

Club pro awaits tourney

Netter finds a career

By Marty Budner
staff writer

Chuck Vollard started playing tennis "to meet girls." Instead, he found a career.

Vollard is now a teaching professional at Square Lake Racquet Club in Bloomfield Township. It's quite an accomplishment for a person who didn't begin playing serious tennis until he was almost out of college.

"I started playing tennis 10 years ago, but I really didn't start getting into it until I was a senior in college," said Vollard, who graduated from Eastern Michigan University in 1976.

"At the time I was playing third base on Eastern's baseball team. But, I decided to get into tennis because it was a good way to meet girls."

"Even though I started playing tennis at a late age, I feel I've done well," he said. "I'm satisfied with the way I've progressed because I've had some good wins over some good people."

Vollard, who lives in Livonia, has improved his tennis game so much that he will participate in his third Western

'I used to be more patient, but I've had this desire lately to end points sooner. I'm becoming more of an aggressive player.'

—Chuck Vollard

Men's 1982 Indoor Singles and Doubles Championship this weekend.

THE TOURNEY, sponsored by Metes and Powers (a local distributor of Miller beer), begins 5 p.m. Friday and concludes Sunday with the singles and doubles final starting 10 a.m.

All matches will be played at the Square Lake Racquet Club, located at 799 Denison Court.

"Two years ago, I got to the second round and won three matches," said Vollard. "But, this is an extremely tough tournament. Usually the best players in the Midwest are here."

Vollard, 28, said he changed his style of play from pure baseline to serve-and-volley.

"I had been playing groundstrokes, but I worked more on my serve-and-volley and coming to the net more," said Vollard.

"I used to be more patient, but I've had this desire lately to end points sooner. I'm becoming more of an aggressive player instead of a baseline player."

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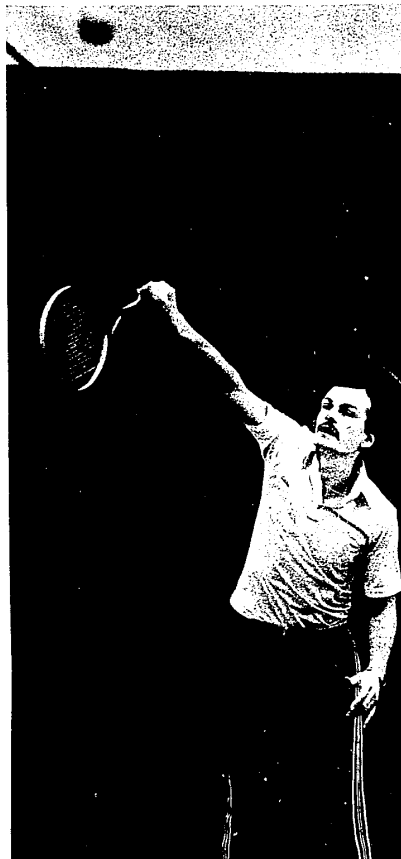


RANDY BORST/staff photographer

The softball set

Softball for girls is a popular spring sport in the high schools of Michigan. The season begins soon. To find out when and where your favorite

team will be playing, turn to page 6 of the sports section. The girls' softball schedules for most of the area high schools are listed.



DICK KELLEY/staff photographer

Livonia's Chuck Vollard is one of the competitors in the Western Men's Indoor Singles and Doubles Championships to be held this weekend at Square Lake Racquet Club.



Brad Emons

Women challenge MHSAA

Death of a sport

The memo was clear and concise: "Due to the lack of interest and participation, subject schedule is hereby cancelled for 1982."

"The above decision has been discussed with all concerned parties and has been mutually agreed upon."

"All schools involved on the Canton Girls Golf schedule have been notified and understand the necessity of the cancellation."

John Sandmann, Director of Athletics for the Plymouth-Canton Community Schools, was the executor. He had no other choice.

Nobody was interested in playing girls golf at Canton. They couldn't get enough for a team.

There's an ironic twist to the cancellation.

This occurred in wake of a law suit recently filed an Ann Arbor group called the League of Parents, Students and Educators Involved in School Athletic Practices. They are suing the Michigan High School Athletic Association (MHSAA) for discrimination against females in the structure of rules, decision-making and monitoring procedures. The MEA Women's Caucus, the Coalition for Non-Sexist Education, and National Organization for Women have also joined in the suit.

THE GROUP cited the MHSAA Handbook which shows that 557 Michigan high schools offered golf for boys and only 175 for girls last year.

The group also contends that the MHSAA rulings crowd most major

girls' sports into the fall, out of the standard season for some, in order to free facilities for boys during the "proper" season. Field hockey is one sport that suffers, according to the plaintiffs. The MHSAA has eliminated that tournament, causing young women to receive little publicity and community support.

Michigan, Montana, North Dakota and West Virginia are the only states to hold basketball in the fall.

These are the smart states. Basketball is a year-round sport now. The NCAA and high school tournaments run these days until late March after starting in mid-October and early November.

Professional basketball kicks off in late October and ends maybe by June. Is basketball really a winter sport anymore?

I can buy the argument that girls' basketball is played in the fall to free up gym time and space in the winter. Both sexes should be thankful that gym times don't conflict. Boys' basketball is played in the winter because it follows football, a seasonal sport.

I always thought that girls' and boys' basketball should be played on the same nights, but after mulling the prospect over, sharing the same bill would be disastrous.

WITH GIRLS' basketball in the fall, they can establish their own identity and gain greater media coverage. Besides, you can only cover so many games in one night.

The state girls' basketball final in Indiana drew approximately 10,000 fans

in late February. The boys' final in late March was a sellout (16,500) at Market Square Arena in Indianapolis.

In Michigan, the state girls' finals drew a total crowd of 5,000 for four championship games on a Saturday in December at Detroit's Cobo Hall.

What's the difference between a cold February day or a chilly December day?

By placing girls' basketball in the fall, fans will be more inclined to turn off hoops by winter. Think of it this way, girls' basketball in the fall is often an alternative to high school football when it gets a little boring.

Sports such as softball, basketball, volleyball, gymnastics and track have the potential to grow. As girls' skills develop, more fans will turn out. Tennis usually draws a large number of participants, while soccer is on the way.

IT'S TIME for the plaintiffs to forget the GAA days. I can't see establishing a field hockey tournament until the interest is there. The same holds true for golf and archery.

The girls' seasons are shorter, indeed. That's not fair. The Ann Arbor group charges that women have little input in MHSAA decision-making matters.

Men have the same problems, too. The MHSAA listens to few. Just ask the wrestling and baseball coaches. Their suggestions have fallen on deaf ears for years.

It's time to go with the strengths and forget the weaknesses.

Memo: Canton High School.

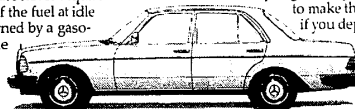


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