

Area women get their kicks in soccer

By TOM BAER



Lori Byers boots one for the Farmington Angels.

(Staff photos by Randy Borst)

Soccer has become popular with suburban youngsters during the past few years. And now the sport's appeal seems to have spread to the players' mothers.

That's the case with a group of women in Farmington. Not content with watching the kids play soccer, the women decided to take up the game themselves. They formed a team — the Farmington Angels. Similar teams have been formed in Ann Arbor, Milford, Plymouth, Grosse Pointe, Dearborn, Livonia, Birmingham and Mount Clemens.

Fortunately for the Farmington gals, John Magee was available and willing to be their coach.

The 57-year-old Magee was born in Northern Ireland and has a long soccer background in England. A former high school soccer referee in the Detroit area, Magee works as a tool machinist in the Ford Motor Company's Wixom plant, and spends his spare time coaching the Angels through an informal season.

"When I began coaching these ladies, they knew practically nothing about soccer," Magee said. "There was only one girl who had ever played before."

But the Angels were quick learners, and after several training sessions, they had their first game, defeating Plymouth 8-0. The team has had three

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more games, losing to Milford (4-2) and Ann Arbor (4-2), and beating Grosse Pointe (5-0). The women have learned their soccer skills, according to Magee.

"THE WAY THEY'RE playing now is unbelievable," he said. "It looks like they've been playing all their lives. I really didn't expect this much. I thought there would be a certain amount of awkwardness, but I was surprised. They really caught on."

Most of the women are oriented toward physical fitness. Martha McIntosh, a centre half for the Angels, is a good example. She knew nothing about soccer, but had two children playing on teams in the Farmington Soccer Association.

"It looked like an exciting game," said Mrs. McIntosh, a physical therapist in Livonia's St. Mary's Hospital. "I've been running a couple of miles three times a week since April. I find

playing soccer kind of reinforces my running."

"I also like the non-stop action," she said. "It's a fast game, and a good team game."

McIntosh gives Magee most of the credit for the team's success.

"He's very enthusiastic and very encouraging," she said. "And he sort of transfers this to the players. I think he enjoys our practices as much as the games because he has a chance to get out there and boot the ball around and show us what he can do."

BORN IN BELFAST, Magee spent the war years in England building Spitfire fighter planes, playing soccer and running track. He was runner-up in the quarter mile in the All-Ireland championships in 1944.

After the war, he went to sea as the gymnasium director on the Queen Elizabeth.

(Continued on page 3B)



Goaltender Joni Snapke prepares to make a save.

Motocross is a challenge to youths

By C.J. RISAK



The course consisted of a twisting dirt track, winding its way over hills and ruts, with mudholes and other obstructions dotting the path along the way.

That may sound like the description to a survival course. And, to a degree, it is. But the object isn't to survive the course — it's to race over it.

The track was the site of the Second Annual West Bloomfield Bicycle Motocross, staged last Friday on the lot where the West Bloomfield Civic Center will be built. Forty participants competed in the four age groups.

Bicycle motocross racing is becoming an increasingly popular sport across the country. The Oakland County Parks and Recreation Department sponsors a motocross race every Saturday morning, attracting between 100-150 participants every week.

The sport is an outgrowth of motorcycle dirt track racing. The competitors wear similar protective equipment — helmets, gloves, arm and leg coverings. Special bikes are also important in both sports, to stand up to the rugged terrain.

The West Bloomfield race was for 20-inch bikes. Most were equipped with special tires and frames designed for speed and durability.

The only other major difference between the two sports is the age of the competitors. In the bicycle motocross, the age groups for the competitors ranged from 7 and 8-year-olds to 13 and 14.

(Continued on page 3B)

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Racing over one of the track's hills, John Colle (291) and Bob Ligon (290) are in hot pursuit of leader Randy Spivy (288). (Staff photos by Charlie Klid)