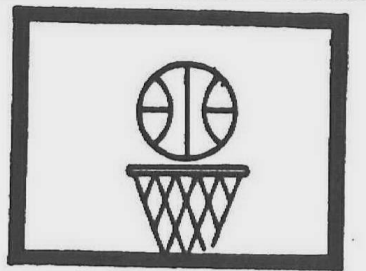


Sports

Chris McCosky, Brad Emons editors/591-2312



Thursday, March 1, 1984 O&E

(P.C)10



Brad Emons

'It's a whole different world'

RON BAWULSKI is your typical gym rat. He pounds the neighborhoods for Detroit Edison by day, but at night the guy who wears black-rim glasses comes out of the booth and plays like Kurt Rambis, but with the grace and finesse of a 21-year-old.

Ron is actually 30 years old and averages 30 points per game for a basketball team called the Bench Pub. He plays in three different rec leagues and always seems to pop up for a pick-up game.

A connoisseur of Naismith's game, Bawulski once tried his stuff for a summer in the famed St. Cecilia League down on Livernois.

The basketball nut that he is, Bawulski still thrives on the game he loves, either watching it on cable with his wife and infant daughter in Farmington, or returning to his familiar haunt — the playgrounds of Bentley High School.

But earlier this month, Bawulski witnessed and took part in the ultimate basketball experience as far as he was concerned. He travelled to Lebanon — Indiana — and met his idol, Rick Mount.

MOUNT played for Purdue back in the late 1960s and led the Boilermakers to the NCAA tournament finals, only to lose to Lew Alcindor and UCLA. He set numerous Big 10 scoring records and once pumped in 61 points versus Iowa.

Al McGuire, the ex-Marquette coach and NBC commentator, called Mount "the best shooter who has ever lived."

Bawulski's trip to Indiana was arranged by Ed Schilling, Jr., a hot-shot point-guard who stars for the Lebanon Tigers, the same school that Mount played for when he graced the cover of Sports Illustrated.

Bawulski and Schilling met last summer while playing for Detroit Kovas at the World Lithuanian Games basketball tournament in Toronto. The two played together in the backcourt and helped Kovas to a second-place finish in a tournament which drew a number of ex-college stars, some of whom played professionally.

BAWULSKI was invited down to see Lebanon, a school of 800 students, play North Montgomery, the state's 16th-ranked high school team.

When Bawulski arrived that Friday afternoon, he learned some startling facts about Indiana high school basketball:

- Players received discounts and didn't have to stand in line to get into local restaurants.
- Fans line up for tickets, even before the start of the JV game.
- The preliminary or JV game drew 3,000 fans. One player even dunked.
- All seats were reserved with 5,000 Tiger fans jamming into the gym.
- Players were taped by the team trainer, both at practice and for the game.
- The game was broadcast on both radio and TV.
- Practice and game uniforms are washed daily. The lockers are first class all the way.
- Student support is nearly 100 percent.
- Players have access to the gym year-round.

BEFORE MEETING Mount for a little shoot-around on Saturday afternoon, Bawulski talked with Jim Rosenstihl, who has coached Lebanon to over 400 victories in 20 years of coaching.

His hour-long session brought forth some other interesting things:

- Parents wouldn't dream of interfering with the program.
- What about kids who can't play defense? "We can work around that by hiding them somewhere," said Rosenstihl. "I want guys who can shoot. Do you know any college that recruits defensive players?"
- Schilling, who reveals as a passer, led Lebanon to victory that night, giving the Tigers a 15-3 record. Nominated for the McDonald's All-American team, Schilling selected Miami of Ohio over North Carolina and Iowa as his collegiate choice.

MOUNT AND his son, Rich, an eighth-grader who is pouring in 19 points a game, met Bawulski and Schilling next day at the gym. They played two-on-two, one-on-one and shot free throws.

Bawulski first encountered Mount back in junior high when Tom Niemi (now the Bentley coach) took Mount and his friends to Michigan games in Ann Arbor. The more Bawulski watched Mount play, the more he was impressed.

"Rick Mount is just a really nice guy who still loves to play," Bawulski said. "He has a little hesitation in his shot, which is impossible to stop. He told me he plays more in the summer. He's still in pretty good shape, maybe five pounds over."

Bawulski and Mount each shot 50 free throws that day. Bawulski made 47 and lost.

"He hit a couple of them left-handed with his eyes closed," Bawulski said.

MOUNT then invited the two over to his home where the Michigan game's memorabilia.

"He pulled out the ball that had 'Consensus All-American' on it," he said. "That ball meant a lot to him."

Mount, who represents a shoe company, said he might drop by "to see what kind of ball they can play in Detroit."

After returning, Bawulski reflected on his trip. "It's a whole different world," he said. "If I'm reincarnated, that's where I'm want grow up."



RICK SMITH

Erik Klein Smith will lead the Salem swim team into battle in the WLAA conference meet beginning tonight. Salem is the favorite, but Stevenson and Farmington are in close pursuit.

Rocks face test in WLAA meet

By Chris McCosky
staff writer

PLYMOUTH SALEM and Livonia Stevenson, ranked No. 1 and 2 respectively in the Observerland swim rankings, were the dominant teams during the Western Lakes dual meet season.

Does that mean the 10-team Western Lakes conference meet, which begins tonight at Salem and ends tomorrow night, will be just a two-team fight?

Not at all.

Salem, 12-1 overall and 9-0 in the conference, and Stevenson, 12-2 overall and 6-1 in the conference, will indeed be the favorites to win the league meet.

But, there is a dark horse contender. Farmington, enjoying the best swim season in its history, will make a serious bid for the league crown.

"We've got a shot at it," said the Falcons' second-year coach Greg Phill. "A very respectable shot at it."

FARMINGTON, 10-3 overall, 5-2 in the league, has within its arsenal perhaps the most talented swimmer in the area — Alec Campbell. Campbell currently tops the Observer swim rankings in three events: 200-yard individual medley (2:04.1), 100 butterfly (53.7) and the 200 freestyle (1:48.5).

Campbell, a senior, currently holds seven Falcon varsity records, five pool records, and three league records. He has been a state qualifier since his freshman year and has a shot at being the state champ in the 100 fly this year.

Besides Campbell, the Falcons have Jay Weaver, Eric Davis, and Fred Courville, all ranked in the top 10 in the area in their respective events.

Farmington's problem is a lack of depth. After Tim Smith, Mike Wohlford and freshman Chris Inch, the Falcons ranks become thin.

"We are going to have to make a lot of things happen," said Phill. "The way I see it, we've only got two for-sure winners — Campbell in the 200 IM and the 100 fly."

The Falcons had a good shot at placing three divers, which would have been a big boon since neither Salem nor Stevenson are strong in that event. But, diver Nathan Hattan has been suspended from the team for disciplinary reasons, leaving just Andy Burns and Mike Finnegan.

"That really hurt, but still, I'm all set. We're definitely going to go after it. I think Salem has to be the favorite and Stevenson is tough, but I don't think anyone can overlook us," Phill said.

SALEM HAS been the dominating force in the young Western Lakes swim league. The Rocks have yet to be beaten in league play since the formation of

the league two years ago. They have won every dual meet (18 straight), the league relays both years and the league meet last year.

Stevenson has offered the Rocks their stiffest challenge this season. The Rocks beat Stevenson by two points, 87-85, winning it in the final relay, in the teams' dual meet encounter Feb. 16.

Rock coach Chuck Olson agrees that the league meet will be a three-team affair.

"Any one of three teams could win," he said. "It's a question of who swims the best."

The three teams — Salem, Stevenson and Farmington. But the veteran coach feels his team is the favorite.

"We're not overconfident. But I think we are really looking forward to this meet. With the quality that Farmington has, the numbers and the talent that Stevenson has, it's going to be real tight. And, I think there's a lot of pressure on our kids to repeat. We are confident that we will swim well. It's a question of how well the others swim."

Erik Klein Smith, Bob Bowling, Greg Wolff, Scott Anderson, Mike Harwood and Don Harwood will be counted on heavily to pace the Rocks.

THE BIG question mark out of the Stevenson camp is the health of Kevin Everhart. Perhaps the best backstroker in the area, Everhart has been plagued by biceps tendonitis.

"Kevin will swim," said Spartan coach Doug Buckler, "but we're not expecting any miracles. He's only going to swim the medley in the state meet. He's pulled himself out of the other events. He is only swimming for the benefit of the team."

Kurt Hein, Greg Deska, Steve Taormina and Jeff Albert will have to pick up the slack if Everhart can't go 100 percent.

"Chuck (Olson) and I have the teams to beat," Buckler said. "Farmington is the dark horse. If anyone slips, they will be there to take the title."

There will also be a dogfight for fourth place between Livonia Churchill and Northville. Churchill, with the likes of Eric Hutchinson, Drew and Eric Baird, Chris Morasky and Vic Valente, have the edge.

Valente, with his top performance of 252.5, is far and away the league's best diver. Hutchinson and Eric Baird go one-two in the Observer breaststroke rankings, 1:02.9 and 1:04.3, respectively.

Last year, Salem ran away from the other nine teams in the league meet. This year, it may go down to the final relay with three teams in contention. The Western Lakes Activities Association meet ought to be a dandy.

Demolition Chiefs blow Spartans out

By Chris McCosky
staff writer

Uncle George and nephew Dave were in total agreement after the ballgame.

Plymouth Canton, coach Dave Van Wagoner's basketball team, completely destroyed Livonia Stevenson, George Van Wagoner's team, last night in the semifinals of the Western Lakes conference playoffs.

No argument from either coach.

The final score: Canton 71, Stevenson 51. That is not a misprint — as the multitude of loud and excited Chief fans that filled into the Canton gym will attest. The Chiefs dominated the contest from the opening tipoff to the final buzzer.

"We played total team basketball," said Dave Van Wagoner. "We outplayed them in every aspect of the game. We came in with a well-conceived game plan and from the players down to the coaches, it was well executed. This was the best game we played all year."

SAID GEORGE: "They were the opportunistic team. They got to us early and completely took us away from our game. The defense they used did a good job. It's easy to make excuses. They just came to play and we didn't."

Canton will host Livonia Churchill Friday night for the conference championship. Churchill came from a 15-point deficit at Walled Lake Western to defeat the Warriors 64-61.

The Chiefs deployed an effective box-and-one defensive strategy in the first half. The Spartans were befuddled. Canton senior Mark Bennett, at 6-foot-2, was assigned to shadow 6-8 Tom Domako.

"I just tried to keep the ball out of his hands. Once he got the ball, there wasn't much I could do," said Bennett.

Domako was limited to just one shot in the first quarter, as the Chiefs roared to a 19-8 first-quarter lead.

Domako finished with 16 points, but all were scored from the perimeter. He was unable to work inside against Bennett in the first half, and Canton's Jim Schlicker in the second half.

THE CHIEFS were paced by the blistering outside shooting of Gary Thomas. The diminutive perimeter player drained 10 of 12 shots from the floor and seven of seven from the free throw line for 27 points.

Bennett, besides his defense, was the Chiefs floor leader on offense. He dished out 11 assists and pulled in seven rebounds to go along with his nine points.

"Mark is just a great basketball player," Dave Van Wagoner said. "He does everything for us. Not only did he stop Domako, but he created so many things offensively it's unbelievable."

Elijah Rogers, Canton's 6-2 center, was strong on the glass with eight boards and four blocked shots. Kevin Hawkins chipped in nine points off the bench for Canton.

For the Spartans it was another devastating blow in a season full of devastating blows.

"It's been very disappointing," said George Van Wagoner, whose team was picked by many to win the league this season. "But, tonight we were out-rebounded, outshot — everything we tried offensively didn't work. That's a tribute to Canton's defense."

Canton is one game away from its first-ever league championship. Standing in its way is a Churchill team that the Chiefs have lost to and beaten, 86-59.

"We better win it now," said Bennett. "If we come ready to play, nobody will beat us." Game time is 7:30 p.m. at Phase III.

Salem pounds lowly Falcons

Plymouth Salem's basketball team was in no mood to be kind.

The Rocks were odds-on favorites to repeat as Western Lakes Activities Association (WLAA) tournament champions until Livonia Churchill's Craig Hunter canned a 30-foot shot at the buzzer to ambush Salem in the tourney's opening round Friday.

Delegated to the loser's bracket, the Rocks played at Farmington last night and, in the words of Falcon coach Rich Roy, "They dominated every aspect: shooting, at the free throw line, rebounding."

The final score supported Roy's remark — Salem 68, Farmington 40. The Rocks are now 16-3 while the Falcons dipped to 4-15.

NOW! AN IRA THAT YIELDS OVER 16%

Investing your Individual Retirement Account funds in the Putnam Option Income Trust offers you:

Higher Yield. A current return in excess of 16% which is higher than the most aggressive money market fund.

Increasing Dividends. The Trust has maintained or increased its dividend each year since inception.

Safety of Principal. The value of Trust shares tends to fluctuate less than the general stock market.

For further information, call (313) 455-1000, or mail the coupon below.

Mail to: **M B M** Manley, Bennett, McDonald & Co.
505 South Main
Plymouth, MI 48170

Please send me a copy of the Putnam Option Income Trust Prospectus and complete IRA information, including management fees and expenses.

Name _____
Address _____
City/State/Zip _____
Business Phone _____ Home Phone _____

- I would like to switch my Individual Retirement Account (IRA).
- I currently have an account with Manley, Bennett, McDonald and Co.
- I'm self-employed. Send me a Keogh kit.