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Dave Versical used to stop goals for the Junior Red Wings and now he's doing more of the same for the MSU hockey team. In his first year in the nets, Versical has played a big role in putting the Spartans in first place in the WCHA.

SN photo/Joe Kirby

## Questions for an MSU goalie

By PHIL FRAME

State News Sports Writer

Dave Versical is currently the best full-time goalie in the Western Collegiate Hockey Assn. (WCHA) and has been an important spark in the Spartans' early drive into first place.

Versical has been involved in all of MSU's league decisions, five wins and one loss, and has a 6-2 record overall. He has stopped an unbelievable 227 shots in his six league games at an average of 38 per game. His goals-against average stands at 3.33.

We recently talked with Dave about some past experiences, what he thinks of college play, MSU and his coach, Amo Bessone. Here's what happened:

**STATE NEWS: What was it like playing for the Junior Red Wings?**

**VERSICAL:** It got pretty grueling at times but the best thing about it was that all our road games were on weekends.

When we went away, it was usually on Friday nights and we really wouldn't have to miss any school at all. We'd come from school, go to Olympia (Stadium), hop on a bus, go two hours, stop and eat in London (Ontario), hop on again, go two more hours and maybe play a game in Niagara Falls. Then we'd come back the same night and get home at four in the morning most of the time.

Last year we went eight or 10 weeks in a row on road trips and got back home at about the same time.

We probably practice twice as much here than we did on the Wings. Here we practice four times a week but with the Wings we only practiced one or two times a week.

**STATE NEWS: What benefits did the Junior Wings experience give you?**

**VERSICAL:** I think it was excellent for coming here because I think you'd really have to be an excellent goalie to go straight from playing high school to playing college hockey. It's a hairy jump. I had tons of trouble coming from Junior "B" to Junior Red Wings. That was a big jump for me.

Then I went from there to playing college, I had so much trouble in the preseason camp here. Everybody shoots a lot faster, they can skate a lot faster and I really thought I did bad my first few weeks here. I was worried but everything seemed to settle down. I still make a lot of mistakes but the Junior Wings prepared me. Without that, the jump would have been a lot more difficult.

**STATE NEWS: Why did you pick MSU?**

**VERSICAL:** Probably because they picked me. I was hoping I would get an offer and if I didn't get one I would have probably gone someplace else. But State approached me towards winter last year, they came to some of our games and then called one night to ask me to come up for a visit. I drove up and paid for my own gas and everything. They took me out to dinner at the Pretzel Bell and took me around campus. That's all they did, they just kept calling me, letting me know the situation, who they were going to take or what they needed. Then they came over April 9th and I signed the papers.

**STATE NEWS: It seems that you have won the goalie job away from Greg Maas. Is there still a question mark hanging over your head?**

**VERSICAL:** Well, in one way, no, because you're always confident of yourself. You always have to be cocky and just say you're gonna go out there and keep your job and stuff like

that.

But in another way, you can say anything can happen. You know, I can get hurt in a game and Maas could come in and play excellent. If you look at it that way, then in that way there is a question mark. I suppose that applies to anybody; nothing's ever for sure.

**STATE NEWS: How is the overall caliber of play in the WCHA?**

**VERSICAL:** The jump now doesn't seem as big as when I first came up here. It seems that I've adjusted, and I know it's a lot better hockey.

Basically, it's a lot faster and not having a center red line makes breakaways happen

more. You have to be more on guard and the game is more wide open.

**STATE NEWS: What single factor produces the most victories?**

**VERSICAL:** It's a combination, I suppose. What you really need is a well-balanced team. You could have a high scoring team but if you don't have the defense to help out when the other guys do get shots...every team will get shots on goal no matter what, so you've got to have a defense to balance off in that situation.

Or the other way around, if you can't get the puck off defense out of your own zone then, that'll hurt you too. So

you really need a well-balanced team.

**STATE NEWS: How do you like working for Amo Bessone?**

**VERSICAL:** So far, so good. I get along with him well. He gave me a lot of confidence in the beginning when I didn't feel I was playing so well, especially in the first few weeks of training camp. He gave me a chance; he didn't get down on me or anything like that. He didn't say anything so I figured he hoped that I would come along. He's treated me fairly, and that's all I ask for.

**STATE NEWS: What is the overall attitude of the team?**

**VERSICAL:** Maybe it was a (continued on page 9)

## Versical: stop the puck

By PHIL FRAME

State News Sports Writer

Someone once said that goalies are a very strange breed. That person hypothesized that the innumerable unidentified flying objects called hockey pucks gave goalies mushy brains.

MSU's Dave Versical doesn't follow that hypothesis but he is unique and probably a lot different than the image some people have of hockey players.

The 5-foot-11, 20-year-old sophomore from Grosse Pointe Shores has rapidly become a mainstay in the Spartan goal crease, as well as one of the best netminders in the Western Collegiate Hockey Assn.

His quiet, low-key nature does not boast of his success, though. In fact, it almost contradicts the heroism he displays while he is defending the MSU goal.

Dave's roommates, Kevin

Coughlin and Jeff Barr, were once surprised when he went to the library on a Friday night before the hockey season began. The nickname they've given him is, "The Book." But that's the way Dave is.

"Even in class I'm really quiet," Versical said. "One thing I've got to do is talk more, I usually just sit in the corner and take it all in."

Versical was a 1973 graduate of Grosse Pointe North High School and then went on to Macomb County Community College the next two years. During that time, he was the goalie for the Detroit Junoir Red Wings.

In his first year with the Junior Wings, Versical helped them to a fifth place finish among seven teams. His second year was rather bitter-sweet, however, with the team finishing last in the league but going on to win the Junior "A"

national championship in post-season play.

Dave began playing hockey when he was 11-years old, climbing through the amateur ranks until he reached the Junior Wings. He was initially touted by Michigan Tech during his first year out of high school, but was passed up when his goaltending slipped during the last month of the season.

Dave's initial academic interest was journalism, of all things, but that was quickly changed to english during his first year in college.

Right now, Dave is debating whether to go directly into teaching in secondary schools or go on to earn a master's degree in english.

Dave Versical may not think he's very rowdy, but some of his fans sure get that way watching him perform.





SN photo/Bill Goodrich

Fly away time. Skiing down hills is one thing but mixing that with a bit of the aerial ballet is another matter entirely. It's known as ski jumping and it takes a little more effort than the downhill variety.

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## Playmate selling magazines; December dreams hit town

By JEROME McGUIRE  
State News Sports Writer

Winter sports. What better winter sport than curling up in front of a roaring fire with a good piece of literature. Especially if it has a fold out picture in the middle.

The December Playmate of the Month is a winter sport herself. She was discovered at that famous winter resort: Lake Tahoe. Of course the centerfold piece contains some pictures of our Playmate strapping up her boots and resting from a nature hike, even though she's naked above the boots in one picture. Yes nothing can beat this winter pastime unless it is skimming over Lake Tahoe slopes yourself. But remember, every great athletic victory begins as a dream.

"Meet her at Meijers! PLAYBOY'S December Playmate Nancie LiBrandi." yelled the ad in last Friday's paper.

In front of the fresh produce section-a melon

promotion. Well the December Playmate of the month was selling something but it wasn't melons even though she was at the north east corner of the store, separated by a partition from the milk jugs in the grocery store. Life does have its poetry everywhere. Nancie LiBrandi, a 21-year-old, originally from Los Angeles, was selling magazines.

Playboy magazines were piled in four foot stacks behind her as Meijer patrons filed by and purchased one for the Playmate to sign on the fold out. The turnout was rather light and Ted March, the Playboy representative with the Playmate attributed it to the opening of hunting season. In fact a few men with licences attached to their backs did have their Playboy signed by the ultimate American sex symbol, (object?) before heading out into the wild to bag the big buck. Deer, that is.

(continued on page 8)

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Winter snow. Waiting in anticipation for the first touch of white stuff when you can break out the sled, find a hill and enjoy...

SN photo/Robert Kozloff

## It is not far out-- Lansing Ski Club

For skiers who want the features of a ski club, but not the long distance drives of some Michigan clubs, there is the Lansing Ski Club.

The club, on Dawn Avenue off Lake Lansing Road, is open seven days and nights each week for members and their guests.

The club was founded in 1947 and since then has added many features in upgrading its facilities. Among these are the Pro Shop, added in 1967; chair lifts, installed in 1970; a new ski school and rental lodge, built in 1972, and, also in 1972, expansion of the north ski area.

The club's ski school is directed by Roy Schaefer, instructor and examiner, now in his seventh year at the Lansing Ski Club. There are also 18 certified instructors which are available 12 hours per day for class lessons or private and semi-private lessons.

Among the skiing facilities are two chair lifts, one poma and seven tow ropes. There are also two beginning areas and 12 intermediate and advanced slopes, which are lighted for night skiing. To keep a 20-to 30-inch base throughout the winter, the club also has two complete snow-making systems.

The MSU Intramural Sports Dept. sponsors intramural skiing at the Lansing Ski Club during winter term. Further details and schedules are being drawn up and will be announced later.

Several different memberships are available. Junior (under 18 years), adult and family (for husband, wife and all children residing with them while attending college), are offered for either five-day (Monday through Friday) or seven-day memberships.

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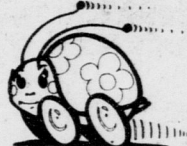
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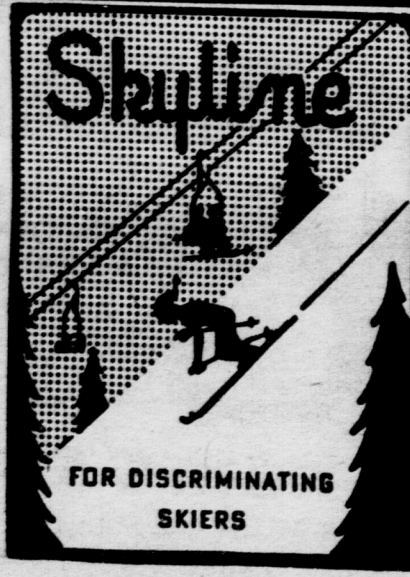
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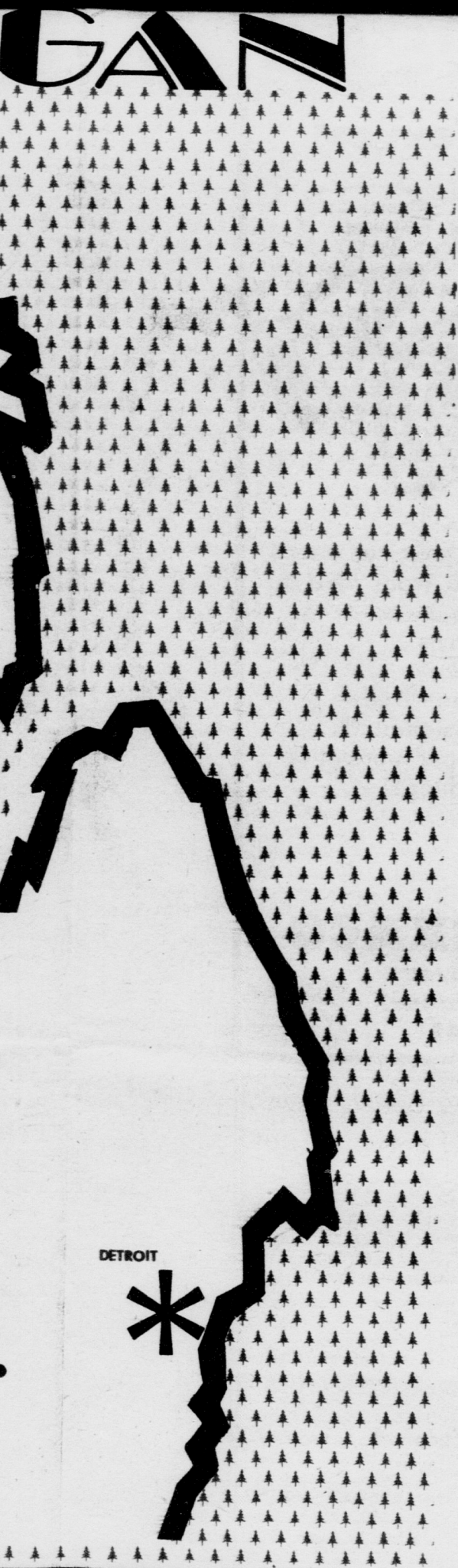
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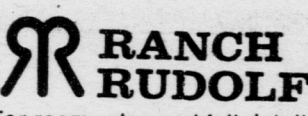
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## Playmate almost a star

(continued from page 4)

Playboy and its playmate were after another kind of buck among other things. For Playboy it is a growing duel with Penthouse etc. for circulation. For LiBrandi it is a chance for a lucrative modeling and possible movie career.

"I don't really feel exploited, because I'm using them too. This will really help my chances as a model," she said in response to a question about whether she felt like a piece of Playboy merchandise.

She was discovered while working as a Black-Jack dealer in a Lake Tahoe Nevada resort. Perhaps it is the Playboy manner but she seemed rather unassuming and not really plastic. The promotion was just part of the deal.

"We are not really supposed to say but the centerfold pictures are a flat fee and the promotions are paid separately. You can decide to do this kind of tour or something else," she said, explaining the monetary benefits of Playmating.

"How did you get into this and how much are you paid are the questions I am usually asked," she said when we told her we were not sure how to interview a Playmate.

She seemed relieved to be interviewed on a more personal conversational level but she had little reaction when asked: "Do you ever think about being every 12-to-14-year-old in the

country's first sexual encounter. You know, everybody had Playboy stuffed under their mattress."

She just gave a half smile and gestured up with her thumbs from her folded hands position. Apparently the psychological significance of the Playmate to the American male had eluded her before. The December issue has only been on the newstand a week and she has not been on the promo trail very long. "Nobody recognizes me on the street yet but I do feel kind of like a star with the attention."

She seemed to be watching the whole Playmate affair with semi-alooof interest. As Eric Burdon said, it was like she "was in a Hollywood movie," but at a supermarket.

A look at the December issue will show you she is a natural model. But without the cameras clicking, a Playmate by any other name could be the girl next door. After the interviews she changed into a pair of jeans. "OK cut, Playmate, take five." Nobody would have suspected she was the Playmate of the month. You might look twice at that pretty coed but not suspect she was the super-sex. So don't feel bad when you open up the December issue and compare yourself or your girl friend. With just a touch of glamour and a spark of confidence...

But alas, many are called but few are chosen.

## Ski cheaper at hostels

There is a way around expensive ski trips with \$25 a night hotel bills for a room you rarely see.

The American Youth Hostels (AYH) is a nonprofit organization whose purpose is promotion of inexpensive outdoor recreation for people of all ages. And AYH has hostels throughout the country and Canada where skiers can sleep and eat for low prices.

They are not substitutes for motels and hotels. Facilities are

bunks, usually dormitory-style, and you may be asked to help with the cleanup chores for a few minutes in the morning. Most hostels have early hours; they are designed for serious skiers and sleepers.

Rates vary by times of year and the amount of business. In Michigan, the Blue Lake hostel (at Kalkaska) is within driving distance of the Boyne Country ski areas and costs \$3 per night. The Windy Moraine hostel (near Empire) serves

five downhill ski areas with a fee of \$4.25 a night. Both hostels also have cross country trails nearby.

During the peak ski season these hostels usually get busy and reservations are required.

You must also have a youth hostel pass, which comes with the guide to the 160 United States hostels when you join AYH. An annual membership costs \$11, a lifetime membership is \$110.



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# Versical is top man in the net

(continued from page 3)  
blessing in disguise to get beaten by Tech last Friday night. It brought us back to know that we could get beaten. Even though it was only four games we went undefeated, it was especially good to come back from getting beaten and win the next night because that shows we can rebound.

The attitude is good, everybody gets along with every-

body else, and that's important. **STATE NEWS: What has been the key to the team's early success?**

**VERSICAL:** Probably our power play, because when we've played at equal strength, we've actually been outscored, I think.

Just as important as our power play has been our penalty killing. We didn't get many penalties against Tech and

Wisconsin but, especially against Notre Dame, we were shorthanded a lot and our penalty killing was excellent with Bolton and Addley, McDonald and Cahill.

So, I would probably say our specialty teams both ways — power plays and penalty killing — has been our key.

**STATE NEWS: What is the easiest hockey game for you to play?**

**VERSICAL:** Probably none of them are easy. I just like to stay busy all the time...give me shots. You don't like point-blank shots or breakaways all night, of course, but it's good to have a lot of shots to keep you busy so you concentrate on the game, so you're always in the game and you don't get cold. I like shots that I can see, shots I have a chance on.

**STATE NEWS: Michigan Tech**

has been having some problems lately. Did it look like it was coming out of its slump?

**VERSICAL:** Friday night they did, I know their coach said they didn't play good their first three games and the fourth one they turned it around and started hitting. Friday night they did the same. They played really well, I thought. I don't think Tech will be as strong as they were the last two years.

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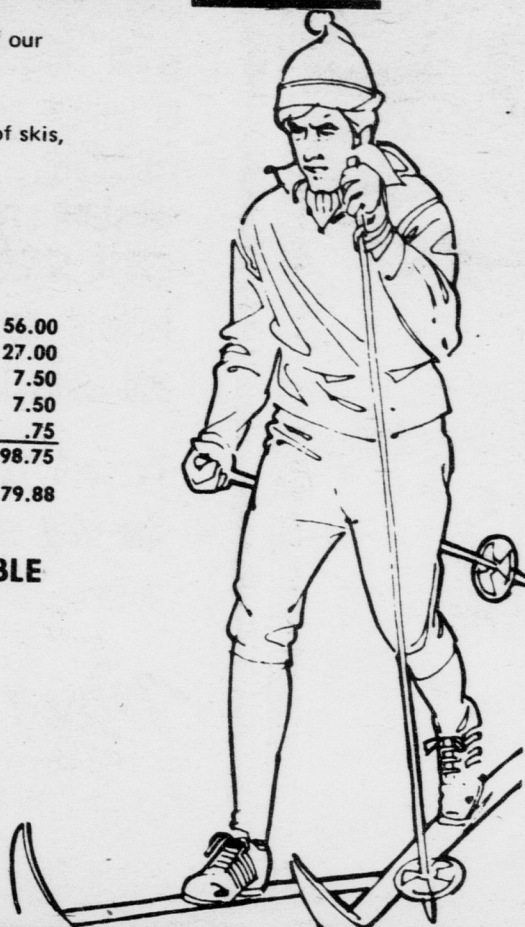
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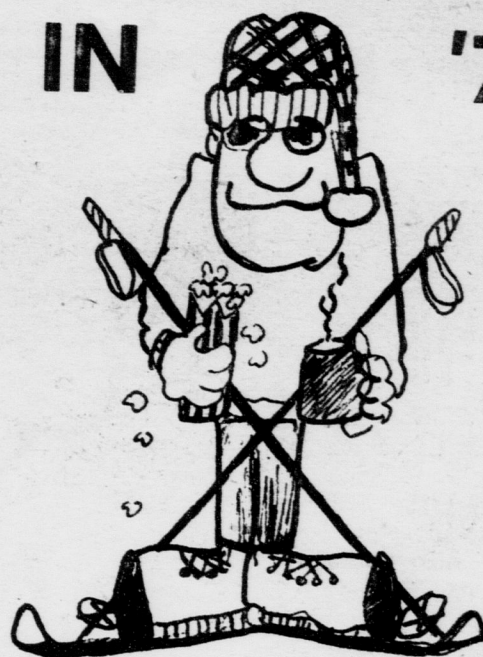


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# Ferrell: more than a manager

By EDWARD L. RONDERS  
State News Sports Writer

Fred Ferrell throws in the towel at each and every MSU basketball game.

And the Spartan cagers, as well as the coaching staff, are glad that he does.

Normally in sports, throwing in the towel is a concession of defeat. But, not so in Ferrell's and the Spartan's case.

That function is part of his job as team manager.

Team manager, i.e. the guy who gathers the soiled uniforms after each game; the one who makes sure there's hot water in the shower; and, on many teams, the brunt of the players' anger over defeat and impending frustrations.

Ferrell's value to the team lies much deeper than the everyday rudiments of the managing job.

And, not only does the Spartan team benefit, but Ferrell views his position as one which enhances many aspects of his life.

"My job is to do the little things," Ferrell commented. "Like during a game there's a unique situation. The players are concentrating on the game and the coaches are concentrating on the players. Somebody must remember that the water bottles must be full and the basketballs gathered for the warm-ups. That's where I come in. I sort of take the pressure of worrying about these little things off everyone else's mind," he said.

Although Ferrell remains removed from the direct action and decision making, he still maintains a closeness to the team.

"I feel like a part of the entire team. The guys here are great. It's a unique situation in that we share a part of each other's lives," he explained. "The players treat me very kindly and I try to help them in anyway I can. And, coach Ganakas has taught me many things since I've been here."

On a trip to Detroit last season Ferrell used one of the many lessons he learned from Ganakas.

## CREDITS

Cover photo: Bill Goodrich  
Here it is, another sporting supplement to the State News brought to you by those wonderful folks in our advertising dept. This one is called winter sports but unfortunately there isn't a whole lot of winter activities going on in November. Still, we did our best.

I would like to take this time and space to thank the people who wrote the stories for this tab: Ed Ronders, Jerry McGuire, Phil Frame and Larry Morgan. Also, I would like to thank Carolyn Fessler (our resident State News feminist) for telling me that she didn't think the Playmate story would be offensive to women. If anyone is offended, I offer my apologies.

Joe Kirby

"We had just returned from the Cable Car Classic in San Francisco last December," he began, "when we went to Cobo Arena to play the University of Detroit. Normally, on the short trips we take a good supply of basketballs. But, this trip we didn't."

"When we got to Detroit, I approached this man at Cobo about getting some basketballs so the team could practice. When I asked him for some," Ferrell continued, "he sort of looked at me in a strange way and grumped, 'What do you want basketballs for?' I used patience and repeated my question again, this time explaining the entire situation to him."

Ferrell continued, "It took some time, but eventually the man cooled down and helped us out. The point being that when a person is mad or upset he usually doesn't remain that way for very long. It's wrong to get angry at someone like that right away. Just be patient. I've seen coach Ganakas use this philosophy."

The senior from Detroit first became acquainted with Ganakas in a basketball class in his freshman year. Eager to learn more about the game, Ferrell asked the Spartan coach if he would teach him the finer points. Instructed to come to Ganakas' office Ferrell did so and was asked if he would be interested in applying for the job of team manager.

Ferrell applied, Ganakas accepted and both have benefited.

Ganakas described Ferrell saying, "Fred's job is one of

taking care of details. Many of them are critical, such as when we are traveling. On some teams if a manager makes a mistake it can be disastrous. But, Fred hasn't made very many and as far as I'm concerned, he could make a thousand. He's very dedicated."

The Spartan coach then pointed out an unusual attribute of Ferrell's, "He has a compassion for people. Plus, he's grateful to be affiliated with the University. Both, academically and athletically. I think the University should be grateful for a person like Fred Ferrell," Ganakas exclaimed.

Senior Lovelle Rivers spoke for the players when he said, "Say something bad about Fred Ferrell? I can't. There's nothing bad to say about him. He's always there when we need him. He's like a brother to the team."

While his teammates treat him as a brother, it was his family which has benefitted from his experience with the Spartans.

A graduate of Southeastern High in Detroit, Fred's father is a working man, in his own words. When Ferrell told his father of his involvement with basketball at MSU, he met with some disdain.

However, as Ferrell blended in with the basketball program his family took a different view of athletics. "My dad came to realize that athletics can benefit a person. My two younger brothers just completed football season and both won all-league honors in suburban Detroit," Ferrell said. "And, if

they want to play ball in college, I think my father would have no reservations now."

Looking ahead to the upcoming campaign, Ferrell believes a combination of things will make the Spartans contenders.

"I can sense a feeling this year," he said. "I can't really describe it, but I feel the team

will do really well. They're all shooting for the same goal."

Reminded that the Spartans have been picked to view the Big Ten standings from the bottom, he remarked, "Even if we should get blown out of a ball game this team has the spark that won't let it quit. What are we supposed to do if

(continued on page 11)

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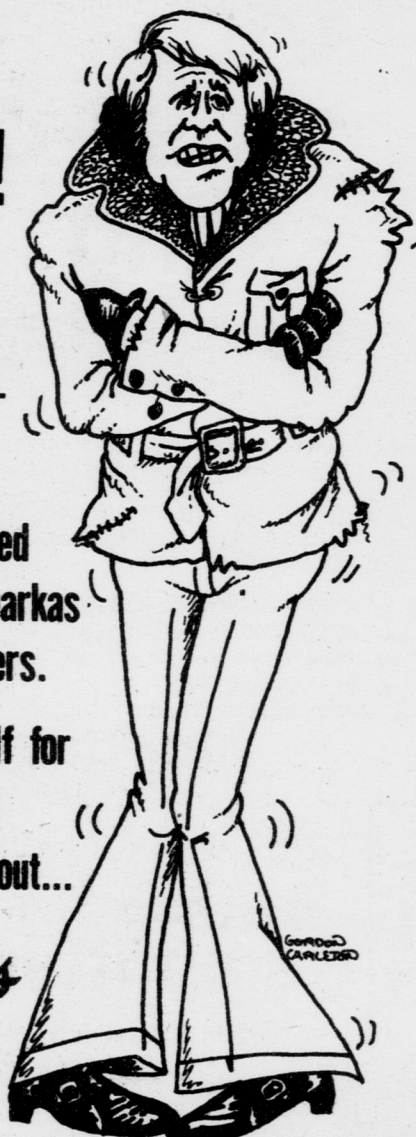
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Freddie Ferrell, manager of the MSU basketball team, is always

ready with a towel or a water bottle on the sidelines.

SN photo/Dan Hughson

## Fred takes time for all

(continued from page 10)  
we get beat really bad? Close up shop and go home?

"No, this team reminds me of Lindsay Hairston," he continued. "When he first came here he was slow. But, coach Ganas took him and molded him into a fine player. That's a lot like this year's team. There's a lot of talent in the rough. It will just take time to refine it."

Ferrell's devotion to MSU basketball was best exemplified when a visitor to Jenison asked him when the first basketball game was. Without batting an eye, Ferrell raced from the fieldhouse up to the staff offices and returned with a fistful of schedules for the inquirer.

One might say that Ferrell manages life very well also.

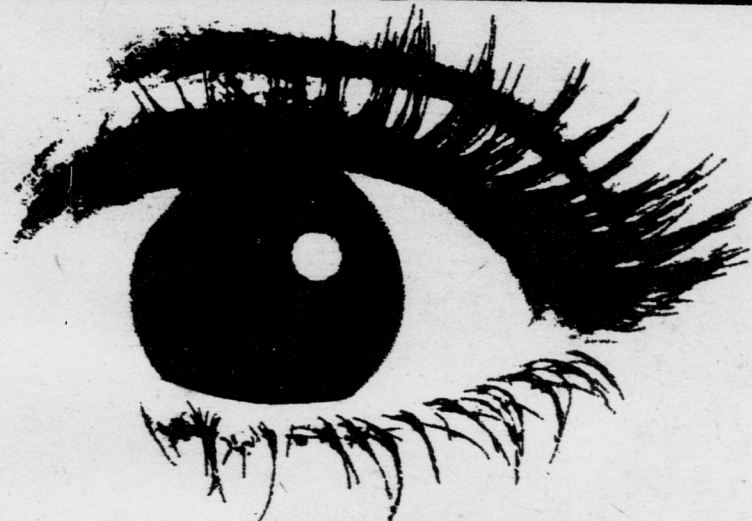


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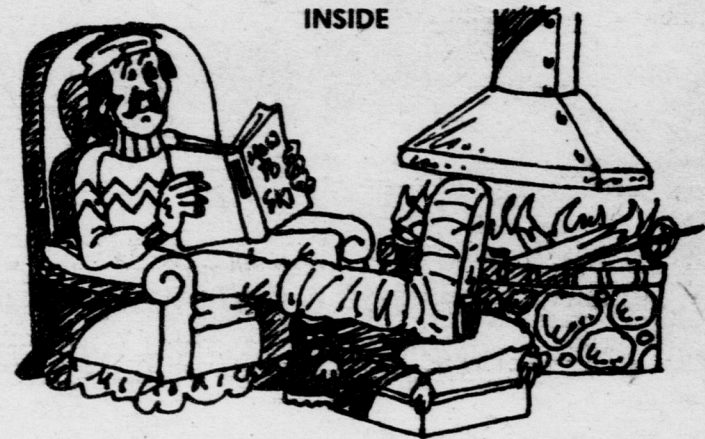


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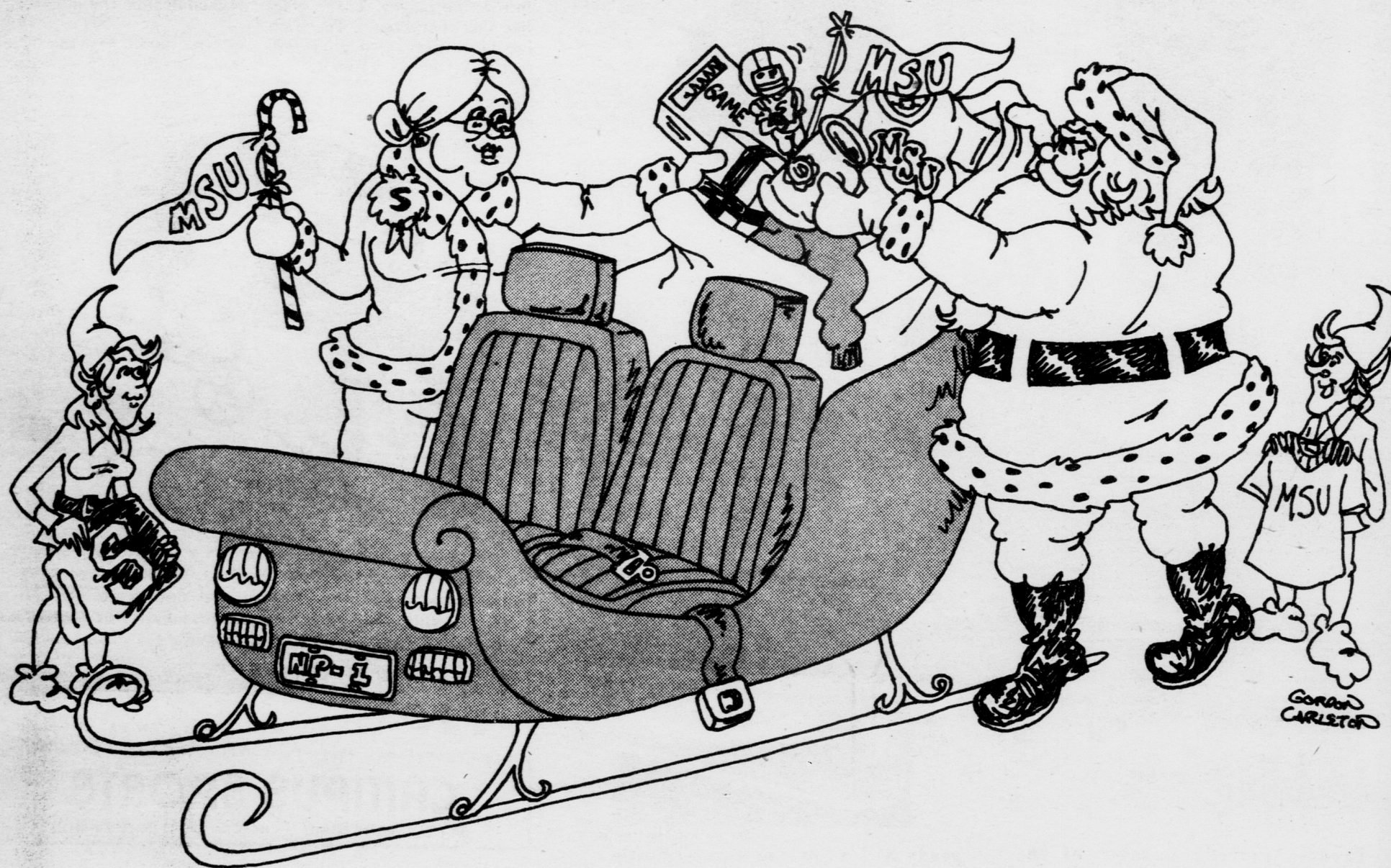
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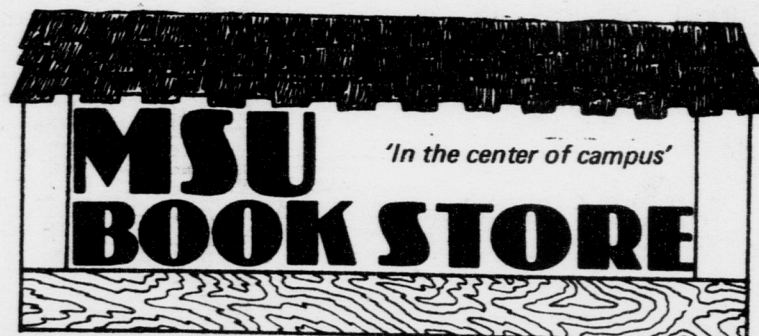


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