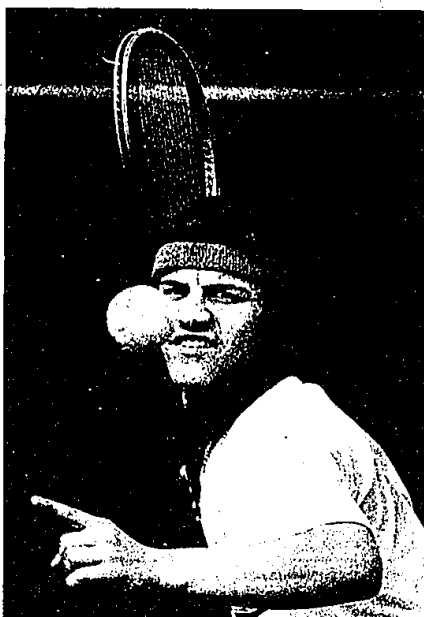


## Minding the nets

The Southfield boys' tennis team opened the season on a positive note Tuesday when the Blue Jays edged Birmingham Groves, 4-3. Southfield's success came from its singles players with the Blue Jays winning all four matches. The No. 1 singles player, John Zappa (right), defeated Mark Karcher, 6-0, 6-1, while No. 2 player Jim Haver (below) handed Corey Bolton, 6-2, 6-3. For a closer look at the match and a roundup of Monday and Tuesday activities, see Page 5C.

photos by STEPHEN CANTRELL



## Ker-plunk!

### Diver makes a big splash but misses chance for cash

By Tom Henderson  
staff writer

Pat Picard makes a recession look like a pretty good thing. After all, were it not for a bad economy and a boring accounting job, he might not be traveling the world as a high diver. He might not be the star of ABC's Wide World of Sports. He might not be knocking himself out, either, hitting the water at a zillion miles an hour from 172 feet high and getting pulled from the pool as the cameras cranked and the announcers wondered if he were dead or alive.

Picard, a 25-year-old graduate of Michigan State who went to Covington Junior High in Birmingham, worked briefly in the dull accounting department of a Farmington firm. He now lives most of the winter with his mother in Troy and has a funny story to tell about his recent quest for the world high diving title.

Picard, stifled with a business degree in a world that was doing very little business, got a job through his college swimming coach doing 60-foot high dives at Belle Isle following his graduation in 1980. The divers worked for Maxwell Associates, which runs diving shows at 18 locations in Europe and the U.S., including the Sea World in Florida and San Diego. Picard worked for the company in Germany last summer and will be working near Niagara Falls this summer.

Anyway, back to the funny story. Maxwell has a contract with ABC to provide the divers for its annual high-diving show, the one where the divers stand on a precarious metal platform 16 or 17 stories above a postage-sized swimming pool and wait for the jet stream up there to stop blowing them around long enough to give them a reasonable chance of hitting water instead of splatting on the concrete apron.

So, there is young Pat, 172 feet above the shark tank that, unfortunately, has been emptied of sharks. He has just done 132 feet in qualifying, but before that, he'd never been above 100 feet before. This is all new to him.

"I wondered what the hell I was doing out there," just before he hurled himself off into space for a flying gain. The first part of the trick is done in lay-out, with his back arched and his

## McCaskill picks Eastern

Southfield High School basketball standout Michael McCaskill announced yesterday he will continue his career with Eastern Michigan University, according to the Southfield athletic director Fred Goldberg and coach Greg Silwa.

McCaskill, who was sick with a cold Wednesday, was to have met with Eastern coach Jim Boyce late yesterday afternoon to sign his letter of intent. McCaskill, a 6-4, 190-pound forward who helped the Blue Jays to the Class A state semifinals two straight years, also was considering Michigan State University, where former high school teammate Ralph Walker currently plays for the Spartans.

"I think it boiled down to the fact that Eastern Michigan is smaller than Michigan State, and he can get more

personal help in the classroom," Silwa said. "I think he felt he'll get more of an opportunity to play. It's a lot more probable he'll have a lot of success in the MAC (Mid-American Conference) over the Big 10. But there's absolutely no way he thought he couldn't play in the Big 10."

During his senior year, McCaskill averaged 17.5 points, 10 rebounds, five assists and two blocked shots per game.

It also was announced yesterday that Redford Blahop Borgess standout Lewis Scott and Westland John Glenn's Paul Grazulis signed at Eastern, a school which finished under .500 last year.

"I think Eastern Michigan is on its way to building a powerhouse," Silwa said.

— Jim Hughes

face looking up at the sky. You then pull into a somersault, spot the water and hit it. Except, "when I spotted the water, I was still so high it amazed me. I remember going into the water and that's all I remember."

They pulled him from the pool and took him to the hospital, where he was checked and released. Except for a sore knee, he was fine.

THE NEXT THING Picard remembers is asking the organizers how he finished and how much was he getting paid.

"It was funny the way they explained it to me," recalls Picard. "Because I was not able to get out of the water on my own accord, the judges awarded me no points and I wasn't able to place. But because I'd hit the water, I'd still get credit for the world record."

Dana Kunze, who did an amazing reverse triple somersault that left him hobbled for a week, was judged the winner and took in \$2,300. To add insult to Picard's injury, he had to pay his own way to San Diego and stayed with a friend while there. He did manage to

win \$500, though, in the preliminary diving, when a field of 18 was winnowed to six.

All six divers got credit for the new world record, breaking the old one by six feet. To miss out on the record, one would have had to miss the pool — that's now known as the Picard rule.

"Hey, I was never in it for the money," shrugs Picard. "It was the adventure of the thing. To do it. But it was a one-time shot. Even if I had fared well, I wouldn't do it again. I gave up one year of my life for that one dive. My life doesn't consist of diving. Next year, I'd rather go to (graduate) school and coach."

Picard is hoping his title will mean an extra \$125 a week, putting him at \$500 a week for the season. He's also hoping the notoriety might help him find a university that might be willing to trade him free computer classes for his expertise coaching the diving team.

"Diving gives me a chance to ride out the economy. Once the economy gets better, there's a better chance of me getting a good job. Diving isn't something I'd do for a career, but it certainly is fun while you're young."

## How you can benefit from the oil price decline

Many companies that rely on oil as a fuel or raw material should benefit substantially from lower oil prices. Among the industries we see recording earnings gains are airlines, autos, chemicals and electric utilities.

This brightened outlook for many stock groups is the subject of a new 12-page report from Argus Research. In it you'll read of the economic factors that have contributed to the break in oil prices, as well as comments on 8 companies Argus feels have better-than-average investment appeal.

Learn how you can benefit from the oil price decline. To get your free copy of Beneficiaries of Falling Oil Prices, call 313-540-1221 or mail the coupon.

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Ah, the rites of spring.

Opening Day at Tiger Stadium, overwhelming displays of optimism — also known as Sparky Maloney — softball practice in the park, washed out athletic events, and, of course, George Kell.

You know spring is here when you flip through the TV stations and find the Tiger network just in time to hear Kell's familiar voice signalling, "The first pitch from Guldry, a curve . . . and a good one."

To the baseball enthusiast, Kell's calls from the booth provide young impressionists a chance to imitate the most imitable media personality. Where would WRIF's George Baier be without Kell?

We're used to such dandies as, "He just absolutely hit it a mile," and, "You are right, Al," (as opposed to being just moderately right, Al).

AS FAMILIAR as Kell's vernacular is to the Tiger viewers, the same is true for baseball and softball participants. Whereas Kell has a language all his own, so, too, do baseball and softball participants.

Etymologists could have a field day exploring the origins of what we're going to call "bench talk." Bench talk is universal. And you need not be the team's best athlete to excel. In fact, the class clowns usually are the best in the business.

In order to be a successful chatter box from the bench, you need the gift of spontaneity. You have to be quick with a line on a second's notice.

The role of the bench jockey is to not only rattle the opposition with remarks — especially the pitcher — but encourage your teammates in given situations.

Now, when you boot on the opposition, there's a fine line you should avoid crossing. Buss remarks fall on the other side of that line, and such remarks often are considered taboo. It's OK to make sport of the way a pitcher winds up, but cheap shots about his mother and girlfriend are forbidden.

LET'S GO DOWN into a dugout to see how a bench jockey operates and offer some definitions of the language:

The first job of the bench jockey (a.k.a. a bench carter) is to test the opposing pitcher for rabbit ears. If the pitcher comes in with smoke (his best

## Bench talk: one of a kind



Jim Hughes

