

Is it recruiting or attracting?

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"I was a product of a parochial school and I know what goes on," Penderacki said. "I was recruited from the other side of the city (Detroit)."

RECRUIT is a nasty word to people at Brother Rice. They say the correct term is attract.

"People don't understand that kids come to Brother Rice for academic standards and fundamental discipline, as well as athletics," said Rice Dad's Club member Jim Foster of Bloomfield Hills. "The correct word is attract — we don't recruit. Success breeds success — that's the word. We have a winning tradition much like Notre Dame, USC (University of Southern California) and Alabama. And that's why Rice attracts players like these schools do — on a much smaller scale."

Rice cross country coach Bob Stark said "the funny thing is, if (defense end) Fred Konkel hadn't tackled that Sterling Helgins Stevenson quarterback at the seven-yard line, we wouldn't have won the state championship and none of this would have ever happened."

Stark is speaking of the quarterfinal football game between Rice and Stevenson where the Warriors almost lost in playoff action.

"IF WE WERE recruiting, we would recruit very, very big athletes — and I don't see that happening," said Brother Rice principal Brother Joseph Gramuldi. "We have the spirit of boys who really want to be here."

"Bill Norton (Rice's athletic director and basketball coach) and Al Fracassa (Rice's football and baseball coach) are outstanding individuals — honest to God — they work for the benefit of those kids," he added, pounding his fist on the desk. "These people (Fracassa and Nor-

ton) have charisma. We attract like no one else."

Norton said "The nature of the private school is that the kids come here, and the parents reach down in their pockets and pay \$1,600 (\$1,400 tuition plus fees). And the nice thing is we keep records — and every athlete pays tuition."

FRACASSA IS HURT by this whole situation, because he feels it reflects on his coaching skills.

"They are taking my coaching ability away from me," Fracassa said. "You just don't get a football and say 'go play.'"

"They think we're just recruiting and not coaching. I think that's unfair to my kids and what's being done here."

"Look at the team we had this year," the Rice coach added. "If I was going to recruit kids, I'd recruit kids bigger than that."

"I'm wondering where is this coaching competitiveness," Fracassa added. "If I were in their situation I would like that challenge to beat Brother Rice very much."

"I'd rather play the toughest teams in America — the ones that are better than you — than beat all the teams that aren't so good," said Fracassa.

BUT QUINN CONCLUDED: "I have an obligation to place my kids in a situation where they can be successful and where they face equal competition. It's getting to the point where competing against Brother Rice is not equal."

"In due respect to Al Fracassa and Bill Norton," Quinn added. "I've known them for years. I think they are very fine gentlemen. I don't know and haven't heard of them directly involved with these actions."

"The bottom line is for an equal situation. For us to compete against a sector that has no boundaries and that is recruiting — and we have to face declining enrollments."

Dispute!

Public-private sports rift widens

(Continued from Page 1)

"It is a serious inequity (for the public schools) because of the declining enrollment," said another athletic director. "The private schools have a broader range of athletes than the public schools."

BROTHER RICE, an all-male institution on Lahser between 14 Mile and Maple in Bloomfield Township, draws student-athletes from all over.

Many public school athletic directors claim quality athletes pass up stardom at their local schools to attend Rice.

The Warriors have won three state football championships — first in 1974 by the Associated Press, and in 1977 and 1980 under MESA's playoff system.

No other Class A school has won

more than one state football title since the state playoff format was instituted in 1975.

Rice also won a state basketball crown (1974) and one state golf championship (1977).

Since 1963, Brother Rice has won 45 Catholic League titles, 10 district and 18 regional titles in all sports. It has qualified for the football state playoffs in three of the last four years.

Thirteen high school All-Americans helped Rice establish these credentials. A lot of those players arrive from Rice's five Catholic "feeder" schools — St. Bede's, St. Hugo of the Hills, Holy Name, St. Regis and Our Lady Queen of Martyrs.

IN FACT, 28 of the 60 players on Rice's 1980 varsity football roster, or 46.7 percent, came from those five

schools. Nine others arrived from other parochial schools.

But it's the 23 remaining players (38.3 percent) who arrived from public schools or public junior high schools that raises concern from public school athletic directors.

"Now we will have to sit down with the non-public and public athletic directors, as a group, and find an equitable way to solve the problem," Quinn said. "We feel, as an association of athletic directors, that we have the obligation to sit down and find a viable solution (to the public-private dispute)."

The athletic directors regularly meet monthly. The next scheduled meeting is Thursday, Feb. 26.

BROTHER RICE Athletic Director Bill Norton also attended the January meeting.

"I was really excited when I came back from the meeting," Norton said. "We have always filled our non-league schedules with Class A public schools and hope to continue this scheduling in the future. And we've worked hard to hold trust and mutual respect."

"We would rather play local competition and the best competition in the area — and we will continue to seek local competition," Norton added. "However, if we are forced to play out-state, we will seek the best competition available."

Currently, Brother Rice has filled only one of its three non-league football games for fall 1981 — thanks to Toledo Bowsher High School.

Norton said he has contacted approximately 45 schools in Michigan, unsuccessfully trying to complete the grid schedule.

Coaches asked to call

Varsity prep coaches from the Observer & Eccentric area are encouraged to call in their sports results for the winter sports season.

The O&E sports lines will be open 8-11 p.m. Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays.

Coaches from the Birmingham-Bloomfield, Farmington, West Bloom-

field, Southfield, Troy and Rochester communities are asked to call in their results immediately after each contest.

Weekend results should be reported after 10 a.m. Mondays. Wednesday night contests should be reported on Thursdays.

The sports lines are 644-1101, 644-1103 and 644-1105.

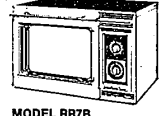
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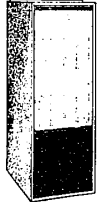

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