



West Bloomfield's up-and-coming hurdling tandem of Dave Hewlett, a sophomore (left), and Rick Penzein, a junior (Photograph by JEROME MAGID)

# Grabowski: top miler

Ed Grabowski reached another distinctive milestone on the prep track circuit Saturday during the Greater Kalamazoo Indoor Invitational.

Clocked in 4:22.5, the West Bloomfield High senior paced the one-mile run during the festivities at Western Michigan University's Read Fieldhouse.

Teammates John Risk and Mark Penzein, both seniors, delivered shiny supportive performances.

**RISK CROSSED** the line fifth in the 890-yard run. Penzein took sixth both in the 440-yard dash and the high jump.

Also placing high for West Bloomfield was its one-mile relay entry, which checked in seventh. Relay members were Grabowski, Risk, Penzein and sophomore Ray Warrell.

Not placing very high but qualifying for the finals were West Bloomfield hurdlers Rick Murray, a junior, and Dave Hewlett, a sophomore.

West Bloomfield Coach Lee Averill said he was quite pleased with his team's showing.

**"WE POSTED** some significant time drops which, hopefully, will pay off over our dual-meet season," he said.

The Lakers next will compete at 11 a.m. Saturday in the Waterford Relays at Waterford Township High.

They will resume dual-meet competition at 6:30 p.m. Tuesday when they host Coach Paul Dain's Bloomfield Hills Andover Barons in a Wayne-Oakland League opener.

# Karate taught to adults

By JIM BOCHENEK

Karate as an adult education class? If you live in the Birmingham area and want to try your hand (and feet for that matter) at the sport, you are welcome to do so.

More than 170 people, both men and women, are enrolled in the Birmingham Karate Club with classes held at Derby Junior High. The program is under the direction of James Vanover, a first degree black belt expert.

"Most of the people who come here to try karate do so for the exercise element as well as the self defense aspect," stated Vanover. "We have people from the ages of 12 to 60 enrolled here."

MANY OF Vanover's students were tested for an upgrading of karate rank on Wednesday night. A panel of four peers, brown and black belt experts, judged the club members in their physical capabilities as well as their knowledge of the subject.

Each potential belt candidate went through a Kata, a prearranged fight, so that the judges could see the club members in action.

If a member passed the required tests, he was elevated one rank. If the member failed, he will be able to try again at the next opportunity.

Whether a person passes the tests or not he can still feel happy in the fact that he is learning an art that is both beautiful to watch and healthy recreation. It may also come in handy one dark night on a lonely, almost deserted, street.

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# Target: Austin Rice netters loom as spring king dethroner

By ROBERT A. SKLAR

Strengthened by weekly winter Practices, Birmingham Brother Rice's varsity netters potentially could dethrone perennial Catholic League tennis king Detroit Austin this spring.

Last year, Coach Don McKercher's Rice Warriors ended with a 14-2 mark in Catholic League competition.

That mark brought second place behind Coach Ed Knuth's unbeaten Austin Friars in the Catholic League race. Overall, Rice wound up a shiny 16-3.

During the state class A tourney, the Warriors won their regional, while finishing among the top 10 teams during the finals.

**THIS SEASON**, McKercher wasted no time in launching limited workouts. He started them back in November at the newly opened Beverly Hills Racquet Club (BHRC).

That's when BHRC, in an effort to bolster community relations, originally offered free early-morning court time to area high schools.

McKercher pegs such preseason sessions on the court as invaluable. "They help quite a bit," observed McKercher, beginning his fourth year at the helm of the Warriors.

"They eliminate the need for several days of working out just to regain your stroke during the spring."

**WHAT'S THE** secret to sustaining a strong prep racket power? Old-fashioned practice, McKercher says.

"In high school," he said, "learning and using the correct techniques are of prime concern. And you meet those concerns with lots of playing."

Rice lost four starters via graduation in 1973.

They were number two-ranked singles seed Tighe Keating and the number one-ranked doubles tandem of Brian Fisher and Bob Taylor.

**HOWEVER**, A talent-deep troupe of returnees lavishes the Warriors with jewel-like hopes for 1974.

Prominently cast in McKercher's latest script for success are Brian Hainline and Mike Farah.

Hainline, a senior, again is number one-ranked singles seed. He's also a defending regional singles champion.

"Brian has steadily gotten better by competing against higher-caliber opponents," McKercher said.

"In fact, one of Brian's regular practice opponents is his older brother, Jon, who's the head professional at Court House Tennis and Racquets Club in Farmington."

**FARAH**, A junior, has moved up to number two-ranked singles seed.

Performing supportive parts are Mark Keating, Steve Mayer, John Burg and Jim Carney.

Keating and Mayer comprise the number one-ranked doubles pairing. Burg and Carney comprise the number two-ranked doubles pairing. All are seniors.

Top prospects include freshmen Paul Heinen, Brian Keating and John McGarth.

**McKERCHER'S APPROACH** to coaching teaches team harmony. It punctuates the importance of striving to share, not to dominate the limelight.

"We stress how each individual game is worth only one point," McKercher explained, "and how no one player can win a match alone."

"We stress how, to win, everyone has to pull together, with the veteran players lending helping hands to the younger ones."

Rice will christen its 1974 campaign at 4 p.m. Monday when it hosts Austin.

**THAT BATTLE** will mark the first time ever the two prep tennis bellwethers have kicked off their seasons against each other.

It should prove quite telling, according to McKercher.

As he perceptively put it, "If nothing else, we'll know exactly where we stand right off the bat."

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