

SPORTS

THURSDAY, JANUARY 2, 1997

FARMINGTON- FARMINGTON HILLS SPORTS SCENE

Blazers are best

The Blazers '78, led by a host of area kickers, claimed the top spot in the U-19 Division of the Christmas Holiday Tournament held recently at Total Soccer in Fraser.

Coached by Lee Fruman, Blazers '78 outscored their five opponents by a combined 31-4 margin to emerge as champions.

Those players contributing to the team's success included Ryan Mack (Birmingham Seaholm), Yuri Krym (Birmingham Groves), Mike Bergfeld (Bloomfield Hills Lahser), Jeff Beeler (Birmingham Brother Rice), Jerome Beeler (Brother Rice), Matt Keller (Rochester Adams), Mike Cunningham (Rochester Hills Lutheran Northwest), Mike Healy (Troy), Adam Heinemann, Richard Keith, Igl Vokopola and Shaun Pratt.

The '78 Blazers will compete in the U-19 Hlitch Division of Little Caesars' League play in the spring of this year. Interested players are asked to contact Fruman at (810) 851-8412.

Aquatic aces

The Birmingham Blue Dolphins capped the fall season with a sterling performance at the recent Rapid Area Y (RAYS) Invitational held in Grand Rapids.

Leading the team's first-place finish were blue-ribbon swimmers Alyssa Sofia (U-8 50 free), Laura Cappelli (U-12 50 free, 100 free, 200 IM), Jennifer Tille (U-14 50 free), Scott Beale (U-8 25 free, 50 free, 100 free, 25 back, 50 back, 25 fly, 50 fly, 100 IM), Peter Bookmyer (U-10 50 breast) and Mike Studt (U-14 100 free, 100 fly).

In addition, BBD's senior girls squad turned in a stellar showing at both the 'A' and 'B' high school meets.

Sara Johnson, representing Bloomfield Hills Lahser, earned a victory in the 200 IM and placed second in the 100 back. Christina Wright finished sixth in the 50 free and 100 free. The duo also qualified for the upcoming U.S. Open in San Antonio, Texas, as Johnson placed 15th in the 100 back and 23rd in the 200 back and Wright took 34th in the 50 free.

Leading Birmingham Seaholm were Emily Ernst (3rd in the 100 breast), Stephanie Staples (relays) and Corky Ribbis (9th 100 fly). Laura Kaznecki of Walled Lake Western finished seventh in the 50 free and eighth in the 100 back and Lauren Najarin of Birmingham Marion was ninth in the 50 free.

Also turning in solid performances were Cranbrook-Kingswood tankers Elizabeth Groth (1st 200 free, 5th 500 free), Kristen Burgess (7th 500 free, 9th 200 free), Janna Burrell (4th 100 breast) and Megan Firth (relays).

Holy Family takes second

Rochester Holy Family settled for a runner-up finish at the recent Orchard Lake St. Mary's Prep Boys 8th Grade Tournament. Holy Family, which won the tourney title the past two years, dropped a 28-17 contest to Livonia St. Michael.

The team is coached by John Maloney.

Memorial tennis tourney

The Sports Club of West Bloomfield and The Tennis Company are hosting the second annual Nick Pishvanov Memorial Doubles Tournament on Saturday, Jan. 4. Proceeds from the event will benefit leukemia research at Washington University School of Medicine.

The double-elimination format tournament runs 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. Divisions of competition include Open, and USTA rankings of 7.0, 8.0 and 9.0 in both men's and women's divisions.

A pre-tournament dinner and silent auction begins at 7 p.m. Friday, Jan. 3. The guest speaker is John F. Dipersio M.D., Ph.D., chairman of the Department of Bone Marrow Transplantation and Stem Cell Biology from Washington University School of Medicine.

An exhibition match between ATP touring pros Steve Herold of Bloomfield Hills and Ed Nagle of West Bloomfield, will also be held.

Nicholas A. Pishvanov, Jr. died of leukemia in 1995 at the age of 39. Nick fought the disease for two years and exhibited great strength and courage. He is survived by his wife, Ellen, and three children, Nicholas, 17; Kim, 12; and Kristin, 8. To honor Nick's memory and help fund important leukemia research at Washington University, The Sports Club is hosting the second annual tournament. Last year the event raised \$13,000.

Minimum donation per entry, which includes the Friday night dinner and exhibition, is \$35 per player.

To register and for more information call The Sports Club at (810) 626-9880.

EMU baseball clinics

Eastern Michigan University will hold a series of baseball coaching clinics from 7-9:30 p.m. Tuesdays at the EMU Huron Golf Club.

The schedule is as follows: Coaching baseball (Jan. 28); catching (Feb. 4); hitting/offense (Feb. 11); pitching (Feb. 18); team defense (March 4); and infield/outfield (March 11).

The cost is \$35 per clinic or \$175 for the entire series.

Among the featured guest speakers include David Martin (EMU), Roger Coryell (EMU), Ron

■ Oakland University enters the new year tonight against Hillsdale. And once again, the OU men and women are enjoying stellar seasons.

By CHRIS MAYER
STAFF WRITER

College basketball fans who visit The Bubble in the upcoming year will see a pair of tradition-rich programs.

The OU men's and women's hoop teams are again off to formidable starts and figure to battle for league titles and NCAA Division II tournament berths. Both squads usher in the new year at home tonight against Great Lakes Intercollegiate Athletic Conference foe Hillsdale College. Tip-off for the women's game is set for 5:30 p.m.

The Bubble followed immediately by the men's game. The Bubble is OU's temporary home while a new recreation and athletic center undergoes construction.

The OU women's program has recorded 20 or more wins in nine of the past 10 seasons under coach Bob Taylor. And that trend could continue this year.

Taylor's undefeated and nationally ranked Pioneers (12-0, 3-0 GLIAC) stormed out of the gate, highlighted by a recent four-game road sweep. They look for win No. 13 against Hillsdale which owns just one victory in 32 career meetings with OU.

Senior point guard Lori Young, junior guard Jamie Pawinski and sophomore guard Courtney Ruffing all of whom attended Rochester Adams — have played key roles in the Pioneers' best start in school history.

Young, an accomplished floor leader named to last season's GLIAC All-Defensive team, leads the team in assists (78) and steals (32) and is averaging a shade under nine points per game, while Pawinski ranks second in assists (31) and steals (25) and averages 8.3 points per contest. Ruffing, who transferred from the University of Dayton, is shooting 41 percent (17-of-42) from behind the 3-point arc to go along with 28 assists and 13 steals.

Teams have struggled to score points against the Pioneers' stingy defense. Opponents are averaging only 58.3 points per contest and shooting a paltry 36 percent from the field.

Oakland's non-conference schedule was one of the most challenging in recent history, but the Pioneers cleared every hurdle. OU defeated St. Joseph's (Ind) twice, the second time 70-69 on Dec. 22, in addition to wins over Northern Kentucky, Kentucky Wesleyan and Indiana-Purdue at Indianapolis. And that competition will likely help OU down the stretch.

Hillsdale (7-3, 1-3 GLIAC) opened its 1996-97 season with five consecutive victories before suffering back-to-back losses to Michigan Tech (79-71) and Northern Michigan (99-73). Both Hibink, who turned in a 30-point effort against Grand Valley State, paces the Chargers' offensive attack at 18.8 points per game.

The GLIAC has split into two

Sweet success

Pioneers charge into 1997 with high hopes

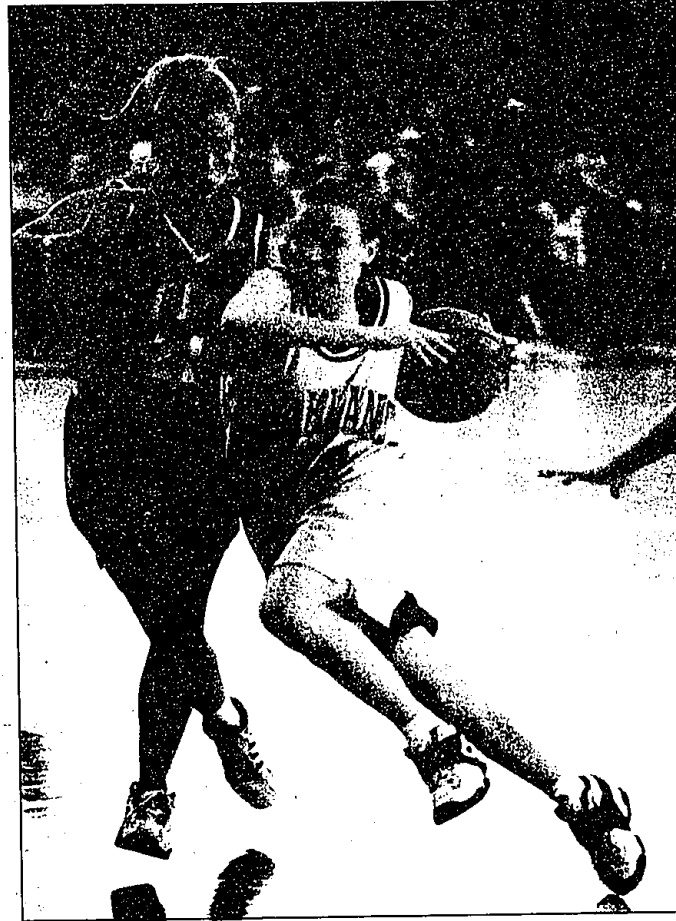


PHOTO BY BOB KOVACH

Young gun: Senior point guard Lori Young (32) is a major reason the Oakland University women's basketball team is off to a 12-0 start. The team leader in assists and steals, Young is one of three former Rochester Adams standouts on the Pioneer roster.

OU HOOP HAPPENINGS

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| The Illinois Basketball Classic Final: Oakland University 80, Ferris State University 74 Consolation: Calvin College 94, Michigan Christian 94 Semifinals: OU 77, Michigan Christian 60; Ferris State 75, Calvin 68 | |
| Tonight Women's basketball: Hillsdale (7-3, 1-3 GLIAC) at Oakland University (12-0, 3-0 GLIAC), 5:30 p.m. Men's basketball: Hillsdale (7-3, 2-2) at Oakland (8-3, 3-0), 7:30 p.m. | Jan. 8 - at Gannon University, 6 p.m. Jan. 11 - at Mercyhurst College, 1 p.m. Jan. 18 - at Wayne State University, 1 p.m. Jan. 23 - at Northern Michigan, 5:30 p.m. Jan. 28 - at Michigan Tech University, 1 p.m. Jan. 30 - FERRIS STATE UNIVERSITY, 5:30 p.m. |
| Tomorrow Women's basketball: Oakland University at Hillsdale College, 8 p.m. Feb. 8 - at Oakland University, 1 p.m. Feb. 13 - GANNON, 5:30 p.m. Feb. 18 - MERCYHURST, 1 p.m. Feb. 27 - MICH. CHRISTIAN, 7:30 p.m. (men only) Feb. 28 - WAYNE STATE, 5:30 p.m. | (Women's starting times are listed only. All men's games played immediately thereafter. All home games are in CAPS.) |
| Remainder regular-season schedule | |

See PIONEERS, C2

Check the cornfields for Canada geese

"Keep your eyes down. Don't look up no matter what."

The words echoed in my mind as I stared down at the aloof mud in the middle of a cornfield. I was up to the task, but I admit, it was tougher than I had anticipated.

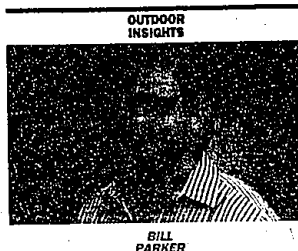
The flapping wings circling overhead sounded more like a hovering aircraft than a flock of Canada geese. They were close, real close, and sounded like they were trying to land in the middle of the blind.

My curiosity was getting the best of me. "Maybe I could just peek a little," I thought for an instant, "before one of them lands on my back."

Fortunately I didn't succumb to my selfish urge and kept my eyes peeled on the mud.

"If you remember anything, remember this, when the geese come in don't look up," explained Oxford's Mark Milosch as we unloaded the decoys from his truck on a damp, misty fall morning.

An avid goose hunter, Mark had offered to introduce me to the art of farmland goose hunting



BILL PARKER

and I jumped at the chance. The aspect of the hunt was thrilling in itself — I'd never hunted geese from a cornfield — and the lure of fresh,

smoked goose breast had my mouth watering like a sprinkler system.

My brother John and I met Mark, his father Don Sr., and our mutual friend Jason Hickmott at a farm in northern Oakland County. We headed out in the predawn darkness to set the decoys and prepare a blind for the hunt.

The setup

The farmer on whose land we were hunting had graciously left a few rows of corn standing in a 30-yard-long patch so we had a terrific natural blind to hunt from. We enhanced the blind by stringing a piece of cornfield-camo burlap through the corn stalks in front of where we would sit.

After checking the wind direction and considering the normal local flight patterns of the geese, Mark decided on a setup and we started placing the decoys.

"They roost on the nearby lakes and come here

See PARKER, C3

See BRIEFS, C2