	3	6	607					
Rabala	6	3	6	607					
Hooters	6	3	6	607					
Heavy Tree	4	5	4	444	2				
Taverns On 13	4	5	4	444	2				
TBD	1	8	1	111	6				
Week 13 results									
Taverns On 13 78, Return/Altitude 77									
Rabala 62, Heavy Tree 45									
Hooters 94, TBD 70									
DOWNSIDE									
TEAM	W	L	T	PTS	GP	GA			
GMAC	9	1	0	1000					
CHI & G	8	2	0	1000	1				
Flower Galaxy	7	3	0	700	2				
Kelly Services	7	3	0	700	3				
Bizarrs	3	8	0	273	6				
Blue Lighters	2	8	0	200	7				
NLD	0	11	0	000	9				