

By George Maskin observing sports

It was a long time and a few building delays later, but Livonia finally has its new indoor artificial ice rinks.

What a good fortune for the community's citizens who have been itching for this chance to have ice available, regardless of the weather conditions.

We are in no position to take any bows, but it was advocated here for several years that Observatory needed some artificial ice facilities.

Youngsters will now get their chance to play hockey right in their backyard, instead of having to travel 30 to 40 miles.

It won't be necessary for the kid hockey teams to practice at 2 a.m. or 5 a.m.—yes, we did say a.m.—because there simply was no other time open to them and their teams.

The rinks are bound to have a tremendous effect on recreational hockey teams.

And, why not high school teams, too?

HOCKEY HASN'T MADE the inroads it should in our high schools. When we say "our," we mean the schools in all of Michigan.

There are some scholastic teams operating—not more than 25.

One of the big troubles has been facilities. You just can't play hockey without an indoor rink... because you can't gamble that the weather will be suitable for the conducting of a 10- or 15-game schedule.

From where we sit, the situation now is ripe for the four Livonia district teams—Bentley, Franklin, Stevenson and Churchill—to band together in a league of their own.

What's to prevent Clarencville, the Farmington schools, Garden City and the Redford Township schools, from entering, too?

The more the merrier.

IT WASN'T too long ago that hockey advocates around Franklin high were looking for financial support needed to put a team on the ice.

One gent pointed out the school had the equipment and everything else. Just a few bucks to take care of the coach, officials and maybe a few hockey sticks and pucks.

Prep hockey is a wholesome sport, we've been told by neighbor Tom Joysey, whose son Greg plays over at Cranbrook School.

"Kids have a good time out there," Joysey told us. "Besides, the requisite skating skills, they have to be able to do other things, like pass the puck, body check, play defense, etc."

"It's not easy. But an adept youngster can get the job done."

HOCKEY HAS BOOMED in some states on the high school level. A good example is Minnesota.

Up in Gopherland, they must have 200 high school teams playing and they even conduct a state tournament.

The result is that many of the colleges sponsoring hockey look to Minnesota for players. However, the key source of college timber in the United States—and it's true at Michigan, Michigan State and Michigan Tech—still is our good neighbor across the river, Canada.

We're certain that schools would gain the support of the State High School Athletic Association were greater stress placed on hockey.

The Association not too many years ago went for skiing in a big way when it discovered more and more schools were sponsoring teams. And some of the schools are in Observer country.

SPEAKING OF THE State Association, we'd be remiss if we didn't say a word or two about a banquet held Monday in Lansing to honor Charlie Forsythe, who recently retired after 38 years as the state director.

Reluctantly, we had to pass up the affair because of business with the Pistons in Flint. Charlie helped to make high school sports mighty and dynamic in Michigan.

He was on the scene during the era when the school program was "small time"; he was still there when it had become "big time."

Forsythe ruled with an iron fist. He didn't give in to one, just for the sake of being nice. With Forsythe, rules existed for all. There never was a concession, regardless of how much of a plea a school might put up.

Forsythe bowed out because the state says a man of 70 is too old to work... at least for the government.

Knowing Charlie Forsythe, he'll never quit working. He's too much a part of schools and education to kick it all out of the window and sit rocking a chair in his living room and watching television.

There's one thing: Charlie left the State Association in good hands.

Bigger and better days can't help but come as the days, the months and the years roll on.

Registrations Open Now For Livonia Boys

Boys, residing in the City of Livonia, will have opportunities to register for the Livonia hockey program in the new ice rink at Ford Field on Wednesday and Thursday evenings from 7-9 p.m., and Saturday and Sunday mornings from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

The program is for boys in Livonia and only those between the ages of five through 17 as of May 31, 1968.

Each must be accompanied by a parent or guardian, bring a small photograph and a copy of the birth certificate. A registration fee of \$4 will be made for those under 14 and \$7 for the older boys.

The registration fees will be used to cover costs of insurance, registration and expenses associated with each team's first practice.

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Thurston Nips Raiders, Sets Up Showdown

Going into the 1968 Northwest Suburban League football chase, the so-called experts said Thurston High would be the "team to beat."

So far, so good for the prognosticators.

Thurston has cleared two obstacles in its drive to the crown, adding North Farmington, 7-6, in a squeaker Saturday afternoon.

Now comes the game-of-games -- against unbeaten

Franklin at Franklin Saturday at 2 p.m.

"That's the one team we have to beat," says Thurston Coach Bill McDonald whose own aggregation has a 3-1 overall record and, like Franklin,

stands 2-0 in the Northwest Loop.

Thurston survived what McDonald admitted was "my worst coaching blunder ever" to down North Farmington, now 1-1 in the league, but still very much a contender.

HERE WAS the situation: Thurston led, 7-0, and it was the final period. The Townshippers drove to about the North Farmington one-foot line.

From the sidelines, McDonald and his staff thought the ball actually was three yards away from pay land. That's what the scoreboard said, too.

So a pass was ordered. Paul Adamian intercepted it in the end zone and took the ball on his 20.

"That was the wrong call," said McDonald, "I realized it as soon as the kid came off the field, but what could I do? I goofed."

North Farmington then put on a drive which carried well into Thurston territory before the ball was yielded.

BUT THURSTON still was in a gambling mood and tried a pass from deep in Thurston territory.

Tony Garcia intercepted for North Farmington and the Raiders went in to score on the run-ning of Adamian and finally a four-yard keeper by Quarter-

back Steve White. White faked to Adamian and kept the ball himself when he spotted a clear lane to the goal line.

The conversion try missed and that was the ball game. Thurston had scored in the second quarter on a 650-yard drive in which Craig Mutch and Robin Spicer did the winning and Billy Bastara clicked on two passes to Mutch and another short one to Gordon Estez.

MUTCH SPRUNTED the final couple of yards for the touchdown and Jack Weston ran over what proved the deciding extra point.

In the third period Thurston drove 50 yards to the Raiders' seven before fumbling the ball away.

North Farmington tried an early field goal attempt from the Thurston 20, but missed.

Statistically, the game was on the even side. Thurston ran for 106 yards and passed for 81. North Farmington earned 77 yards rushing and 58 through the air.

It's Uphill Fight For East Now

No team or coaches like to have to fight uphill.

But, the Detroit Tigers did it time and again during the past season, and that's the way it will now be for Garden City East in the Mid-Wayne League football race.

In what amounted to an early

Cherry Hill Downs West For 1st Win

It was the battle of the victoryless and Cherry Hill emerged the winner for the first time this season in downing Garden City West, 14-0.

The running of Gary Wilhelm was too much for West, now 0-1.

He ran over twice on gallops of 26 and nine yards.

Carl Knoll and Bill Pelligrin added the extra points.

Once in front by halftime, Cherry Hill resorted to fine defensive tactics to keep West from moving inside its 20.

Denny Appears With Combo At Westland

Denny McLain, of the Detroit Tigers, will be at Westland Center on Friday for two 45 minute concerts with his Combo. Show times are 6:15 p.m. and 7:30 p.m.

Westland Center will have its big stage set up in the East Court -- everyone is invited to see and meet McLain and his Combo in person.

Six Crowned PPK Winners

The annual Livonia Pass, Punt and Kick Contest, sponsored by Bill Erown Sales and conducted by the Recreation Department and the Livonia Jaycees was held Saturday at the Wonderland Shopping Center.

Over 200 boys competed for trophies and the chance for further competition at the zone level on Oct. 12. The ultimate contest will be held at the NFL Play-off Game on January 5 at Miami, Florida.

Winners were:

8 years: first David Kietly, second David Banghart and third Mike Campbell (1639)

9 years: first Daniel Dan-felak, second Mike McGowan and third Dennis Rice (158)

10 years: first Greg Sipus, second Tim Hollandsworth and third Richard Hammlis.

11 years: first Jim Maude-ville, second Tom Elnehan and third Daniel Bobowski (2077)

12 years: first Tom Zalla-giris, second Mike Leisen and third Russell Funk (2657)

13 years: first Gar Frantz, second Tony Dathillo, and third Steve Forsberg (3237)

showdown, Riverview whipped East, 28-6, to become the favorite for the league crown.

Both had gone into the game with unbeaten marks. Each had won its league debut the week before.

But the pass receiving of Darrell Blackburn, one of the area's top receivers, proved too much for East.

Blackburn hauled in four passes, two of them for touchdowns. He now has scored seven times this season, six via aeri-als.

UNTIL BLACKBURN broke loose, East was in the thick of things.

East had scored in the first quarter on a neat pass from John Chute to Tim Whitson on a 5-yard pass to end a 70-yard drive while Riverview tailed on a short plunge by halfback Tim Daniel.

That made it 6-6 until Blackburn hauled in a 45-yard pass for his first TD and then a 5-yard pass for his second.

From then on, it was catch-up action for Garden City East, but to no avail.

Riverview added a safety in the third period and another touchdown by Brian Queen in the fourth.

"I THINK we can bounce

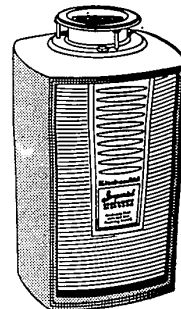
back," said East Coach Gary Humphrey. "We have a solid ball club and maybe one of the other teams can help us."

But Humphrey had to note that after just two weeks of the loop season, Riverview now has won four straight and "is the loop's only unbeaten-untied team."

Humphrey also declared: "We made some mistakes and you can't do that against a team like Riverview. Every time you do, it costs you six points."

Riverview rolled to 225 yards in the game, while holding East to 100 with Jim Burton accounting for 40 of them.

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