

"The YMCA has been a traditionally middle class, conservative organization ... from its inception," Cameron declared. "Up until five or 10 years ago, many Y's were still conducting the traditional gym-swim program for men and boys."

"We were dependent on United Fund support and annual fund-raising campaigns ... we were truly a 'non profit' organization."

But times have changed. According to Cameron, YMCA's are now working with inner-city youth, minority groups, street gangs, drug programs, the under and overprivileged.

"The indoor tennis club came to mind as we realized the United Fund support dollar was becoming more difficult to justify in the suburban areas as more money was needed in the inner city."

"In addition, the charitable donation given to needy organizations was being stretched thinner and thinner as tax laws change, the cost of living increases and more and more organizations seek that dollar."

"AN INCOME PRODUCING PROGRAM to offset the expenses involved in our community type programs seemed the only way," Cameron related.

At the time of planning, there was only one indoor tennis facility within eight miles of the Livonia Family Y. There are now three others under construction within a six mile radius.

AREA TENNIS HOUSES

FARMINGTON RACQUET CLUB, 22777

Farmington Road, Farmington. Ten courts, scheduled for November opening. Men and women, \$75, junior \$30, family \$175. (476-6446)

FRANKLIN RACQUET CLUB, 29633 Franklin Road, Southfield. Eight courts. Men \$85, women \$65, family \$175. (352-5633)

NORTHWEST RACQUET CLUB, 17250 Newburgh, Livonia. Eight courts. Men and women \$75, junior \$25, family \$150. (421-5220)

YMCA GRAND SLAM TENNIS CLUB, 14255 Stark, Livonia. Annual dues (tennis only): men \$70, women \$55, junior \$25, family \$150. (261-2161)

How will the Livonia Y compete with the commercial tennis houses?

"We feel we have a uniqueness that sets us apart from the commercial operations," Cameron stated. "The YMCA has been in business for over 125 years. We have a highly trained full-time professional staff. Any profits we derive will go right back to the community in the form of subsidy programs. And we have the most complete facility of any tennis club in the state."

For \$150, families can join the Y's tennis

club, which will offer the facilities of private tennis houses. And, \$25 more, entitles them to the use of all the Livonia Family Y facilities—including two swimming pools, gymnasium, handball courts and health clubs for men and women.

"We plan to run 47 tennis classes a week—all levels and all ages," Director Cameron said. "This represents more tennis instruction than any club in the country."

A "teaching court" in most tennis facilities is separated from the others by netting, and can be rented when no lesson is being given. Not so at the Y.

A court to be used only for teaching will be in an adjacent but separate building. The court may also be used for some of the Y's exercise classes when no tennis is scheduled.

The Y is veering away from tradition in another area. Instead of green, the six new courts will be blue in color. "I played on some blue courts in California," Cameron reported. "I thoroughly enjoyed the experience, and thought others would too."

Cameron will delegate many of his duties as executive director, so that he can give 60 per cent of his time to the direct management of the tennis program as well as serving as head pro. He will be assisted by Dean Snyder and Nancy Johnson.

He admits that "there are a lot of eyes around the country focused on the Livonia Family Y to see how its tennis facility works. With 1800 Y's looking for new sources of income, you'd better believe we're in the spotlight."

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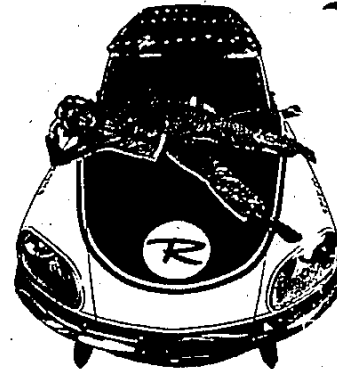
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