

Restrictions Many for Our Girl Prep Athletes

BY SUSAN HOLTZER
Free Press Special Writer

Michigan high schools virtually protect a girl athlete right out of her gym shoes.

In a series of rules promulgated by the Michigan High School Athletic Association, girls are restricted from the extensive work that most athletes find necessary to high achievement.

The MHSAA rules limit the number of hours a girl can practice and the number of times she can compete in games. To avoid the restrictions, many girls turn to private clubs — if they can find one, if they can afford it and if their interest in athletics hasn't been crushed in the process.

Not every girl is as lucky as Sue Parks of Ypsilanti High School, whose father is men's track coach at Eastern Michigan University.

Bob Parks decided early that he was going to develop his daughters into track stars, and he has been particularly successful with Sue, who was on the United States team in the Pan-American Games. Parks coaches other girls along with his daughters, in what spare moments he can find.

Parks is a self-professed track fanatic, a man who believes in the value of his profession. And he has been leading a running battle with Ypsilanti school officials, and the State Board of Education, to

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force them to provide girls with opportunities. So far, he had not had much luck.

The MHSAA, the governing body of all high school athletic competition, has absolute authority and can ban any school from competing if any of its rules are violated.

Within the body of MHSAA rules, the one that people like Bob Parks find the most damaging to real achievement is Rule 7:

"Girls shall take part in not

more than five practice or play periods per week including games or contests. Practice periods shall not exceed one and one-half hours in length per day."

This rule eliminates the kind of extended training necessary to achieve excellence, its opponents point out.

There is no limit on practice time for high school boys.

MHSAA's Rule 3 states:

"A girl shall not compete in more than two games per sport per calendar week, and in not more than one game per sport, on two consecutive days." The only equivalent rule for boys is a limit on basketball games, a more-than-usually tiring sport.

ANOTHER OF MHSAA's girls' rules deals with medical examinations. The rule for boys is simple; to be eligible for a sport, a boy need only have a physician's approval on file with his school principal. The regulation for girls, however, is once again "protective":

"There shall be a thorough medical examination of each girl on the squad of the sport concerned during the current school year and prior to interscholastic athletic competition in that sport. In any questionable case, the student is to be withheld from competition.

whole life, by any means. It is just one of several things she does astonishingly well — like maintaining a nearly perfect A average.

But life would be just a little easier — and a little more fun — for girls like Alfreda who are interested in sports if their schools shared in that interest.

SALARY FIGURES seem to show that they aren't, however.

In the Detroit Federation of Teachers' master contract for the current academic year, extra salaries for coaching duties are spelled out in detail.

The boys' head football coach receives \$884 over base pay; so does the head basketball coach. The other coaches specified, 11 different coaching positions, receive increments on a sliding scale down to \$465 for the golf, tennis and cross-country coaches.

The highest-paid woman coaches, under the Detroit master contract, get only \$465 — for field hockey, swimming and basketball. There are only two other coaching positions included in the contract; the girls' tennis coach gets \$318, and the golf coach receives

Michigan's girl athletes.

In Ann Arbor, in fact, the Board of Education has already gone ahead in advance of the law. Early this month they passed resolution authorizing girls to play on boys' teams.

Still, in high schools at least the tide may be turning. The recently-passed Senate bill which would allow girls to compete on non-contact boys' teams may mark the beginning of a major breakthrough for

Court Test Looms After Tennis Default

By ROGER LANE
Free Press Lansing Staff

LANSING — The issue of whether girls can compete in interscholastic high school tennis meets reached the confrontation stage Wednesday in Lansing, and headed toward the courts.

It came to a head when athletic officials from Harry Hill High School declared the Ann Arbor Huron team loser of an inter-school match by default, because the Ann Arbor school's lineup included two girls.

Business Manager Diane Gundry of Harry Hill said the default pronouncement by tennis coach Gordon Thomas followed South Central Conference policy adopted Tuesday night.

Mrs. Gundry said it also was in record with Lansing school system policy under a direct-

of the U.S. and state constitutions," said Attorney Lawrence Sperling of Ypsilanti.

Ann Arbor girls said the matter was thoroughly analyzed by city school board members and administrators several weeks ago, and he expected their backing in a court action.

The conflict on the Harry Hill courts was part of a snowballing controversy that already has led to Senate passage of a bill expressly authorizing high school girls to compete in non-contact sports contests between schools. The bill is before the House.

At the last minute, under the Lansing school district policy, Mary Carter of Lansing was withheld from competition Tuesday in a Section High match with Ypsilanti High School at Ypsilanti.

"After any protracted period of illness of a student, there is to be an additional medical ex-

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