

from our readers

Rice parents react to boycott

Sports Editor:

Once upon a time, there was a castle on Lahser Road in the county of Oakland.

Rice Castle was its name and many a naive person thought athletics was its only claim to fame.

Castle was inhabited by brave and agile Warriors, who were sent by their parents to pursue a Catholic education and become proficient in the liberal arts.

It was a beautiful castle, surrounded not by walls like some mighty fortresses, but by love and cooperation — and a discipline steeped in Catholic tradition.

The castle was conducted by a dedicated religious order, known as the Christian Brothers of Ireland, and ably supported by an unbelievably loyal and talented staff of teachers and coaches.

Warriors near and far (85 percent) traveled to Rice Castle to be educated according to their religious convictions, as guaranteed by the United States Constitution.

These mighty Warriors, as they came to be called, were known far and wide for their athletic prowess and feats of skill.

In the field of competition they excelled, but alas, they were never to enjoy the glory they truly deserved.

For they were unjustly maligned and accused of false crimes by jealous knaves, who had partaken of a poisonous potion called "THE SOUR GRAPE."

But, being stalwart of heart and of gentle demeanor, the mighty Warriors emerged victorious.

This story closely resembles a legend of Grimm's Fairy Tales, but in actuality it is a reality.

It may be a grim reality for the unsportsmanlike members of the Michigan High School Athletic Association, and certain members of the press, but

one they must face and deal with in a just and sportsmanlike manner.

MARIANNE NELSON
Brother Rice Mothers' Club
Lathrup Village

We were 'attracted'

Sports Editor:

As a father of a student-athlete who transferred from a Birmingham public school to Brother Rice High School, I feel an obligation to answer the criticism directed at the Brother Rice Athletic Department.

Our son was not "recruited by," but rather was "attracted to" Brother Rice. The attraction for my family includes the excellence of its academic program, the Christian environment, the value system of its families that is similar to ours and the individual attention given the students.

I'm sure these same qualities are the reason most families send their son to Brother Rice over the public schools that benefit from their tax dollars — the same tax dollars that help to support their athletic programs.

The Brother Rice athletic program is successful because of excellent coaching, a willingness to work extra hard to be prepared and a tremendous community and school pride by everyone involved.

Brother Rice has earned its reputation for overall excellence as a college preparatory school. As a community, let's not forget that it is Birmingham Brother Rice High School.

LOU BAUGHMAN
Rice Parent
Birmingham

It's not recruiting

Sports Editor:

After reading the articles in The Eclectic, I felt I must respond.

Last year, my husband decided to inquire into the hockey program at

Brother Rice. We were told that no matter how good a hockey or soccer player my son is, he would have to take an exam in the fall of his eighth grade and score somewhere in the 90 percent (range) in order to get into the school. (Can't say that sounds much like recruiting.)

We looked into Brother Rice because it has the best of both worlds, high academics and a well-rounded sports program. Brother Rice is one of the few schools that is interested in promoting excellence in all areas.

As I read the articles, all I could come up with is that some coaches are just poor losers.

It seems they can't beat Brother Rice, so the only way they can get back is by boycotting them.

Because Brother Rice has a great coaching staff, excellent students and a fine, disciplined group of athletes, they can handle it.

I only hope the economy gets better so that maybe my son will have a chance to get the guidance and discipline Brother Rice offers.

My son plays on a travel hockey team, and we don't just play teams in our own division. We play teams two and three years older.

We think it helps us get better. If you want to talk about injustices, it's really an injustice to Brother Rice to have to play teams they already can beat.

GLORIA HOPE
Rice parent
Rochester

Wise advice?

Sports Editor:

Advice to private school parents:

- Pay your school taxes.
- Pay your private school tuition.
- Then lose your games.

DONALD R. CAVANAUGH
Former private school student and parent
Birmingham

Dispute raises questions

(Continued from Page 1)

better framework in which to debate the public-private perspectives.

FROM OUR VIEWPOINT, these are the issues in the dispute.

• The public-private school conflict has raged for years. But it never advanced to this friction point. In the past, area public school coaches quietly fumed about Brother Rice's winning ways, but would never publicly admit it. So why has this problem surfaced now? Is it because angry football coaches resent Brother Rice's winning tradition? Or is it truly an all-sports scheduling boycott of all private schools? If the latter is true, why did some public schools recently agree to form a soccer league with Bloomfield Hills Cranbrook and Detroit Country Day — two private schools?

• Why is Brother Rice still playing baseball powerhouses Plymouth Canton, a Wayne County school, and Royal Oak Kimball, an Oakland County school, this spring? And why is Brother Rice being considered to host the Birmingham-Bloomfield Wrestling Invitational next year — against public-school competition?

• Rice's wrestling program is down. The Warriors are average in baseball. Are public schools willing to play private schools only when they think they can win?

• There's always talk about athletes transferring to Brother Rice. Is it because they are "recruited" or "attracted" to the winning athletic program?

• If these athletes are "attracted," are they "attracted" for the right reasons? Rice admits it does a great "sell job" of its school. But does Rice sell its academics before its coaches and athletics, or is it the other way around?

• And where are the priorities of parents who transfer their student-athletes to Rice? Is it for academic prowess or scoring points?

• Why are these student-athletes transferring to Rice in the first place? Is it because of less desirable programs, athletically and academically, at public schools? Is it healthy for a teenager to transfer not related to a family's uprooting from one place to another? Should local transfers be allowed at Brother Rice at all after the ninth grade?

• We hear about transfers all the time. Public

commentary

school to public school. Public to private. Private to private. Private to public. Students living in phantom apartments to run, bat, kick or swim for a school in another district.

Are Michigan High School Athletic Association rules on transfers strong enough to deal with this situation? Are the rules being enforced?

• Are there problems with the athletic programs in the Catholic League? It seems that Brother Rice and Detroit Catholic Central are the only teams to win in that league. Are Rice and CC too good for the Catholic League, let alone the rest of the state? Do these two schools really have that much of a monopoly on the best athletes in most sports?

• There used to be strong competition in the Catholic League. Where is it now? There never used to be resentment between public and private schools in the 1950s and 1960s. Why now?

• Would this condition exist if public schools weren't facing declining enrollments — and fewer athletes?

• Why isn't there resentment toward public schools with successful athletic programs? For example, no one boycotts River Rouge's basketball team or the Ann Arbor swimming teams?

• Is the resentment with Rice, itself, or do public schools resent all the publicity the school receives?

• Why does Brother Rice receive all of this publicity? Why don't the major newspapers treat Rice like an ordinary school — instead of always giving it the headlines? Why are the Catholic schools so special in some newspapers' coverage of high school sports?

IF WE ANALYZE the motives behind private and public academic and athletic programs, we'll begin to find solutions to this debate.

The Rice controversy provides the platform to address this goal.

DENNIS O'CONNOR
MARTY BUDNER
TOM BAER

'Hat Trick' winners honored

The first annual Hockey Hat Trick final competition recently took place prior to the Detroit Red Wing-Colorado Rockies professional hockey game at Joe Louis Arena in Detroit.

Winners of the competition were Keith Bozyk of Canton (7-8 year-old division), Steve Green of Troy (9-10), Richie Abbo of Oak Park (11-12), Ben Bolen of Ponton (13-14), and Mark Blaz of Bloomfield Hills (15-16).

The competition tests the skills of youngsters in

skating, passing and shooting. Bolen finished with the top point total, scoring 220 points. He knocked down six of eight targets on his shots.

Runners up in the competition were Matt Jones of Brighton (7-8); Bill Flaherty of St. Clair Shores (9-10); Ron Jones of Detroit (11-12); Ed Sauer of Southgate (13-14); and Jeff Buck of St. Clair Shores (15-16).

The event was sponsored by the Southfield Parks and Recreation Department.

sport shorts

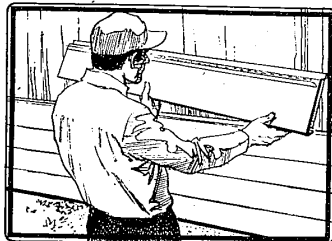
TENNIS WORKSHOP

United States Davis Cup Captain and former Wimbledon champion Arthur Ashe will conduct a tennis workshop at the Grosse Pointe Indoor Tennis Club starting today, along with Peter Burwash, president of Peter Burwash International, Honolulu, Hawaii; George Acker, Kalamazoo College tennis coach; and Bob White, Wayne State University's veteran trainer.

Burwash will offer a special program for teaching professionals and coaches 6-10 p.m. tonight and 8-10 a.m. tomorrow.

Topics will include: tennis careers, planning your future; developing a public relations/publicity campaign for your club; contract guidelines, selecting and training a staff; tennis camp/clinic organization and administration and on-court teaching techniques.

Cost for the six-hour program is \$85. The tennis workshop featuring Ashe, Burwash, George Acker and Bob White will be 10 a.m.-10 p.m. tomorrow and continues 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m. Saturday. Call 884-4444 or 886-2944 for more information.

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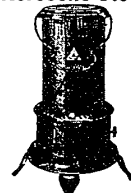


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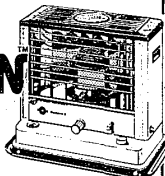
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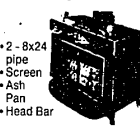
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