

Cloverlanes still a safe haven for bowlers

It was only a few days ago that a shootout took place near the Cloverlanes bowling center in Livonia. And truthfully, it had nothing to do with the game of bowling or those who participate at Cloverlanes.

This center has always been considered a safe place to go, and still is.

It so happened on that night the perpetrators had chosen this site to express their grievances against one another. The action that took place was in the parking lot of the bowling alley. The shooting was apparently drug-related.

The incident had nothing to do with this bowling center, its customers or any persons here," said Cloverlanes manager Bob Smith. "As a matter of fact, we had already closed up for the night."

If you read USA Today (Dec. 4), you would have seen some of the most negative views of howling to appear in print that I can ever remember.

It was the feature story in the sports section titled, "300 loses its luster."

Surely, their data is nearly correct, but writer Tom Clark, who obviously is not a bowler, suggests that a 300 score does not really mean much to the bowler, or the other players who witness the feat (ho-hum). Clark is 180 degrees wrong.

I know a lot of very good bowlers who have achieved scores of 298 and 299 without ever having shot a 300 game.

The vast majority of bowlers, who you and I know, would be thrilled to get one, or to watch another bowler do it. Not everybody can put 12 strikes together.

Regardless of the newly developed power balls, it takes a combination of skill and luck to put together a 300 game.

How many times have you thrown a perfect strike ball, only to see a 10-pin, or a four- or seven-pin, staring back at you?

Clark also wrote that there is a steady decline in the number of (league) bowlers.

True, but like every other activity, there are many more diversions nowadays than in the past, such as home computers and movie rentals.

The numbers are down in most activities because a person has to make a commitment with his or her time to a sport like bowling.

There are a few bowlers, including the pros or local all-stars, who have rolled 20-to-30

plus 300 games. This is only a handful, however, the few who are so talented. They bowl virtually all the time, and they surely do not represent the typical grass roots group, many of whom would only dream of rolling a perfect game at least once in their life.

When a 300 ring is earned in sanctioned league play, a representative from the American Bowling Congress (or Women's International Bowling Congress) arrives at the bowling center and makes a formal ring presentation in front of all the members of the league.

According to Clark, it's no big deal anymore (ho-hum). Clark would also have you believe that you can "buy" a 300 game, just by acquiring the newest, high powered ball, combined with the easy lane conditions.

So how could you miss? In reality, sport conditioned

lanes are not that much more difficult than the house shots found in most bowling centers today. Tom Clark of USA Today should join a league, and let's see how many 300 games he could bowl.

BOWLING HONOR ROLL

Beech Lanes (Redford)
Friday 4: Bill Hoffman Jr., 201-300-2347/37.
10th Tuesday Men's: Ron Lewis, 257-279-2198/15 (second 800 series in the history of Beech Lanes).

Dak Lanes (Westland)
Board of Education: Rodney Saunders.
297-253-2558/80.

Woodward Lanes (Livonia)
Motor City Men's Early: Jeremy Mayer.
297-814.

Royal Mixed Handicap Classic Collis Love.
300.

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Tim Smith
Alley

Al

Harrison

Top coach tries to make it fun

BY TIM SMITH
STAFF WRITER

Chris Tennyson has the unusual distinction of being a member of the Observer and Eccentric All-Area Swim Team as members of both Bloomfield Hills Andover and Birmingham Groves.

The 25-year-old Tennyson starred for the Maples from 1992-94, making the All-Area team three times in the breaststroke. But now, he is going in as a Falcon - and as Coach of the Year.

So it can be pretty strange and confusing at times for Tennyson, who coached Groves' girls team to a third-place finish at the recent Division 2 finals at the University of Michigan - the team's best finish since 1988.

"The boys and girls swim dual meets at Andover, so it's kind of a tough thing," said Tennyson, with a smile.

"Because I don't want to see Andover lose. But at the same time, I don't want to see my V-3 lose, either."

Allegiances aside, Tennyson - who finished his second season

'What I say to them before every meet is that high school athletics should be a fun thing.'

Chris Tennyson
Groves coach

as coach of the Falcons' girls team and is now getting ready to coach the school's boys squad - tries to get across to his swimmers that success comes from being focused while managing to stay as loose as possible.

"What I say to them before every meet is that high school athletics should be a fun thing," said Tennyson, who also swam at Syracuse University (where he earned a B.A. degree in political science.) "I think a lot of them tend to put too much pressure on themselves. We just try to emphasize that this is one of the most fun things they'll

do in their life, and that's what it should be."

At the state finals, where Groves placed third with a team total of 214, seven points from top team Dexter, that meant girls listening to music in between races and enjoying the moment.

"They had fun with the atmosphere, and that kind of loosened them up a little bit," said Tennyson.

The team was sparked at the finals by sophomore Megan Eyo, who captured the 100-yard breaststroke with a mark of 1:04.85.

"We were extremely pleased with third place," Tennyson said. "We knew it would be a tight race at the top."

Tennyson said next year's team could be even better, despite the graduation of senior leaders such as Krista McComas.

"We gain an extremely talented group of freshmen next year, so we're excited," he said. "The future gets better and better as we go along."

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Madonna men win tourney

Madonna University brought home a first-place trophy Saturday, capturing the Bethel (Ind.) College Classic with a 90-82 men's basketball win over Indiana University-South Bend.

BASKETBALL

The Crusaders, who defeated Andrews University in Friday's opening round, is now 6-4 overall. Forward Dan Kurtinaitis and center Noel Emmerich each scored 21 points for MU, which led 48-41 at half. Forward Chris Behrens added 16 points, while guard Aaron Cox contributed 12.

Paul Sammons came off the bench to lead IUSB with a game-high 22, while Jeremy Herring added 16.

MU hit 50 percent of hits shots from the floor (29-for-58) and 81.8 percent from the free throw line (27-for-33).

SCHOOLCRAFT 91, KIRTLAND 76: Ronald Dorsey came off the bench to score 19 points, leading unbeaten Schoolcraft College to a victory Monday over host Kirtland Community College. Schoolcraft, ranked No. 7 in the latest NJCAA Division I poll, is 11-0 overall, while Kirtland, guided by former Schoolcraft coach Glen Bonneau, is 4-5.

Dorsey, a 6-foot-5 forward from Detroit Pershing, scored 15 points in the second half. Guard Dion Sherrell (Detroit Henry Ford) added 13 points, while forward Andre Scott (Washington, D.C.) and point guard Gary Johnson (Wayne Memorial) added 14 apiece.

Eugene Phillips had 19 for Kirtland, which trailed 46-35 at halftime. Schoolcraft hit 14 three-point shots in the game.

What do you have to say?

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