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'Mother' Hayes oozes success

By Tom Henderson
staff writer

Muffy Hayes, just a sophomore but already Birmingham Seaholm's No. 1 golfer, thinks she might attend Arizona State on a golf scholarship.

Her younger sister, Kelly, 14, plays volleyball, softball and basketball at Covington Junior High, well enough that she is thinking scholarship, too.

And then there is the baby of the family, Jenny, who, though just 11, is a starter for the mighty Cougars, traditionally a powerhouse in the Birmingham Softball League.

There is another Hayes, too — Pat, their mother, who may have been the best athlete of them all. While her kids, children of the '50s, are free to have their dreams of college stardom — and maybe even its reality — she was a child of the '30s, when bouncy, energetic, cute and tiny girls were perfect cheerleader material.

Pat was too busy to lead cheers. In-

PAT WAS a go-getter in college, a scrapper who strung for both the Free Press and old Detroit Times. It paid a few bucks here and there and, better yet, "I got sidelines passes for the games." She got into umpiring field hockey, then, too. "I was making \$4 a game and taking the bus to the matches."

She graduated from Wayne State in 1952, and though she began coaching and teaching science at the Academy of the Sacred Heart at Grosse Pointe Academy, her athletic career wasn't yet over. She played on the U.S. women's field hockey team in 1954 and 1955.

The Grosse Pointe campus closed, but Pat continued her teaching and coaching (field hockey, lacrosse, tennis and basketball) at the Bloomfield Hills campus, before retiring in 1969 after Kelly was born.

After retiring from teaching, Pat resumed her umpiring career, first doing girls high school matches around Birmingham, then branching out to local colleges. Now she umpires 75 games a fall, throughout Ohio, Illinois, Indiana and Michigan. (She makes \$15 a game plus mileage.) She has worked the NCAA field hockey championships and, as one of two U.S. umpires with an international rating, the Asian championships and two world championships.

"The big goal right now is the '84 Olympics, at which I have an excellent shot," adds Hayes, "and then the '88 games in Seoul, Korea."

CATHY DRITSAS, the athletic director of Sacred Heart in Bloomfield Hills, has known Hayes for 25 years. "We played against each other in high school when she was at Western and I was at Redford. . . I think she's extraordinary, what she does for field hockey and as a role model for young girls. It's been very lucky for us to have had her in Bloomfield Hills."

"She was a marvelous athlete in high school. She would be recruited by everyone today. What's marvelous is that what she's done as a player, coach and official has helped lay the groundwork for these kids. And she has three daughters who have the opportunities that she didn't have."

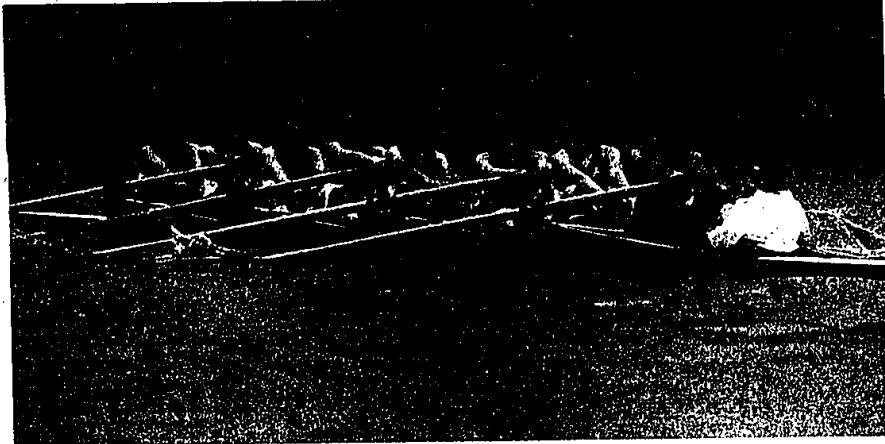
Hayes is an avid golfer and tennis player, who, in addition to her officiating, is president of the booster's club (in the middle of an interview she accuses a reporter of playing up Brother Rice at the expense of Seaholm) and coach, along with husband John, of the Cougars girls softball team daughter Jenny plays.

Pat is quick to credit her husband, who works for Chrysler Corp. parts division, for much of her success. "There aren't too many women who have a husband like I have. Who will let them write up and leave for five weeks, and run a household and take care of three girls. We have a family meeting before mother leaves. One girl does the cooking, one does the laundry, and the little one, since she's the last one out the door, makes sure the house is picked up and the breakfast dishes are done. John is very supporting of what I'm doing and very proud."

All this is a part-time career as field hockey umpire, which isn't as mundane as you might think. It has taken her to Vancouver in '79, Holland and Germany in '80, Argentina and Scotland in '81, Japan and India in '82, and, just recently, a five-week tour of Singapore, Hong Kong and Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

But that's getting ahead of the story.

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GARY CASKEY/staff photographer

Orchard Lake St. Mary's rowing team works out for the upcoming North American championships in Ontario.

There's nothing gentle about powerful St. Mary's rowers

By Tom Henderson
staff writer

"Get your boat in the water," yelled John LeBlanc, the rowing coach at Orchard Lake St. Mary. With the North American schoolboy championships coming up over the Memorial Day weekend in St. Catherine's, Ontario, there was plenty of work to do.

But the boys were slow to leave. Something was wrong. Davies, the No. 1 coxswain, was missing. The coxswain, who steers the boat and bolsters out the rhythm for the oarsmen's strokes, is crucial.

"Davies is at detention, coach," someone offered. Oh-oh. Discipline trouble. Smoking? Drinking? Skipping classes? Worst? What happened?

"He got five days for skipping mass." LeBlanc erupted. "Didn't I tell you guys we had a big one coming up? Didn't I tell you we had a lot of work to do? No goofing off? And now I lose my coxswain."

He turned to a reporter, smiled and said under his breath. "That's what I love about this place. They don't let them get away with anything. That's why they're such great kids."

ANOTHER COXSWAIN was found and soon the No. 1 boat and the two others were sliding through the cold, clear water of Orchard Lake. John, his wife, Julie, and one of his assistants — Bruno Strzelwicz, who rowed for the school in 1975 — rode in a small motorboat alongside the No. 1 boat, which contained the heavyweights (180 pounds and up).

The other assistant, John's son Don,

who once rowed in the nationals, piloted a second small motorboat and kept tabs on the action in the other two boats, which contained the lightweight and novice rowers.

The water was flat. The air still had a feel of spring warmth though it was late in the day. The sun slid behind a veil of thin clouds.

The elegant rowing boats glided on the 1,500-meter course along the edge of the lake as fully blossoming fruit trees, greenings and expensive homes slipped by.

The rowers in their bright red jerseys stood out against the green backdrop of the trees and new grass. The colors of the lake, land, boats and jerseys, the feel and smell of the air, the reflective calm of the water, the silver haze of the sky — all of it was a treat for the senses.

FOR THE senses of an observer, of the photographer, maybe even of the

coaches — but not of the rowers, who were working far too hard, concentrating far too intensely, to notice color, smells or feels. This was work for them.

In the No. 1 boat, muscular Andrew Martin, who will attend Holy Cross in the fall on a football scholarship, had the job of stroke. He sat directly in front of the coxswain and set the pace the others would follow.

Not follow actually, but try to match as it happened; a synchronization of effort and oars that results in the least drag and the fastest speed — eight oars dipping into the water as one, rising from it as one and eight sets of shoulders pull against the thickness of the water and seven sets of eyes focus intently on the neck of the person in front of him to ease the matching of movement with movement. A smooth meshing of . . .

"A CRAB, we caught a crab," yells LeBlanc. Steve Basic's car, instead of

rising from the water with the others, loses stride and stays submerged, a crab in rowing parlance. The boat jerks. Momentum is lost. "That's how we lost to Ridley at St. Catherine's last year. We had the lead, caught a crab, and lost in the last 300 yards."

The spoils of that victory would have meant a trip to England and the championships there. Ridley, a Canadian school, went to Britain and St. Mary's went home.

LeBlanc has a megaphone of his own and keeps up a stream of chatter that is more cadence for the rowers than anything else. "Get your head up, hold it to it, long and hard, elbow out, don't jerk it out, row it out, START PICKING IT UP."

The boat begins to fly as LeBlanc keeps up his cheerleading. "Who are we gonna beat? RIDLEY, RIDLEY, hit it, hit it, HIT IT YOU'RE KIND OF LAZY AFTER TWO DAYS OFF. Pull, pull, pull."

Martin in front is implacable, his oar slicing through the water like a big hot knife through a lot of butter. Others grit their teeth, their necks bulging. A few gasp for air. Basic, a freshman known affectionately as Belch who is filling in temporarily on the No. 1 boat, is in obvious pain.

THEY ARE given a short rest, turn around, then head back toward shore and school. "You guys are slow on the catch," yells LeBlanc. "You gotta be quicker. Ready? Hit it."

The three boats surge at once. "Take it home. Take it to the dock. Kick off."

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MINDY SAUNDERS/staff photographer

John Finlayson shouts instructions during a Southfield football game last fall at the Pontiac Silverdome.

Stepping down

Southfield's Finlayson resigns football post

By Jim Hughes
staff writer

John Finlayson, a football coach at Southfield High School since 1952, resigned after 30 years on the job, the last 10 as head coach.

Finlayson will continue his physical education duties, but cited "a number of reasons, nothing really specific," as to why he is retiring from the coaching circle.

"Everything weighed together, I just thought it was the best time to get out," Finlayson said. "I know I'm going to miss it. I just hope I made the right decision. Only time will tell."

Some controversy arose from an accusation that Finlayson stepped down due to friction between the leaders of the Southfield High basketball and football programs.

A LETTER addressed to the Southfield Eccentric last week indicated there was "disension" between the head football coach and basketball coach Greg Silwka, who served for two

years as a varsity assistant under Finlayson. The letter incorrectly said Silwka has a policy which says players must choose between football and basketball. It stated, in part, "Since when does one individual have the right to tell the basketball team to make a choice — football or basketball."

"I don't think there's a personal conflict between us," Finlayson said. "There might be some truth there about the basketball coach wanting his players to play one sport; I don't agree with that."

"I think you should give the athletes a chance to make their own decision. It cheats the athlete. In my view point, it's a bad policy."

Silwka denied he has such a "policy." "Not at all, there's basketball players on the (football) team — Jerry Lougry, Lorenzo McCaskill, Ron Austin, Silwka said, naming a few.

ACCORDING TO Silwka, he did prohibit his players from lifting weights during the football team's winter weightlifting program while the

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— John Finlayson

basketball season was in session.

"He (Finlayson) tried to run a weightlifting program in the winter, and I wouldn't allow my players to participate in it. He couldn't understand why my basketball players weren't allowed to lift."

"But the fact still remains, I have six or seven players on the basketball roster that do play football."

When asked directly if he has a policy prohibiting his basketball players from playing football, Silwka answered,

ed, "None whatsoever."

Silwka served as a varsity assistant for two years under Finlayson, but after his 1981-82 basketball team posted a 25-2 record, he said he decided to put more time into the cage program.

Finlayson discussed the problems caused by having his present assistant coaches "not teaching at Southfield High."

"I have all outside help, and that makes it hard," he said. "It's not the quality of coaching that's the problem. It's not being in the high school. They don't know the kids as well, and it makes it tough making the practice times."

FINLAYSON'S resignation as head coach comes after compiling a 10-year record of 53-33. In 1979, one of Finlayson's "better teams," posted an 8-1 regular season record before losing to Hazel Park in the regionals of the Class A state playoffs. It was the second loss of the season to Hazel Park.

In 1978, the Blue Jays tied Royal Oak Kimball for their only league title

under Finlayson.

"That was one of our goals (winning a league title), but we never quite got it," Finlayson said.

Although he never won a league title outright, Finlayson looks back at his 10 years as head coach as a highlight.

"Just the 10 years as head coach has been a highlight," Finlayson said, "and working with the kids and good assistants. I've worked with Cal Fletcher, Pete Mazzara, the late Bob Haney and Greg Silwka."

"They say you're only as good as the players you have and your assistant coaches. I've been lucky. "I also feel fortunate to have worked with this year's assistants: Keith Stevens, Kevin Thomas, Mike McCann, Mike Kurylo, Mark Pagot and John McFarlin."

The opening left by Finlayson's resignation hasn't been officially filled. According to regulations, the job must be posted in the district for seven days. Two leading candidates for the head coaching job are Fletcher and Ron Brown of Southfield-Lathrup.