

A Varsity Sport For Boys And Girls

Skiing Takes Top Spot At Thurston

When it comes to sports booms, skiing has blossomed out by leaps and bounds.

Especially in Michigan. More and more people — men, women and youngsters — are taking to the state's ski trails every winter.

Yet, skiing has still to become a major activity as far as the high school sports programs are concerned.

But, it's making some headway.

Just ask Ves Vanhille, who teaches at Pleson Junior High School in Redford Township's south school district.

With Vanhille the guiding force, skiing now is recognized as a varsity sport at Thurston — for the girls as well as the boys.

WHAT'S MORE Thurston competes in the Southeastern Michigan Interscholastic Ski League with approximately 25 other schools.

There are schools like Ferndale and Southfield in the conference, plus others from Bloomfield Hills, Rochester and Walled Lake.

But at the moment, Thurston is alone from Observer-

land with a varsity ski team.

Vanhille talks how it all happened.

"It started at Pleson and Marshall junior highs about seven years ago," Vanhille declared. "We started some ski trips once a week."

"When it came time for these youngsters to move into Thurston High, they wanted to

continue to ski. They asked for a team."

"So we talked the authorities into letting us sponsor a team and it's been very successful and very popular."

UNDER STATE High School Athletic Association rules, skiing is open to girls, too.

However, the girls must ski against gals, the boys against

boys. But they help each other in meets.

"We ski in slalom races," Vanhille said. "Each team (boys and girls) goes down the course twice. When the boys are in action, the girls serve as the gatekeepers. When the girls race, the boys do the chores."

Each skier is timed. The four fastest times among the

boys post the team score. The top three among the gals are used.

Things can become pretty close. Take the meet last week between Thurston and Ferndale. The Ferndale gals posted a winning time of 210.7 seconds. Thurston's collected time was 211 seconds.

"That means our gals lost by just three-tenths of a second," moaned Vanhille.

The Thurston boys did much better. They had a winning score of 244 seconds to 280.4 for Ferndale.

THURSTON HAS a full schedule for skiing. Naturally much depends on the weatherman. He must co-operate with a little snow once in a while.

But this has been a banner year... for snow.

Thurston, like many of the other prep teams, skis at Mt. Brighton for the most part. There are other meets at Mt. Holly and Pine Knob.

The Thurston team boasts some standouts, including Ray Ott and Bruce Franz, among the boys and an upcoming sophomore in Jim Simeson.

Bob Boucher has been lost to the team for several weeks. He suffered a broken leg, something which happens frequently to skiers.

Among the girls, there is Debbie Lewis, who was No. 1 overall against Ferndale. She's a 17-year-old senior. Nancy Heins and Kathy Horton are

two other standouts among the gals.

THE THURSTON girls went undefeated last year and won the first-place overall trophy. The boys finished in a tie for third.

The gals have had some problems this year. They lost their first two meets.

Two big meets are carded this week. Thurston skis against Benedictine on Thurston at Mt. Brighton and then participates in the Detroit News area prep meet at Mt. Holly on Saturday.

More than 30 schools will contest at Mt. Holly in the News meet.

The State Association is sanctioning three regional ski meets this year, although there'll be no overall competition for a state title.

ONE REGIONAL will be held at Mt. Brighton and most of the Detroit area schools will be there — the schools, that is, which sponsor skiing.

Another lower peninsula regional will be held at Traverse City with an Upper Peninsula meet near Marquette.

"Skiing is coming fast," adds Vanhille, "but we could use more schools in our own Observer area."

He's confident that it won't be long before a few more Observerland schools send forth skiing teams.

It's truly a fun sport. Just ask the youngsters who ski for Thurston.

And Hopes To Make A Home In Livonia

'Mules' Solves A Piston Problem

He stands 6-8, his wife is more than a foot shorter. They're fairly new additions to the Observerland sports colony, along with their one youngster.

Among his associates he's known as "Mules," officially he's Erwin Mueller, who with his wife and youngster hope to settle down and make Livonia their home for years to come.

By the looks of things, they

should get their wishes. Mueller is the Detroit Pistons forward who was obtained early in the season from the Seattle SuperSonics.

THE PISTONS figures they engineered "a steal" in the trading department. For Mueller, they merely gave up a future draft choice.

In return they have in Mueller a starting forward who

has blossomed into the type of forward the team has been hunting for.

Mueller was the man coach Bill van Breda Kolf wanted from the time he was appointed the boss of the team last June.

Some were ready to knock Mueller. After all he had switched from Chicago, after being a star at San Francisco University, to Los Angeles

Chicago to Seattle in less than three years as a professional.

"Good players don't move that fast and to so many teams," some were heard to say.

VAN BREDA KOLF felt he knew differently. He had coached Mueller when they were together with Los Angeles two years ago.

Mueller has lived up to van Breda Kolf's predictions.

His point production has swelled to the point he is approaching 10 per game. His rebounds are up. Mueller is a durable player. He goes from 38-42 minutes per game.

"He does things a lot of people don't appreciate," says van Breda Kolf.

"He's an excellent defensive forward. He's one of the best

passing forwards around. He hustles. He knows how to switch men."

"THERE AREN'T many who can figure out a play and be in New York," Mueller is so often. That's why so often an opponent goes crashing into him and knows Mueller down.

The rival gets the foul and we get the ball. That's what's most important."

Mueller welcomed the three-day break the Pistons enjoyed this past week for the All-Star game. He needed time to do some painting around the new home in Livonia.

"One doesn't have much time to spare in our business," he says. "We're jumping around all the time."

And he's not kidding. This weekend the Pistons moved from Detroit to Syracuse to Boston to Detroit to Chicago for games.

Starting Thursday, the Pistons play five games in five states — in New York, in Detroit, in Cincinnati, in Detroit and in Greenville, S.C.

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Tigers Appear Set For 1970

By W.W. EDGAR

The Detroit Tigers are setting something of a record — even before the season starts.

For the first time in years they'll be heading south for spring training and won't be caught in an avalanche in the breakup of the outfield or all manner of trades.

Even Al Kaline, veteran rightfielder, knows the role he is expected to play in the coming campaign and he has voiced his wholehearted satisfaction.

More than that, there's little prospect of a battle for starting pitchers, and Dick McAuliffe will be back at second base.

THE ONLY POSSIBLE stranger in the opening day lineup against Washington in the nation's capital on Monday, April 6, will be Cesar Guterres who will be filling the gap at shortstop.

"We're confident that Cesar can fill the bill," General Manager Jim Campbell told audiences throughout the state last week on the annual public relations tour.

Last year, it will be remembered that Mickey Stanley, one of the best outfielders in baseball, was assigned to the shortstop role he had filled so capably during the 1968 world series. But it didn't work out.

As a result shortstop was a weak spot all year. Even the

acquisition of Tom Tresh from the Yankees didn't work out too well after the first few weeks.

ACCORDING TO CAMPBELL, and Manager Mayo Smith, the starting lineup is fairly well set — unless something drastic happens in the training camp.

"Our main job down south," Campbell said, "will be to get in condition both mentally and physically." And Owner John Fetzer nodded his approval.

"Our fellows can win it all if they want to," was the way Owner Fetzer put it and he added, "they learned last year that you can't get by on your reputation."

"They've known the glory and thrill of winning — then missing. So, it will be up to them. If they make up their collective minds they can do it."

SO, UNLESS SOMETHING happens, here's how the team should line up:

1b — Cash or Kaline
2b — McAuliffe
3b — Wert

ss — Guterres
rf — Northrup or Kaline
cf — Stanley

lf — Horton
c — Frazier or Price
p — McLean, Lolich, Wilson and Killebrew

In other years Kaline has been the subject of many rumors — many of which had

him figuring in a trade. It was said he was good trade material and that the Tigers could get the needed shortstop by making a deal with him.

As a result switches had to be made from time to time in the outfield.

THIS YEAR Kaline has been told that he will see a lot of service at first base and Stanley will be a fixture in his centerfield position.

There'll be a few faces missing, among them Joe Sparr, the in-out-of pitcher who has been traded to Montreal. The other trouble spots appear to have been eliminated and all that's left for the Tigers to do is to get into condition. There is little chance of any of them losing their jobs.

And that's unusual.

Turf Tips, Quips

By Doc Minard

While the battle of words continues between Michigan Racing Commissioner Leo Shirley, track operators and horsemen over the allotment of dates, Windsor Raceway, across the river in Ontario, has quietly gone along its way and built up a program that will be hard to match.

There has been a constant debate going on in Michigan since the Racing Commissioner announced 1970 dates and didn't grant as much as one more day to the tracks — harness or thoroughbred.

The immediate screams came from the harness horsemen over the failure to grant winter dates to the Jackson-Northville meeting for January and February. There were thoughts that the dates had been more or less promised but never given.

Then the cry and hue went up because the Commissioner hadn't lengthened the racing season at all. Both the thoroughbred and harness tracks thought they had been told more days and nights would be handed out.

AT ABOUT the same time, Don MacFarlane, president of Hazel Park Harness Racing Association, made loud noises about the mid-March opening. He apparently was assured that the opening nights would go to Northville Downs which is prepared for cold weather and also has winter type barns at Hazel Park.

And behind all of the talk was the constant cry of why Michigan wasn't doing anything to compete with Windsor and keep the Michigan dollars in Michigan and not allow them to wander off to Ontario.

It is very apparent that Commissioner Shirley had no thoughts of allowing winter racing whether it was to furnish competition to Windsor or for any other reason.

So, while Michigan was in the midst of a debate, Windsor took things in stride and made plans for the second half of its winter meeting.

WITH COMPETITION out of the way, Windsor officials started the twice a week matinee programs on Wednesday and Sunday afternoons in addition to the usual six night cards.

That made a total of eight racing programs for one week. It also added 18 more races for the horsemen to enter pacers and trotters, giving them more chances to get their horses started. All of which makes the horsemen happy — on the assumption that the more starts the more money the pacer or trotter banks.

Now Windsor is going one step farther and will start Sunday matinee racing next week. Post for the first race will be 1:30 p.m., same as that for the Wednesday and Saturday afternoon programs.

It won't add another day to the week's racing since track officials decided to have dark Mondays for the remainder of the meeting.

Somewhat or other it appears to us as if Windsor officials and Canadian racing authorities think a lot faster than they do in Michigan.

The track operators in Michigan may be ahead of Windsor in thinking but that doesn't mean a thing when the Racing Commissioner has his head buried in the sand at least it appears that way.

North Farmington High's wrestling team captured the annual Redford Union Invitational wrestling tournament with 86 points.

Farmington followed with 73, followed by Southfield with 56, Thurston 48, Glen 47, Redford 46 and Garden City 45.

The results:

98 pounds — John Wheeler (Thurston) dec. Mark Frank (NF). John Barlett (Farm) dec. John Birchard (Glen) for third place.

107 — Ken Haller (NF) dec. Tom Neal (Glen). Jeff Donovan dec. Ken Harris (West) for third place.

115 — Dennis Campbell (RU) dec. Chuck Wayne (CV). Scott Clemens (Thurston) dec. Steve Nichol (West) for third place.

123 — Tom Tooley (NF) dec.



NEW COACHES for the Farmington school district get together for the first time after the recent announcement of their appointments. The trio (from left) Harold Beardsley, football coach at Farmington High; Ken Dean, basketball at Harrison High; and John Harrington, football at Harrison.

(Photo by Evert)

Jack Cotton Is Named MHSAA Vice President



Jack Cotton

Election of John K. (Jack) Cotton of Farmington as vice president of the Michigan High School Athletic Association has been announced.

Cotton for many years has served as athletic director for the Farmington Public Schools.

In recent years, he also has been a member of the State Representative Council, which

supervises schoolboy sports on a senior and junior high level in the state of Michigan.

Henry Geisler of Morenci, where he is superintendent of schools, has been named president of the MHSAA, and Ernest J. Buckholz, director of athletics for Mt. Clemens schools, is the secretary-treasurer.

The trio was elected unanimously.

Raider Grapplers Capture RU Honors

Rick Stewart (West). Ken wrestling team captured the annual Redford Union Invitational wrestling tournament with 86 points.

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130 — Dave Kroll (Thurston) pinned Mike Tierman (Farm). Ray Tooley (NF) dec. Mike Marr (RU) for third place.

127 — Wayne Wendell (NF) pinned Dave Pomar (Thurston) for third place.

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145 — Gary Curtis (SF) dec. Mike Ponce (NF). Layman McLilly (Glen) dec. Bob Metz (RU) for third place.

155 — John Plichta (Farm) pinned Craig Gow (NF). Mike Davis (Glen) dec. Tom Burke (RU) for third place.

165 — Len Dicks (CVille) dec. Jerry Miller (Southfield). Rick Hagopian (RU) dec. Bob Kruse (Glen) for third place.

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