

sports roundup

● MCMASTER SHINES

Peggy McMaster, a junior at Michigan State from Troy (Birmingham Marian), was instrumental in the Spartans' success at the NCAA gymnastics regionals April 9 at Louisiana State in Baton Rouge.

McMaster finished third overall in the balance beam with a score of 9.65 and placed sixth in the all-around competition with a mark of 37.60, the best of any Spartan.

MSU broke the school record by totaling 187.15. The Spartans finished third, qualifying for the NCAA nationals April 22-23 in Salt Lake City.

● MR. JOE'S EXPANDS

The Southfield-based Mr. Joe's racing team has entered a new field of competition — the million-dollar SCCA Corvette Challenge, the newest and richest showroom stock car racing series.

The 10-race schedule, which features identically prepared Corvettes, will run in conjunction with Trans-Am, NASCAR and CART Indy car feature events and will have a \$1 million prize fund.

The prize fund provides \$50,000 to winners of each race, with the remaining \$500,000 spread around the 24 leaders at season's end, with the series champion getting \$100,000. Fifty Corvettes will be competing in this year's inaugural series.

The Mr. Joe's entry will be piloted by Andy Pilgrim. The first race of the series is slated for May 1 in Dallas, in conjunction with the Grand Prix of Dallas.

● NET STANDOUT

Ferris State has dominated tennis in the Great Lakes Conference, winning the last six GLIAC mens titles. One reason for the Bulldogs' success this season — 6-2 overall, including 5-1 against NCAA Division I competition — is the play of freshman Scott Smith of Birmingham (Seaholm).

Smith boasts a 6-1 mark in singles play. He has also teamed with senior Karl Johnson to win five of seven doubles matches.

Ferris won its last five non-conference meets, all by 9-0 scores. The Bulldogs opened their GLIAC season April 8 at home against Hillsdale. Ferris had won 31 consecutive league meets entering the season.

● WINNING BY A HARE

Central Michigan's baseball team, the defending Mid-American Conference champion, is off to another fast start — thanks to players like outfielder Shawa Hare of Birmingham.

In 16 games, Hare has collected 22 hits in 45 at-bats for a .489 average, the second-best mark in the MAC. Hare also has three doubles, a triple and three home runs, has knocked in 17 runs and has stolen six bases in eight attempts.

Smelt gather for spring runs

THIS WEEKEND should mark the beginning of the 1988 smelt runs in southern Michigan. The recent spell of sunny spring weather has warmed the rivers, enticing the small, silvery smelt upstream to spawning grounds.

There have been no significant runs so far this spring, but reports from lower Lake Huron indicate there has been some light smelt activity near shore.

Smelt spawning runs begin when the river water becomes warmer than the lake water, generally when the rivers reach 45-degrees or above. Reports from the Au Gres river, north of Pinconning on the Saginaw Bay, show the water temperature there has already reached 42 degrees.

The earliest runs usually begin in the St. Clair River system, especially at Point Pelee National Park. The foot of the Blue Water bridge in Port Huron, the Sears Dock and Pine Grove Park are also traditional hot spots for the early southern Michigan smelt runs.

LAKE HURON DIPPERS should have little problem finding smelt this spring. According to Ray Argyle, fisheries biologist with the United States Fish and Wildlife Department, the population of smelt in Lake Huron has nearly doubled in the last year.

Using trawl (netting) surveys at 45 locations throughout Lake Huron and hydroacoustic equipment (fish finders) estimates the Fish and Wild-



Bill Parker
outdoors

life Department surveys the lake each fall. In 1986 they estimated the smelt population to be about 2.2 billion fish. The 1987 survey indicated the population had expanded to about 3.7 billion fish.

With a relatively mild winter and a warm, dry spring, indications are that the 1988 spawning runs will be much improved over last year.

"THERE ARE plenty of fish out there," Argyle said. "Fishermen don't have anything to worry about in terms of the number of smelt."

Argyle also pointed out that in recent years smelt been changing their breeding habits.

"Over the last few years we've noticed the (smelt) have slowly been turning from river spawners to shore spawners," Argyle explained. "It hasn't been a major change and there are still plenty of fish returning to the rivers, but we have noticed some changes in recent years."

Dipping is best at night, prime time is usually between 10 p.m. and 3 a.m. The only equipment needed is a 1988 Michigan Fishing License (a Canadian fishing license is needed for any dipping in Canada), a smelt net (available for \$20-\$25 at most fishing tackle or bait shops), waders,

with an update from the DNR on current management and planning, and a question and answer period.

The meeting is free of charge and open to any interested angler.

Phase one of the "Upper Rifle River Stream Improvement Project" began last month with the construction of a 2,500-foot-long water diversion route for Gamble Creek. This will divert the colder water of Gilbert Creek, a tributary of the Rifle River, around the warm water of Mallowd pond.

The Upper Rifle River Improvement Project is a \$40,000 three-phase project to provide anglers with a quality trout fishery on the Rifle River.

Farmington resident Donald H. Wolfe, a 23-year veteran park ranger at Kensington Metropark, was recently honored as one of several "Police Officer of the Year" recipients.

Wolfe, a ranger sergeant at Kensington, received a plaque from the Certificates will be presented, along

outdoors calendar

IMPORTANT DATES

● April 14 — Fisheries meeting, a meeting with officials of the Department of Natural Resources' fisheries division and members of Southeast Michigan fishing clubs will be held at the Waterford Community Center beginning at 7:30 p.m. The program includes Master Angler Awards presentations, an update on management and planning for the upcoming year and an open discussion. For details call the DNR Pontiac District Office at 666-1500.

● April 16 — Home Firearms Safety Clinic, held at the North Macomb Sportsmen's Club in Romeo, the clinic will feature courses on basic firearms safety, gun handling and ammunition storage. Clinic fee is \$4 and includes targets, ammunition and lunch. Registration is limited to the first 30 individuals over 17 years old. For details, call 293-3452 after 6 p.m.

● April 21 — Trout Unlimited fund-raiser — hosted by the Paul H. Young Chapter of TU, the fund-raiser features guest speakers, prizes of fishing and hunting trips with local sport celebrities, wildlife art, fur coats, crystal, dinner and drinks and more. For details, call 353-4565.

● April 23 — River Crab Salmon Stakes fishing tournament will be held on Lake St. Clair beginning at 6 a.m. The tournament, co-sponsored by Chuck Muer's River Crab Restau-

rant and the Blue Water Sport Fishing Association, raised \$68,000 last year for child abuse and neglect, and evaluation and treatment programs. Raffle/entry tickets are \$10 each and are good for \$10 off the price for dinner-for-two at Chuck Muer's restaurant. For more information, call 997-9539.

● April 30 — The Marine Division of the Oakland County Sheriff Department will conduct a boating safety class at Dodge Muer's restaurant, 4 State Park (4246 Parkway, Pontiac) beginning at 9 a.m. To pre-register call the park at 682-0800.

METROPARKS

● Star Search Astronomy Program, a basic program in night sky observation including a slide presentation and outdoor observation, will be offered at 7:30 p.m. Friday at Indian Springs.

● Denizens of Darkness, an evening hike in search of amphibians, bats, owls and other nocturnal creatures, will be offered at 7:30 p.m. Saturday at Indian Springs.

● Birding for Beginners, the first of a two-part program designed to help people identify common birds and learn about the role of these birds in the environment, will be offered at 10 a.m. Saturday at Stony Creek.

● Focus on Nature, a monthly photographic workshop for beginner and advanced photographers, will be held at 10 a.m. Saturday at Stony Creek.

● Discovering the Pond, a nature program in which participants will explore the plant and animal life in a pond, will be held at 1 p.m. Sunday at Indian Springs.

● Discovering Spring Walk, a nature-walked hike through the park in search of plants, animals and other signs of spring, will be held at 2 p.m. Sunday at Stony Creek.

● Most Metropark programs are free but require advanced registration and a motor vehicle permit. For information call the parks at 1-800-24-PARKS.

● The new 1988 Clinton River Canoeing Maps are available free of charge. Pick up a copy at Metro Beach or Stony Creek, or by sending

your name, address and \$.25 in coin or postage to Clinton Canoe Map, Dept W-14, Huron Clinton Metropolitan Authority, P.O. Box 2001, Brighton, MI 48116-8001.

OAKLAND COUNTY PARKS

● Sky Dance, a nature program about the aerial courting antics of the woodcock, will be held at 7:30 p.m. April 23 at Independence Oaks. For details call 625-6473.

● The deadline for saving \$2 on Oakland County annual vehicle permits has been extended to April 30. The annual permit fee is \$14 for county residents and \$24 for non-county residents if ordered before April 30. To receive a mail-in coupon to purchase an annual vehicle permit call 858-0906 daily during business hours.

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