

Birmingham Area Athletes Have Outstanding Year

Birmingham area schools and athletes enjoyed a banner year in 1956, but it was little different than preceding years.

Local athletes, teams and coaches have long enjoyed a reputation for producing top-notch material from this area.

Here is a resume of the outstanding sports scenes during 1956:

JANUARY

Southfield high school shocked all the so-called experts by taking the northwest suburban Christmas Invitational tournament. And the Jays knocked off the highly-touted Bentley eagles for the cup.

Birmingham got off to a good start in the Eastern Michigan league race by downing Mt. Clemens, 57-45, as Bob Stephenson dumped 21 points.

The recreation department's senior hockey league was thrown into a turmoil when the Oaks upset the setting Varsity Shop, 5-1.

The win left a three-way tie for first.

Franklin Hills pro Wally Burkens finished in the money at the \$35,000 Los Angeles Open in California.

Marty Pavelch opened his first hockey clinic at the Elton Park rink and had an excellent turnout of area youngsters.

FEBRUARY

Birmingham's fabulous swimming team notched its 18th straight win as Coach Jay Myers' tankers dunked Plymouth, 59-37.

The Maple eagles, on the other hand, ran into an unbeaten Farmdale squad and were bumped, 54-41, as Ferndale's Earl McNeal hit for 27.

The Green Hornets captured the junior recreation hockey league crown, the Oaks the senior loop and the Tigers finished on top in the intermediate loop.

Most of Coach, football coach at Southfield high school, was named athletic director to succeed Bob Watts, who retired to devote more time to counselling. . . Watts, however, retained his basketball coaching post.

Birmingham's Henry Gleiner, professional skier, who tutors area novices, said the local slope needed a snowmaking machine if the recently installed program was to be a success.

The all-star recreation hockey teams made short work of the newly-crowned champs in the recreation hockey finals.

MARCH

The Maple tankers set five new records in the Eastern Michigan league qualifying finals held in Royal Oak and gained 22 places in the league finals that were staged in the local own pool.

Berkley eliminated Birmingham from the district basketball finals by a 52-40 count and Pontiac tore Southfield apart with a 86-28 whipping.

Pete Sints set a new national record in the state swimming finals with a brilliant 56.4 at Ann Arbor as the Maples finished third in the meet.

Birmingham basketball coach John Petrakis and track coach Kermit Ambrose both resigned in surprise faculty moves at the local school.

APRIL

Birmingham's track team finished third in the Huron relays held at Ypsilanti and assistant basketball coach Lew Parry was promoted to the head post to replace John Petrakis.

The Babe Ruth league expanded to 12 teams and First Presbyterian church won the Birmingham YMCA church basketball crown.

Early spring weather began to bring out both the flowers and golfers on area courses.

The USGA Women's Open was played for Forest Lake country club for the first time in Michigan's history.

Cranbrook school pitchers Andy Billston and Larry Demerick combined talents to throw a no-hitter at Assumption. The Cranes barely won however, 3-2, as walks and errors gave the visitors two markers in the game.

Bowing to heavy pressure from parents, fans and students, Birmingham coach Kermit Ambrose agreed to return as head track coach after resigning a few weeks earlier.

MAY

East Detroit downed Birmingham in the opening baseball clash for both squads, 11-5.

Birmingham's track team finished sixth in the 30-school Central Michigan college relays held at Mount Pleasant.

Cranbrook, working on a 19-meet win streak, met Birmingham's track team and lost, 71-38.

The Little League and Babe Ruth leagues began their draft selections for the 1956 campaign.

Both Cranbrook and Birmingham took their Class B and A regional track titles. And Bloomfield Hills

golfers finished second in the Brighton regional meet.

Bill Alcorn, the Maples' top pole vaulter, set a new state record when he pushed himself over the pole 12 feet, 11 and three-quarter inches at Ann Arbor.

JUNE

Babe Ruth and Little League officials were nonplussed when the recreation board informed them there was no money for baseball field improvements. Officials were told that there would be even less

money in 1957 for the diamonds.

The Titans remained undefeated and made it five in a row in the Babe Ruth League.

Crooner Don Cherry left the recording studios long enough to take second place in the Buick Open at Grand Blanc.

And the local Junior Legion team moved one game over the 300 mark by downing Milford, 4-2.

(The last six months of sports highlights will be concluded next week.)

Maples Edge HP

Birmingham won its second game in three outings Friday—but it was another close one.

The Maples edged Hazel Park, 48-47, when Jeff Boucher hit a free throw with 14 seconds left.

Hazel Park couldn't get a shot off before the end of the game and Boucher's throw took the decision.

Birmingham trailed by six points at halftime, 20-14, and were behind by eight by the end of the third period.

THE MAPLES finally loosened up in the last quarter and outshot the Vikings, 23-14, for the win.

With the score deadlocked, 47-47, Birmingham brought the ball down when Boucher was fouled.

He missed the first shot and Hazel called a time out.

Boucher used the time out to settle down and sank the second one.

Merv Gailop dumped in 21 points to pace the Maple attack. K'n Broadley had 19 for the losers.

COACH LEW Parry has scheduled two scrimmages during Christmas recess and several practices.

Birmingham will not return to action until Jan. 9 when East Detroit invades the Maple gym in an Eastern Michigan league contest.

The Maples will carry a 1-0 league record and 2-1 overall slate into the game.

AAA Issues Annual Book

The Automobile Club of Michigan today released the 1956 edition of its annual winter sports booklet. Included in its 38 pages is a listing of 81 winter sports areas in the state with a description of sports available, facilities and accommodations.

Also included is a map showing the location of the areas and a calendar listing major winter sports events in the state for the season.

The booklet is available to the public at all Auto Club division offices.

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Along the Sidelines

with bill arthur

Birmingham basketball Coach Lew Parry must be classified as an optimist.

And since optimistic coaches in this state can be counted on the fingers of one hand, this is indeed, an unusual distinction.

This optimism, while expressed towards the team in a general way, is turned mainly toward the defense of defensive basketball—a touchy subject, at best.

It is this observer's opinion that defense is a lot ar where basketball is concerned and that every effort is extended to aid and abet the scoring phase of this somewhat ridiculous whistle-blowing caper.

BUT PARRY remains one of those fresh breezes in a smoke-filled room by devoting considerable amount of time each day to the art and finesse of defensive basketball.

It must be said at this point, that the rules cause the whistle-blowing, not the referees. The referees, unfortunately, are handicapped by those rules . . . they do not make them; only enforce them.

A neutral observer would ask why Parry even bothers with such a thing as defense.

He says that defense is still a part of the game (I still don't believe it) and adds that the defense will still win its share of the games.

THIS, IT MUST be admitted, is optimism in its highest form.

The patience which Parry extends to the players when explaining the finer points of grabbing the ball without touching the opposing player is gratifying.

It is also nearly impossible.

Nevertheless, Parry continues to include defensive tactics in his daily lessons at the Birmingham high school gym.

IT MUST be discouraging, however, to see a whistle (with a referee attached) come screaming across the gym during a game every time a defensive maneuver is attempted.

On the other hand, Parry seems to be the type that's hard to discourage.

Which may stand him in good stead in the future.

Record-Setting Relay Team

Birmingham's record-setting relay team relays (which Birmingham won) held at has something to smile about these days, as Battle Creek last week. The team, from left, is Dennis Collins, Dave Smith, Meyers, Jim ers set a new record for the Cereal Bowl Walls and Bill Buick.

A new North American brown trout record catch was established at Celina, Tenn. April 19 when George Langston landed a 26-pound, 2-ounce beauty from the Okey river below Dale Hollow dam, a U. S. Army corps of engineers impoundment.

and that marker was sufficient as the Eldorado went on to win, 2-0. Dave MacLean got an insurance tally in the second.

How long does it take to become a "big time" jockey? Tony Penny, an apprentice jockey at Detroit race course, rode for three full seasons at California and Florida tracks with nary a winner and not too many mounts. Then he pushed home a longshot in the first week at DRG, rode a couple more winners the next three days and now there is a line of trainers outside his door asking him to pilot their top horses.

THE JETS scored two goals in the second period and another in the third to decision the Huskies. Dave Jensen scored twice and Steve Landis once for the winners. Mike Miles tallied for the losers.

In the junior league, Terry McGovern scored once in the first and again in the second to lead the Yellow Jackets to a 4-0 win over the Green Hornets.

Pete Hutton and Doug Kaufmann scored the Jackets' other goals.

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Bulldogs Down Tigers In Intermediate Loop

A four-goal scoring burst by George Forest gave the Bulldogs a 7-0 win over the Tigers in the recreation department's intermediate hockey league Saturday.

Bill Hutton, John Sison and Tony Rizin got a goal apiece in the shutout.

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Ringing thanks to our many good friends for your loyal patronage throughout the year.

May you all enjoy a very happy Holiday Season and a New Year filled with 365 days of health, happiness and good fellowship.

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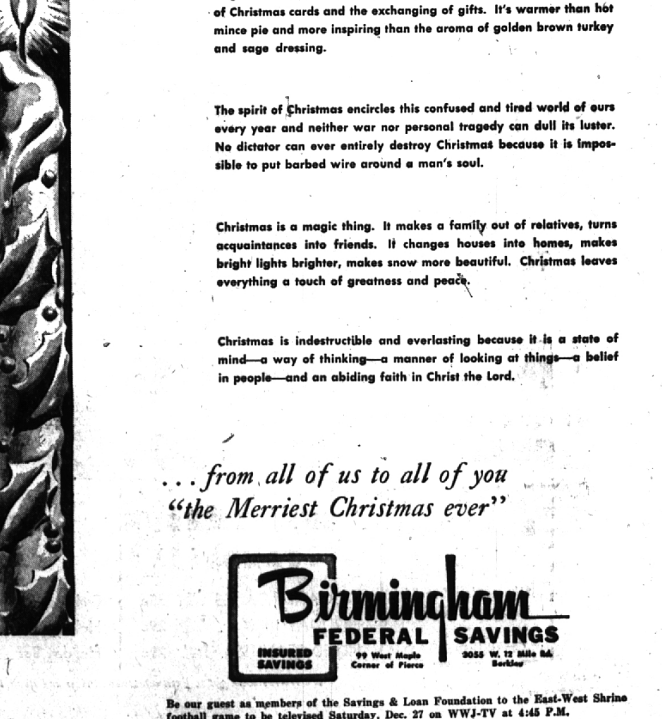
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Season's Greetings

Not in the sense of custom only, but with a genuine appreciation of our pleasant associations during the past year, we extend to you our best wishes for an Old-Fashioned Merry Christmas and a New Year of Happiness and Prosperity.

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Christmas is a lot of things. It's bigger than Santa Claus and it's brighter than a million lighted trees. It reaches beyond the mailing of Christmas cards and the exchanging of gifts. It's warmer than hot mince pie and more inspiring than the aroma of golden brown turkey and sage dressing.

The spirit of Christmas encircles this confused and tired world of ours every year and neither war nor personal tragedy can dull its luster. No dictator can ever entirely destroy Christmas because it is impossible to put barbed wire around a man's soul.

Christmas is a magic thing. It makes a family out of relatives, turns acquaintances into friends. It changes houses into homes, makes bright lights brighter, makes snow more beautiful. Christmas leaves everything a touch of greatness and peace.

Christmas is indestructible and everlasting because it is a state of mind—a way of thinking—a manner of looking at things—a belief in people—and an abiding faith in Christ the Lord.

... from all of us to all of you
"the Merriest Christmas ever"

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