

## CC defeats Rice, 2-0; district rematch next

Detroit Catholic Central ended the regular season Saturday at Redford Ice Arena with a 2-0, shutout victory over rival Birmingham Brother Rice and an outright championship in the Michigan Metro Hockey League.

The Shamrocks haven't seen the last of the Warriors. They open the Class A district tournament with a first-round game at 6:30 p.m. Friday at Compuware Arena in Plymouth.

"It's tough to play the same team twice in a week," CC coach Gordie St. John said. "We went all out. They were tough; we worked hard and just barely hung on."

Greg Berger and Jason Tardif scored goals for CC, which takes a 15-3-3 overall record into the postseason. The Shamrocks earned the Metro title with a 12-1-3

record. Senior goaltender Ricky Marnon earned his third shutout of the season, stopping 20 shots. The Shamrocks had 32 shots on the Rice netminder.

Marnon seems to be playing some of his best hockey at the right time for the Shamrocks.

"He had the mid-season blues kind of thing," St. John said. "He's playing well now."

CC led 1-0 after Berger scored, assisted by Tardif and Tony Keshishian, at 10:48 of the first period.

The score stayed 1-0 until Tardif scored a short-handed goal at 11:27 of the third period with an assist by Dave Turner.

Tardif's goal came on a breakaway.

"He was busting up the middle and Turner hit him," St. John said.

## Whalers survive tough weekend

Three games. In four days. Another busy weekend for the Plymouth Whalers, with every game a must-win.

When you're in a battle for first place, that kind of stuff happens. For the Whalers, it was the fourth consecutive weekend with that kind of schedule, and except for a 10-minute span in the final game, it was another extremely successful one.

The Whalers opened the weekend with a 6-3 victory at Windsor last Thursday. On Saturday, they blanked the Sault Ste. Marie Greyhounds 8-0 at Compuware Arena before hosting the Owen Sound Platers Sunday, a

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"One thing I found most disappointing about the gold-medal game was only two American men (members of the U.S. team) were there to watch the game," Schinzel said. "Whereas, the whole Canadian team was there. I thought that was a great disap-

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pointment."

Nighthawks players say women aren't interested in playing on men's teams, but they do want people to respect the quality of play in their game.

"I think it's a cleaner sport," said Nighthawks goalie Meg-Carolyn Remesz, referring to the no-checking rule in women's hockey. "It requires more skill. You can't eliminate someone by simply tossing them into the boards."

"You're forced to play the puck as opposed to the body," said Nighthawks winger Mary Smith, who quit playing hockey in the 1970s because checking was allowed. "I was a lot smaller than a lot of the girls who were playing, and I was getting hurt."

"More guys tell me they enjoy watching the women more than the guys," because of the emphasis on passing and pure hockey skills, Treder said.

Organizers hope to start play in the Women's National Hockey League by 2005, taking a cue from the success of basketball's WNBA last summer.

"I think (the TV networks) found out in the Olympics there is an audience for it," Treder said.

"There won't be a need for women to want to play in the NHL," Schoff added.

"But it may open the field for women, too," Treder said. "If someone large enough should want to play (in the NHL), it

won't be as laughable as it would have been a few years ago."

Manufacturers of hockey equipment have taken notice of the increased popularity of the women's game, too.

Women no longer have to buy men's equipment or rely on hand-me-downs, because everything needed to outfit a player is being made to suit the physical needs and specifications for women. The cost is \$500-600 per player.

"There was a whole market out there that was untapped," Schinzel said.

The 20-and-over MSHL (with an average age of 30) started six years ago with five teams and has grown to 20 divided into three divisions for advanced, intermediate and novice players.

A potential problem in the growth of women's hockey could be the ice time needed to accommodate the expansion since men's and youth leagues also enjoy rising popularity.

"It's not like you grab a baseball and go to the field," Treder said.

Players in the MSHL don't have visions of Olympic glory. Instead, like so many adult men, they enjoy playing hockey as a recreational activity.

"It's a fun, fast-paced sport with a lot of action," Schoff said. "You meet real nice people and everyone gets along."

"You go out in the beginning because you love the sport and

Eacho made 24 saves in earning his third shutout of the season.

Against Windsor last Thursday, Plymouth again got out of the gate quickly, building a 3-0 lead by the end of the opening period, with Druken getting one goal and assisting on another.

The Whalers eventually built their advantage to 6-1, with second-period goals from Babenko, Tselios and Passmore. Tselios totaled a goal and two assists, and Eric Goolley had two assists.

Eacho played the first two periods, giving up two goals, with Robert Holsinger playing the final period.

want to play, but it's the people who keep you coming back."

"It's better than any aerobics class I ever took," Treder added.

**ABOUT THE NIGHTHAWKS:** Besides playing a 24-game schedule in the MSHL, the Nighthawks also play in a lot of tournaments.

They've already played in the Windsor Lady Bulls-Labatt Ladies Classic, Golden Blades in Ann Arbor, Midland Rainbow, Women's Tournament of Champions in Troy, Team Michigan Friendship and Fall Festival in Mount Clemens.

Upcoming tournaments are the Seventh Annual Ruicel Cup (March 19-22) at the Farmington Hills Ice Arena, Toronto Icebreakers (April 10-11), Windsor Baba Blades (March-April), North Country Women's in Traverse City (Feb. 27-March 1) and Chicago Ice Black and Blue (April 24-26).

The Ruicel Cup also serves as the MSHL playoffs. The Stanley Cup will be on display Saturday, March 21, and Red Wings Hall of Famer Ted Lindsay will drop the ceremonial first puck at 1:30 p.m. the same day.

The six-place Nighthawks have a 9-7-2 record in the MSHL's nine-team Blue Line Division (intermediate) with six games remaining.

The team's leading scorer through 33 games is Kathy McCormick with 22 goals and 12 assists for 34 total points. Smith is third with five goals and 12 assists, and Henkel is fourth in assists with seven.

The Nighthawks roster includes seven players from Farmington or Farmington Hills and one each from Waterford, Royal Oak, St. Clair Shores, Commerce Township, Redford, Southfield, Plymouth and West Bloomfield.

## Be There.

When the Box Office opens this Friday (10am).



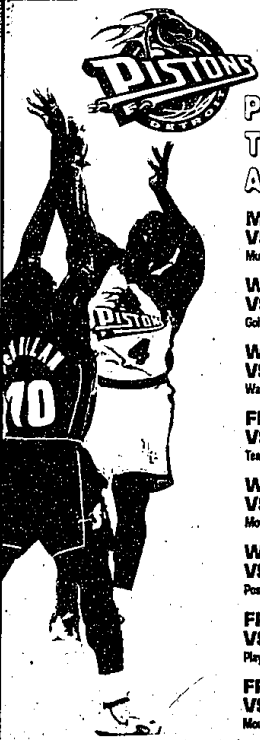
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