

League adds 4 new teams

Bicycle racing -- a growing sport in area

By TOM BAER

Area high school students have been trying something new — competitive bicycle racing — and the results have been interesting and encouraging.

Last spring, students from Southfield-Lathrup, Birmingham Groves and Birmingham Seaholm formed racing clubs and competed against each other on make-shift tracks.

This year, teams from Farmington, Berkley, Cranbrook and Rochester Adams have joined the original three clubs in forming the North Metropolitan Detroit Cycling League. The 19-meet schedule begins this week.

"It's really a good sport for both spectators and riders," said Dan Fitzgerald, a member of Southfield-Lathrup's team. "One reason I became interested in bicycle racing was that I was interested in track," Fitzgerald said. "The two sports sort of parallel each other. They are both endurance sports. But in bike racing, you're using a machine, so there are more tactics — different ways you can ride and win a race."

"It's good for the spectators because it's fast and exciting. The track is only a mile so they see the racers often."

THE CLUBS compete in three general events: one-mile sprints and time trials, and 10-and-20-mile criterium races. In the sprints, the field leaves

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the starting line together. In the time trials, the racers start at 15-second intervals.

In the 20-mile criterium, the winner is determined by points awarded to the leader at four-mile intervals. Double points are awarded to the leader after 16 miles.

There are three classes of competition. Class A is for male riders with one-piece bicycle tires. Class B is for males with clinchers (tires with removable tubes). Class C is for girls.

One problem facing the racers is that there is no regular bicycle racing track in the area. Each club uses improvised tracks. Lathrup's team is trying to use a subdivision in the southeast corner of Twelve Mile and Inkster roads.

"It's a perfect course," Fitzgerald said. "It's exactly a mile going in a circle. There are very few cross streets, and it's out of the way so there's very little traffic."

FARMINGTON HAS improvised a mile track in the parking lot at the Orchard Ridge campus of Oakland County Community College.

One of the most suitable tracks in the area is the Waterford Hills automobile racing track, and the league plans to hold its championship race there May 29.

"It's been a bad season for training because it's been so cold," said Bill Corliss, of the Farmington Club. "I only have about 500 miles under my belt and I should have somewhere over 1,000 miles to be in shape for a race."

Meanwhile, most bikers have been trying to get into shape for the upcoming season.

"Our biggest problem has been getting girls to come out," Corliss said. "We can't find any. They just don't want to race."



Area bicycle racing teams are searching for suitable tracks



Some riders have logged over 1,000 miles in preparation for the upcoming North Metropolitan Detroit Cycling League season which starts this week.

Racing schedule

- April 22 Adams at Berkley
- April 23 Groves at Seaholm
- April 24 Farmington at Cranbrook
- April 29 Adams at Seaholm
- April 30 Lathrup at Farmington
- May 1 Groves at Berkley
- May 2 Seaholm at Cranbrook
- May 7 Farmington at Adams
- May 7 Lathrup at Groves
- May 8 Farmington at Seaholm
- May 9 Cranbrook at Berkley
- May 13 Lathrup at Adams
- May 14 Berkley at Farmington
- May 15 Seaholm at Lathrup
- May 16 Cranbrook at Groves
- May 20 Adams at Groves
- May 21 Berkley at Seaholm
- May 22 Cranbrook and Berkley at Lathrup
- May 23 Groves at Farmington
- May 29 League Championships at Waterford Hills



A member of Seaholm's team prepares for a race

Down Canton, Thurston

3 wins for Falcon '9'

By KEN SCHIFF

Farmington High baseball coach Richard Roy knows how to prepare his team for its Inter Lakes League schedule. It's simple — just win the nonleague games which come before the league contests.

Roy's team swept a doubleheader from Plymouth Canton Wednesday, and then made it three in a row by edging Thurston High 2-1, Friday.

The three victories raised Farmington's record to 3-1 this season. The Falcons open league play Wednesday, against Pontiac Northern, which is favored to win the Inter Lakes title.

Farmington jumped out to a quick 2-0 lead in the first inning of Friday's game on a bases loaded single by Jim Holton that drove in both runs. A single by Steve Koinis, a walk by Mitch Thomas and a single by Bill Wilson, his first of three hits, loaded the bases.

"We didn't do much after that," Roy said. "Thurston's pitcher, Chris Queen, was wild in the first inning, but he settled down after that and we had trouble with him the rest of the day."

THE FALCONS got two men on in the sixth, but that threat ended with a double play. Queen struck out seven and walked two as the game developed into a pitchers' battle between Queen and Farmington's Jeff Herman.

"I'm pleased with Jeff's performance," Roy said. "He's usually my shortstop, but both pitchers, Dan Perry and Dave Duolo, pitched Wednesday's doubleheader."

Herman struck out five and walked four. Thurston came back in their half of the first with a run on a single by Gary D'Ascenzo, walks to Ken McLean and Roy Ivey and a sacrifice by Mike Donoghue.

DAN PERRY struck out 14 batters in seven innings as the Falcons edged Canton, 2-1, in the first game of Wednesday's doubleheader. Canton was shut out in the second game, 2-0.

"Dan had a good game," said Coach Roy. "He is usually wild, that was his trouble last year as a junior. But now he has better control."

Canton scored first as its pitcher, Chris Martivelli, doubled and was singled home by catcher Tom Close. Perry gave up only three hits the rest of the game.

The Falcons came back in the second inning with two runs to take the lead. Mitch Thomas singled and Jay Cummings got on base by an error. Perry singled to knock in the tying run and help his own cause.

Jim Holton followed with another single to bring in the go-ahead run and neither team did much after that. Farmington had only three base hits the rest of the game.

Neither team hit that well," Roy said.

"We hit the ball, but right at them. We only struck out three times."

IN THE SECOND game Dave Duolo shut out Canton. He has now pitched 10 consecutive innings without giving up a run.

"Dave is a smart pitcher," Roy said. "He moves the ball around and he's got good control."

Both Farmington runs came in the third inning on only one hit as the Canton pitcher, Bill Parson, allowed only three hits, walked five and struck out five.

Duolo walked to open the inning. Jim Holton followed with a single and Jeff Herman was hit by a pitch to load the bases. Steve Koinis then walked to pick up an RBI and Mitch Thomas grounded out to bring in another run.

"We're still young yet," Roy said after the doubleheader. "I'm pleased with our defense and our pitching, but our hitting has to improve."

Track looks for record season

The Hazel Park Harness Raceway this spring has more good drivers, more good horses and more good racing than ever before in its 22-year history.

And Hazel Park has been breaking all records for crowds and mutton handle, running far ahead of anything any Michigan track has done in the past.

These two developments are related, says Harold S. Duris, the Birmingham resident who serves as executive vice-president and general manager of the Hazel Park track.

"Our patrons appreciate high-quality, sharp, competitive racing," he said. "That is why they come to the race track—they want to see a good show. If you produce one, they will support you. It's as simple as that."

The facts appear to support Duris' judgment. Hazel Park this year has more good stables than ever before. And it is more than a coincidence that the track is offering the richest purse distribution in its annual—a total of

more than \$3 million will be awarded in purses during the meeting which continues through June 25.

THE RESPONSE of the fans has been surprising even to such an incorrigible optimist as Duris. Despite miserable weather in the early weeks of the season—snow, rain, sleet, cold, hail, even a tornado—the track has broken every betting record for a Michigan standardbred track.

The mutton handle is up almost \$70,000 a night over the previous all-time high—and it's climbing.

Duris has never wavered in his belief that it all begins with first-rate racing but, if you prod him, he may concede that there is a little more to it than that.

"This obviously isn't a one-man operation," he says. "Every department head and everybody in each department must do their job. We have to function with split-second efficiency. We don't dilute on 10 races a night without wasting time. We want our patrons to get home as early as possible."

"I think Bill Connors is the best

racings secretary in the business. He brings in good stables and that results in good racing. I guess if anybody is indispensable to the success of the track, it's Bill."

HAZEL PARK now attracts outstanding stables from throughout North America. Several excellent stables have come to the track this year for the first time but Duris emphasizes that the track still depends mostly on Michigan-owned or Michigan-trained horses.

"Many are among our leaders, year in and year out. We have now completed 20 nights of racing and the leading percentage driver is Tom Merriman. A Wayne horseman who drives exclusively for Bob Kalish of Southfield."

"Equally important, in my opinion is the fact that a good number of our Michigan stables have upgraded their stock tremendously in the last few years.

Rice hosts relays

The 10th Rice Relays are slated for this Saturday at Birmingham Brother Rice High. The field will bring together 15 of Lower Michigan's finest prep track teams.

Along with hosting Rice, area contenders will be Birmingham Groves, Bloomfield Hills Lahser, North Farmington, Birmingham Seaholm and Bloomfield Hills Andover.

Non-area contenders will include Detroit Austin, Ecorse, Oak Park, Pontiac Northern and Harper Woods Notre Dame.

OTHER NON-AREA contenders will be Flint Powers, Oxford, St. Clair Shores Lake Shore and St. Clair Shores South Lake. The program will feature eight

running and four field events. Field events will begin at 10 a.m.; running events will get underway at 1 p.m.

With no individual competition on the program, the Relays annually boil down to a battle between those teams which possess the greatest depth.

LAHSER is defending Relays champion, having paced the meet in 1972; no meet was held last year.

This year will mark the final time the Relays will be held on Rice's old cinder track. That track is scheduled to be replaced by an all-weather one next month.

Rice is located at 7101 Lahser Road, just south of W. Maple Road.