



As I see it

By KEN HOFFMAN

Everyday I am bombarded over the phone by coaches and team managers relaying scores of their teams most recent outings. For the most part, I simply record this information and write it up before my deadline. If someone were to ask me a particular score a half hour later, I would probably have to look it up in my files.

However, every so often I receive telephoned reports that excite my imagination or capacity for belief. These events I also file away, but this time I make a mental note to follow the particular team with interest. Such is the case with the junior varsity girls basketball team over at Avondale High School.

About two weeks ago the JV gave Oxford a terrible beating, 72-4. I called back to verify the score but really couldn't say that I gave the game that much consideration. After all, who knows what could have actually taken place? A star of the opposing team was injured, or perhaps the entire team missed the bus and they played the physical science club instead. Who knows?

A few days later the phone rang again. "Avondale junior varsity 66, Athens varsity 10". Well, that proves it, I said to myself. Athens certainly is no challenge to the record books, and anyway they scored more than double what Oxford did.

OH YEAH, I wrote in the paper that the Avondale girls were incredible, but I confess that I really didn't see anything mind boggling in their performance.

When I received information that in their following game, Avondale rolled up an 87-2 score against established Rochester High School, I couldn't believe it. Maybe, just maybe, they were incredible.

I made up my mind that I was going to find out just how good these girls were, but I had a problem. It appeared senseless to watch them play some other girls junior varsity team, because how can a team be judged when it's offered no competition?

Then it dawned on me. I'll personally see just how tough they are. But how?

I could have chosen to challenge its best player to a one-on-one game, but that would have given no measure as to the team's merit. So team coach Bernie Bell and I agreed that the Avondale High junior varsity would take the court against the Observer and Eccentric All-Stars.

ALL-STARS were in name only. Our roster was dotted with such luminaries as Ron Hingst from the Birmingham office. Ron has a lot going for him, mostly a lot of weight. Let's get right down to the point, Ron is so fat that last week his wife had to let out the shower curtain. Also Ron's lack of mobility was further accentuated by the fact that he forgot his sneakers at home and played the game in his socks. Ron doesn't exactly make Red Auerbach drool.

At the last moment we decided to take on a pick-up to fill out the squad. His name is Dan McGoughin, a student at Avondale, and the only one on the team that could call himself an athlete without causing much laughter, occasional chuckles, and assorted smirks.

I was the other player on our three man roster this day. My only pretense to basketball ability comes from my years on playground courts in New Jersey. But that was more than a few years ago and since then my daily exercise routine has consisted of smoking two packs of cigarettes a day. And I ain't no candidate for the Mr. America contest either.

Some All-Stars. When we arrived at Avondale High School for the big game, we found a gymnasium filled with girls running lay-up drills. They didn't look too bad, but they didn't make me shake in my shoes either. I went over the ground rules with Coach Bell, deciding on a 21 point game, no half time.

IF THEY thought the game would be played for laughs, they were soon advised to the contrary.

I've never fooled around in sports, and if they were going to beat us, they would see us drop with our boots on.

Hingst jumped center and controlled the tap for us beginning the game. I threw in a short jumper over Cheryl Johnson and the All-Stars had exceeded in five seconds the output many had expected of us for the entire game.

As Avondale brought the ball up against us, I realized that we were going to be in a lot of trouble defensively. The girls had a fast break situation on us with every layup, and only a passing error could save us from allowing the girls an open shot at the basket each time.

JoAnn Russell answered my basket with one of her own, and the game settled into a see-saw affair. With Hingst plugging up the lane, I thought surely their offense would crumble as the game progressed.

They were much better than I thought they would be, but conversely, we also surpassed their expectations.

I was hot in the early going and wasn't bothered to any great extent by the Avondale zone. However, when the score got to be around 12-10, I started to be haunted by the ghost of cigarettes past. In my life I had never felt the physical strain as I did that day.

I HAD TO decide on a course of action. We had no bench, and a brief timeout would not have helped, so I did the only thing I could — I stopped playing defense. In my younger days I was accused of not playing defense even when I was, so this play to conserving energy came easily.

Somehow, as if by magic, I came alive when we gained possession of the ball. Looking like the typical New Jersey greasy punk, I shot like a maniac every time I could get my hands on the ball.

The game wore on and I am proud to say that justice prevailed, and the good guys on the white horses triumphed. The Observer and Eccentric All-Stars 22 The Avondale girls JV 16.

This was the greatest victory; forget Babe Ruth pointing out his home run, forget about Joe Louis knocking out Max Schmelling, forget all of that. Remember the day that the All-Stars bumped off the neighborhood bully.

For you who may sit there and see images of Bobby Riggs taking on the women tennis players, I can only reply that Riggs was a former Wimbledon champion. No one on our team even played basketball when he was in high school.

ALSO FOR those people who think that they could fare better than the Avondale ladies, I accept all challenges.

I just don't think that there is any team of women, any age, that can keep up with my All-Stars in any sport. If there's a group of women out there that thinks it can take us in basketball, football, or anything; we welcome the chance to beat you. If some woman thinks she's a not shot bowler, I'll take her on personally.

If there's any so brave as to accept the offer, I'll have complete records kept and published in the following edition of this paper. The challenge has been foisted.

All-Stars	
Ken Hoffman	18
Ron Hingst	0
Dan McGoughin	4
Avondale	
Jean Hanley	0
Cheryl Johnson	0
JoAnn Russell	12
Linda Smith	0
Stephanie Sanger	0
Rene Ashbell	0
Janet Russell	0
Barb Cooper	0
Chaddy Walker	0
Jean Smith	0
Cheryl Bolton	16

Trio receive racing honors

Waterford Hills Road Racing Inc. named their annual Perpetual Trophy winners last week and two area men were among the recipients.

Bill Tann From Troy won the best small production car with his MG Midget. Ralph Hottel took honors in best small sedan in his Lincoln-Mercury Capri and Rochester's Mark Davidson topped the field of best formula variety in his Titan Ford.

The winners were chosen on a point system from the number of races the participants started and the finishes over the racing season.

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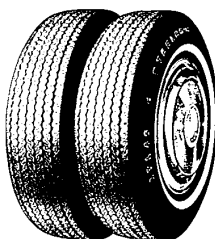
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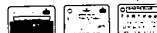
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