

# Traffic ticket flap is no kick for frustrated soccer coach

BY TIM SMITH  
STAFF WRITER

Pat Hulett coached a Canton recreational soccer team that lost all 10 of its games this season. But that didn't upset him nearly as much as getting nabbed, along with many others it seems, for making an illegal right-hand turn in Keego Harbor.

And he probably isn't alone with his anxiety.

"My soccer team was 0 and 10 this year," Hulett said. "But that was less frustrating for me than this thing."

This "thing" was the ticket Keego Harbor policeman Dan Reynolds issued him about 6:35 p.m. May 2 for turning right from Orchard Lake Road onto Summers Street. That's where a no-right-turn sign was erected in April, to eliminate traffic that cuts through a residential area to circumvent the usual long wait at Orchard Lake-Cass Lake roads.

Motorists who do not live in the neighborhood are prohibited from turning right onto Summers between 4-6 p.m. Mondays through Fridays. Residents' complaints about speeding traffic prompted a survey by the Oakland County Road Commission, resulting in the sign being put up, said Keego Harbor Police Chief Jack Beach.

Hulett and "at least 25" other ticket victims appeared Monday before a 48th District Court magistrate.

"I'm letting you know that whole courtroom was packed

with people facing the same thing," Hulett said. "To me, that's utterly ridiculous."

Apparently, many of the ticket victims did what Hulett did during their court appearances, which cost many time away from work.

After talking with Reynolds at the court, Hulett took the ticket under advisement. If he is not cited for any driving infractions over the next six months, the charge will be wiped from his record.

"I paid the \$85," Hulett said. "Everybody I saw did the same thing. . . They don't want the points and they don't want insurance rates to go up."

According to Hulett, a Canton resident who claims to have had a clean driving record for 16 years, Reynolds was stationed in a parking lot at Orchard Lake and Summers, armed with "a huge pad of tickets."

When Hulett was pulled over, on the way to a soccer field in that neighborhood, drivers of four other cars were parked ahead of him, waiting for their tickets. And several others behind Hulett also were told to pull over.

"I've been driving for 29 years and I have never seen a no-right-hand turn sign. I thought it was some joke," said Hulett, adding that "the real sign should be no through-traffic."

Defending the ticket-writing practice was Beach, who said even local business people and relatives of Summers-area residents have been ticketed or

warned not to turn onto the street.

"We're not down there every day or all the time," Beach said. "Just when we can. A lot have received tickets and I know a lot are mad. . . But it has cut down tremendously on (through traffic to Cass Lake). It has been very effective although some people are still doing it. There have been a lot of warnings given."

People seem to be getting the message, Beach said the amount of tickets being written at the intersection "has dropped quite a bit" even since when Hulett was cited.

Beach concurred with Hulett that it is legal to make a left-hand turn from Orchard Lake to Summers. But traffic flow on southbound Orchard Lake is not nearly as much of a problem. The police chief also said people going to the soccer field have been given suggestions for alternative routes, such as turning right on either the next side street (that has several four-way stop signs) or on Cass Lake.

"They felt that was too much to ask," Beach said.

Meanwhile, Hulett said he just hopes others read about his plight and stay away from the troublesome corner.

"I don't want to see anybody else get tagged for something as stupid as this," he said with disgust.

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Michael Grabinski

and eighth grade academic years. They included: Daniel Freeman, Brian Lafer, Julie Levin, Erik Oswald, Daniel Shumer, Holly Stockton, and Chick Tomil.

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The NMDAA is a group of Polish American physicians and dentists, who have established the award at St. Mary's Prep for students of Polish American background. Dr. Romuald Szymankowski is the organization's president.

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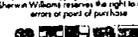
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