

Area to have own 'softball city'

By M.B. Dillon
Staff writer

You no longer have to guzzle gas all the way to Detroit's Softball City in pursuit of a softball field.

May 1 is opening day at the spanking-new Suburban Softball Complex at M-59 and Adams Road in Avon Township.

The 80-acre site features four lighted diamonds, and another four will be ready when the second season begins in August.

A nine-hole golf course eventually will surround the fields.

"We'll have more than 200 teams

in A, B and C leagues playing in each of two 12-week seasons," said Jim Dieters, Suburban Softball general operating manager and a former minor-league for the St. Louis Cardinals.

"Games will be played seven days a week at 6, 7:15, 8:30, and 9:45 p.m.

"On weekends, we'll host U.S.S.A. (United States Slowpitch Softball Association) world-qualitying tournaments, including the state tournaments.

"That will give teams from all over Michigan a chance to use our facility," he added.

Suburban Softball league teams will receive priority in entering tournaments.

ENTRY FEE at Suburban Softball is \$215 per team per season. Gate fee is \$1, and the price of an umpire is \$5.

That's cheaper than Softball City, which charges \$240 per team, \$2 per person and \$5.50 in umpire fees.

Rochester's local league charges a \$180 team entry fee and a \$15 player entry fee.

"We are not stealing teams from other leagues," said Dieters, commenting on a report in another area publication. "That's not the case."

"We did a lot of studying before we started with this, and found out that there are at least 5,000 softball teams in the metro-Detroit area," Dieters said.

"Most local leagues are overflowing with teams. We're working with the Troy and Rochester leagues now. They refer teams to us that they can't accommodate."

"And we're getting teams from as far away as St. Clair Shores, Mt. Clemens, Romeo and Pontiac. Unlike the local leagues, we have no residency requirement."

"Some teams from this area that used to play at Softball City are coming here now," continued Dieters. "Softball City is really our only competitor. But there's plenty of business for both of us."

DIETERS AND his father, Dick Dieters (Suburban Softball owner

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If the boys of summer can hang on for a few more weeks, a spanking new, 80-acre facility in Avon Township featuring eight lit diamonds will be ready for many a hard day's night on the ballfield.



Jim Dieters manages the new Suburban Softball Complex in Avon Township.

Cole replaces McPhillips OCC elevates cage coach

Leonard Cole, Oakland Community College's new basketball coach, knows the job ahead of him won't be an easy one.

Cole, a 30-year-old Pontiac resident, knows his way around OCC, having spent two years playing for the school and four more as an assistant to Tom McPhillips, who resigned recently after 10 years at the helm.

The new coach was happy to learn that basketball still is in the budget at the financially-strapped school, even though his old position — assistant coach — was a victim of the cost cutters.

The prospect of being a one-man coaching show doesn't bother Cole, however.

"Lynn Reed, my coach while I was playing at OCC, didn't have an assistant, either," Cole said. "If he can do it alone, I guess I can too."

"Sure, it's going to be a challenge, but I like challenges."

Cole played his high school basketball at Pontiac Central, graduating in 1968. He

played for two years on the OCC-Highland Lakes team under Reed, now a "campus athletic coordinator" at Highland Lakes.

COLE CAPTAINED the Highland Lakes team in his sophomore year (1971) and then enrolled at Eastern Michigan University. During his senior year at EMU, he was named captain of the Huron squad, which included George Gerwin.

After a brief tryout with the Detroit Pistons, Cole helped organize basketball leagues and clinics for the Pontiac Parks and Recreation Department. He is currently employed by the OCC-Southeast Campus System in Royal Oak in a non-teaching capacity.

McPhillips, who said he resigned to devote more time to his family and teaching, was one of OCC's most successful coaches.

During his 10 years as head coach of first OCC-Orchard Ridge and then the all-college team, McPhillips compiled a 153-103

record. Four of his teams won Eastern Conference championships, and two others gained runner-up honors in the community-college circuit.

McPHILLIPS, who will continue to teach health and physical education at OCC's Orchard Ridge campus, coached last season's team to a 6-13 record.

In the best community-college tradition, many of McPhillips' players went on to play basketball at four-year colleges. Two of the more well-known are Walker D. Russell, like Cole a product of Pontiac Central, who starred at Western Michigan University, and Kurt James, a Pontiac Northern grad who played at Michigan State.

OCC draws its talent from the school's four regional campuses — Auburn Hills, Highland Lakes, Orchard Ridge and the Southeast Campus System. The team plays its home games in a year-old facility on the Orchard Ridge campus in Farmington Hills.

Prep football stars to shine

Nine area players have been named to play in the first annual Michigan High School Football Coaches' Association (MHSFCA) East-West All-Star game to be held Aug. 8 at Michigan State's Spartan Stadium.

All eight area choices will represent the East squad which consists of players from the following counties: Wayne, Oakland, Monroe, St. Clair, Lapeer, Sanilac, Macomb, Huron and Tuscola. That area represents approximately half of the state's high school students. The West squad was drawn from the remainder of the state, including the upper peninsula.

Among the area players selected to play on offense include Steve Mazur, 5-foot-10, 175-pound halfback, Bloomfield Hills Andover; Rick Rogers, 6-2, 200 fullback, Wayne Memorial; Dale Boone, 6-3, 215 linebacker,

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Westland John Glenn, and John Penders, 6-1, 195 linebacker, Plymouth Salem.

North Farmington's Doug Schulte will do the punting for the East.

Defensive selections include Ken Kaszubski, 6-2, 155 linebacker, Rochester Adams; Alex Clark, 5-11, 187 safety, Bloomfield Hills Lakes; Ken Granader, 5-10, 180 safety, Birmingham Groves; and Tim Maclean, 5-11, 185 cornerback, Birmingham Brother Rice.

A total of 35 players on the East squad will be coached by Al Fracassa of Brother Rice, Ron Holland of North Farmington,

John Herrington of Farmington Harrison and Dave Sneed of Detroit Central.

Jim Scarelli of Warren Woods, a 6-5, 220-pound defensive end, and John Ghindia, a 6-3, 225-pound defensive tackle from Trenton, both bound for the University of Michigan, were also selected to the East squad.

Players were chosen through nominations made by MHSFCA members. A 12-member committee from the MHSFCA then selected 72 players to represent the East and West teams.

KICK-OFF for the game is 1:30 p.m. Tickets can be purchased by sending \$3 per ticket to: Chuck Evans, Head Football Coach, Homer High School, Homer, MI 49245. Checks should be made out to the MHSFCA along with a self-address envelope.

Clinton Canoe Classic coming up

Get those canoes ready — the fourth annual Clinton River Canoe Classic is less than four weeks away.

This year's amateur race takes place at 1 p.m. May 3. Anyone 18 years and older is eligible to enter.

The 3.4-mile race begins at the junction of Adams Road and the Clinton River between Avon and Hamlin roads in Avon Township. It ends at Diversion Street in Rochester.

Two-person teams compete for trophies

in three separate categories — male/male, female/female and male/female. Canoes must be a minimum 15 feet in length. Wide racing paddles are prohibited.

Registration fee is \$40 per team (\$30 for those with canoe).

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Luxury trappings can't cut running costs or prolong car life or make driving safer. Technology can—as witness that 1½-ton mobile efficiency system, the 240D.

The Mercedes-Benz 240D

is far more than the only \$20,000 sedan to be rated at 20 EPA estimated mpg and 33 estimated highway mpg. It's a meeting of science and technology, pursuing not only high fuel mileage but efficiency in every sense of the word.

For example, its zero-emissions four-cylinder diesel engine is meant to run efficiently at 5,000 feet above sea level, or at 10,000 feet below it.

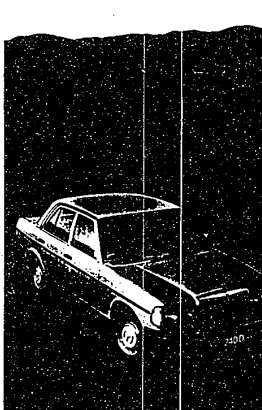
Mercedes-Benz sensors give it a built-in "brain" to adjust the fuel air mixture in the intake.

An ingenious automatic cruise control device can make you a more efficient driver by holding 55 mph all day if needed — far more precisely than your throttle foot. Not to mention up and down hills. Drive often in rush-hour city traffic, consider that you 240D's efficient diesel engine burns 25 percent less fuel at idle than a gasoline engine of the same. And that no amount of idling gets you and your traffic to a plug or pothole.

Efficient roadholding. To save weight while not missing power and fuel flow, the engineers gave the 240D a four-mass four-wheel drive transmission, an efficiently designed four-speed manual.

To three through-mounted engine, sleep steering is efficient. Spongy brakes are inefficient. A car that willows over bumps or slows through curves is inefficient. Thus the 240D's four-wheel drive steering and lane-keeping aid.

Separate torsion bar chassis helps the shock absorbers cope more efficiently with road irregularities. Not only does the 240D's wheels, which are deeply seated in a sweep extra cooling air to the brakes, and leaves the front brake pads even become critically worn, an efficient electronic sensor is designed



To flash the message to you via a light on the instrument panel.

Efficient inside and out. The 240D's power windows are aerodynamically efficient, shaped not to allow into the vacuum but to slip through it. (Note the car's subtle wedge shape.)

You also enjoy the benefit of efficient air. The 240D cradles five people and 12-17 cubic feet of luggage room within a package much less bulky than even today's downsized luxury limos.

The goal of driver efficiency governs the design and layout of the 240D's interior. The seats feel more like chairs than pillows. The instrument cluster

workmanship and finish. The glove compartment is lined and trimmed like a jewel box. You will discover similar gratifying examples throughout the car.

20 safety features. Integrated into this mobile efficiency system are 20 safety features, from a rigid passenger seat with impact absorbing front and rear crumple zones to a built-in first aid kit. The 240D body and chassis are reinforced.

Even the wood interior trim of the 240D is efficient. Sandwicheled into it is a thin strip of aluminum, a precaution against possible splintering in an impact.

Put together but welded at several thousand points to form a single unit structure.

Even the wood interior trim of the 240D is efficient. Sandwicheled into it is a thin strip of aluminum, a precaution against possible splintering in an impact.

The \$6,000 surprise. It is worth noting that this model of engineering excellence is priced \$6,000 lower than an older Mercedes-Benz sold in America.

An outstanding and electric window lifts are available as extra cost. So is an efficient automatic transmission with three but four speeds.

And here is a final efficiency of this mobile efficiency system—its share in the Mercedes-Benz legend.

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