Negotiations Resume: DEA vs. Board

By JAMIE MacKENZIE

Talks have recently reopened between the Darien Education Association (DEA) and the Board of Education concerning the formulation of a new contract for certified personnel. The old contract expired in June 1976 and the staff is currently working without a contract. The teachers and administrators are temporarily being paid exactly what they earned last year, along with a carry-over of the previous contract’s fringe benefits.

The contract issues and the history of Darien teacher-board negotiations are quite complex, but interviews with several of the people close to the issue helped to clarify the situation. Alan Tucker, DHS science teacher, is chairman of the DEA’s Negotiating Committee. This committee represents the teachers and administrators in negotiations, and it meets at prearranged times with representatives of the Board of Education in an effort to arrive at a mutually satisfactory contract.

There are three main disputes under discussion by the DEA and the Board of Education: 1) the fulfillment of the old three-year contract, 2) the situation under the present “frozen” conditions, and 3) the terms of the new contract.

The argument over the fulfillment of the prior contract in regard to the payment of so-called merit increments.

The entire staff has worked for the past three years under a unique feature of the last contract, introduced by the Board of Education, which recognized special effort and contribution in five degrees. A rating of one in that system resulted in the withholding of any increment. If a teacher received a rating of three or better, he was awarded a merit increment, or increase in his salary for the next year. Tied in with the merit system was the requirement that all teachers formulate and seek to realize certain “performance objectives,” another unique feature of the last contract instituted by the Board. A teacher could not earn merit pay unless he had formulated and achieved to some extent these objectives.

The teachers objected and still do object strongly to both the system of merit increments (1-5 rating system) and performance objectives. The Board did not pay any merit increments in the third year of the old contract, something which the DEA feels they had both a legal and moral obligation to do. The teachers feel that they have lived up to their side of the agreement by complying with the merit rating system and performance objectives within the entire cooperative procedure, and that the Board is now obligated to make the payments.

MacLoud Budd, chairman of the Board of Education and a member of the negotiating team, explained the Board’s position. “There is a very simple reason [why the Board did not make any merit payments in the third year of the prior contract], and that is that the last contract did not provide for a fund for the payment of those so-called merit increments. Now, the teachers were represented [in the negotiations]. They know what the contract provided just as well as the members of the Board of Education knew what the contract provided. The teachers are saying that we are failing to live up to a moral obligation; I see no moral obligation existing when two people are aware of the same set of circumstances, because in that situation no one is taking advantage of anyone else. So I can’t see that we are immorally taking advantage of any situation to the

Continued on page 2

Parents Express Concerns

By DAVID BAUER

For the first time in Darien history, the high school opened itself up for an all-school open house, held on October 6. School officials have now assessed the results and have a rough idea of what the community considers to be the strengths and weaknesses of DHS.

In addition, they received people show up for the event. Dr. Robbins and he was pleased with the turnout but had hoped to see even more people from the town other than the parents. After a “state of the school” address by Dr. Robbins and a speech by Dr. Porter, the townspeople were broken up into discussion groups of 15-20 people, each led by a faculty member.

They discussed the strengths and weaknesses of the school and offered their ideas and suggestions. The area of community involvement was mentioned as another weakness.

A fourth weakness listed by the townspeople was the lack of opportunity on the part of the students to participate in an enriching experience for the students who wish to explore a career. “Students who are interested in participating in the C.A.P. program next semester should see their guidance counselors because there still are openings.”

There are many students in C.A.P. who are involved in interesting projects. Barbara Henley, for example, is working at the Darien YMCA. She began a class called Camp Capers, for six to nine year olds. Barb outlined the format of the program, produced all of the publicity, and was responsible for the budget of her class. Camp Capers is held one day a week for two and a half hours, and the session lasts for five weeks. There are presently fourteen children in the class and two volunteers to help Barb. “It’s been a great experience for me because I am interested in working with children,” commented Barb about her project.

Anne Ferrara is also involved in working with children. She works at the Darien Book Aid Plan. It is her job to fulfill requests for books that are desperately needed in certain underprivileged areas of the world. Specifically, Karen selects and sends books to Peace Corps volunteers in Africa and in other underdeveloped nations. She has also sent books to the destitute areas of the United States.

Earning Credit

Some of the over 250 teachers who displayed their support of the DEA Negotiating Committee were before the Board of Education meeting on December 14. (Photo by Mary Valentine, Darien News)

CAP Students Volunteer While

By LESLIE EVANS

The Community Action Program, known to most students as C.A.P., is an elective course that enables students to participate in community services as volunteers.

C.A.P. can be taken for one or, at the most, two semesters and students receive half a credit for each semester.

The enrolled students are evaluated on a credit/no credit basis, depending upon the fulfillment of their requirements. Each student must work a minimum of three hours a week at an assigned agency, and must also be willing to participate in monthly seminars to discuss the success of his project. He or she must also write objectives and keep a journal.

According to the Darien High School C.A.P. student handbook for 1976-1977, C.A.P. was formed “to create opportunities for a student to participate in an enriching service experience which will create an awareness of the needs of others, fostering communication with groups other than one’s own, and develop personal and civic responsibility.” This was Dr. Donald Robbins’ intent when, last year, he initiated the C.A.P. program and became its advisor. However, because Dr. Robbins has assumed many more responsibilities as principal, Charles Burwell, social studies teacher, has become this year’s advisor.

Mr. Burwell believes that “C.A.P. provides great opportunities, especially for those students who wish to explore a career.” Students who are interested in participating in the C.A.P. program next semester should see their guidance counselor because there still are openings.

There are many students in C.A.P. who are involved in interesting projects. Barbara Henley, for example, is working at the Darien YMCA. She began a class called Camp Capers, for six to nine year olds. Barb outlined the format of the program, produced all of the publicity, and was responsible for the budget of her class. Camp Capers is held one day a week for two and a half hours, and the session lasts for five weeks. There are presently fourteen children in the class and two volunteers to help Barb. “It’s been a great experience for me because I am interested in working with children,” commented Barb about her project.

Anne Ferrara is also involved in working with children. She works at the Darien Book Aid Plan. It is her job to fulfill requests for books that are desperately needed in certain underprivileged areas of the world. Specifically, Karen selects and sends books to Peace Corps volunteers in Africa and in other underdeveloped nations. She has also sent books to the destitute areas of the United States.
Negotiations Continue; No Results

Continued from page 1

determent of the teachers, and the sim¬
ple reason is that the contract did not
provide a fund and did not provide for
payment."

Mr. Tucker explained that the in¬
comes of Darien teachers and ad¬
ministrators in the past were based upon
a salary schedule, and their position on that "grid" was determined by their individual accredited years of experience and the extent of their
educational accomplishment. Their ad¬
ancement was achieved by satisfac¬
tion, or better evaluations of perfor¬
ance. The columns on the salary scale which represent years of experience are numbered from one to
fifteen, one being the level of a first
year teacher. After reaching the top step,
teacher or administrator given a "bonus" or adjustment to compensate him for the fact that his pay would rise no higher on the schedule.

Under the present "freeze" conditions of employment, no teacher is earning more than he received the previous year, notwithstanding the ad¬
ditional year of experience and improve¬
mement in his educational status, and there have been no bonuses paid to those at the top of the pay scale. Mr. Tucker
said that the net effect of the frozen conditions is "the same as if all the staff had received 'unjustifiable' evaluations. Obviously, this has a demoralizing influence and reduces staff effectiveness." In order to set at least the DEA feels that the Board's failure to pay merit increments 'earned' in the third year of the old contract. Mr. Tucker commented, "In effect, by deny¬
ing all staff any increases, though they may have been earned based upon the evaluations of the last year's performances, everyone has been treated as if he were a level one performer. We feel that's a kick in the head. What did we work hard to comply with? To be thought of as substandard teachers? Stuff and nonsense!"

"...statistical evidence would indicate that they [Darien teachers] had been, if not over-compensated, at the very least handsomely compen¬
sated."

The DEA has filed a complaint with the Connecticut State Labor Relations Board charging violation of their last contract agreement by the Board of Education in regard to the merit award dispute, and an informal hearing on the matter is expected to be held within thirty days.

The principle dispute between the DEA and the Board of Education is over the new contract proposed by the Board. The Board is proposing for no in¬
crease in salaries for certified personnel for the first year of the proposed new three-year contract, and smaller in¬
creases over the next two years that were given in the prior contract. It proposes to eliminate several educational status columns from the teachers' salary grids, extend the work year, and make the teachers' in¬
volvement in co-curricular activities in¬
considered neither a merit nor a voluntary. The teachers' salaries would be tied to the cost of living index, although in such a way which would compensate them only minimally for a rise in the cost of living. All told there are twenty-odd is¬
SUES under discussion, and they will have to be settled one way or another. Mr. Tucker stated that money is an "overriding" consideration of the teachers. "I would be living on an area I don't acknowledge that," he said, adding, "especially coaching and ad¬
ministrative salaries."

Mr. Bud explained the Board's rationale for its proposal. "In general," he said, "if we were comparators in Darien with their professional peers in other communities, statistical evidence would indicate that they had been, if not over-compensated, at the very least handsomely compensated."

Mr. Bud stated that the teachers in Darien are the highest paid as a group in the state of Connecticut, starting at the highest level and ending at the lowest. Mr. Tucker commented that a "group of teachers in Darien would have to be settled one way or another."

Alan Tucker paid in other similar communities, the teachers in Darien receive more compensation than their professional colleagues in other communities. I would say that the town of Darien compensates its teachers well.

Contract talks began last October, nine months before the old contract ex¬
pired. The old contract had run through the fall of 1973 through June 1976.

Negotiations reached an im¬
passe in June 1975, at which point mediation was begun according to state law, presided over by a state-appointed mediator. When no progress was made in mediation, arbitration proceedings were initiated.

Arbitration is a fancy word for a series of meetings presided over by three individuals: a teachers' advisor, a Board advisor, and a neutral arbitrator selected by the two advocates. The arbitrators listened to arguments and presented their recommendations. The teachers met to assess the panel's recommendations and voted to reject the "award."

The DEA's negotiating team has since met with the Board several times to renew the negotiations. Mr. Tucker outlined the teachers' standpoint. "Our position has always been that we are flexible . . . willing to compromise to find a solution to our differences. The Board's position is nothing, no way, no how, and not next year, either. The teachers have become more open in their expression of displeasure with the Board recently, wearing "Teacher Dignity" buttons and picking up the Board meeting at Tokeneke School on Tuesday, April 14. Mr. Tucker explained that the purpose of picketing was for the teachers to demonstrate their support for the bargaining unit and our frustration with the overly long duration of the negotiations."

The teachers acknowledge the fact that if not settled, there is a possibility that this dispute could become a strike action, but the expression of this action is as yet uncertain. "Teachers in Darien consider a strike action as a real possibility," stated Mr. Tucker. "We will turn every stone to try to reach a fair compromise in this, but it is our pledge. I don't know what the Board's mind is, but I assume they are bargaining in good faith."
Faculty, Students

Compiled by Nina Sawicki

Neirad has collected information on several people in and around DHS who have been doing interesting things lately.

David D. Brown IV of the DHS Class of '76 has received a writing achievement award from the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) identifying him as "among the best student writers in the country."

David received the award after submitting two papers last year, one on Dostoevsky and another on his experience with Outward Bound.

This brings the second consecutive year that DHS has had an NCTE winner. Last year's winner was Elizabeth Adams, now a freshman at Harvard-Radcliffe.

David is now living in Banner Elk, South Carolina, where he is working in a greenhouse after graduating at the end of his junior year. He plans to attend college eventually.

Richard Percudani, former DHS basketball coach and current social studies teacher (in ALP) here, has been appointed associate basketball coach and consultant at Sacred Heart University.

Mr. Percudani, in addition to his duties as assistant coach, will also be responsible for coordinating scouting and recruiting activities.

M. Percudani left the Blue Wavers last year after leading them to qualification in the state tournament. In accepting his post, he will not be giving up any of his duties at DHS.

John A. Ballo, chairman of the Big Apple excursion committee, organized a workshop for the Connecticut Organizations of Language Teachers (COLT) this fall. The topic for his workshop was "The Role of Newspapers and Ads in Teaching Foreign Languages." Dr. Ballo has also written publications concerning different teaching media. He has been named co-editor of the Connecticut chapter of American Association of Teachers of French (AATF) newsletter, which is distributed state-wide.

Dr. Ballo has recently been asked to conduct a workshop in Washington, D.C., at the Northeast Conference on Teaching of Foreign Languages. This will be held in April and is a widely-known event in the foreign language world.

Three DHS juniors, Eva Franko, Howard Mastropiero and Mark Hutchinson, are working up a project concerning ethnic contributions to New York City. The three will be taking field trips to the city and will concentrate mainly on the immigrants (i.e., Jews, Irish, Polies, etc.). They will look into the flavor of each area of the city identified with a certain ethnic group. They are doing this project for an American Studies honors class but are considering turning it into an Independent Study project.

Nine DHS students have recently been selected by the Connecticut Music Educators Association to play or sing in the All-State Orchestra or Choirs. Over 2,000 Connecticut high school students auditioned for the bands, choirs, orchestra and were selected on the basis of their audition scores.

The selections for the All-State Chorus are: Bass — John Gibson, Gair MacKenzie, and Clark Porter; Tenor — Michael Fitch, Alto — Margaret O'Neal, Sura Bokhour, Carolon Toner, Francesca Day and Elizabeth Gray were both chosen for the orchestra; French horn on the violin.

Also, every Friday night, the Stamford Museum and Nature Center is open for public use. The second Friday of every month there is a lecture by the Fairfield County Astronomy Society Junior Division, which is open to the public.

A more expensive and more glamorous approach to entertainment may be found in the Big Apple, only an hour away. At the Rockefeller Center, MTA on a Sunday when half fares are in effect. One into Grand Central Station, walk two blocks walk to 54th Avenue. Here you are very close to the main Christmas attractions the city has to offer. Lord and Taylor's Christmas windows, the most exotic and creative in all N.Y., can be found at 5th and 59th. FAO Schwartz, a child's dream world (you'll like it, too), is easily found at 54th and 59th, and, of course, visit Rockefeller Center on 5th between 48th and 52nd (best at night with the Xmas tree lighted and skating).

A little out of the way, yet of special interest, is the World Trade Center Observation Deck (on a clear day you can see forever!), easily reached by the SuperJohn, a trip from Times Square. Also, the Egyptian exhibit at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, and South Street Seaport Seaport Palace (on the east side near the Brooklyn Bridge).

So, we hope you all have a terrific vacation, but if you find yourself looking for something to do, try one of these suggestions, or call Darten Answers (655-1234) for further information.

Christmas Vacation: Where To Find The Action

By Marian Davis

Got the boredom blues already? What are you going to do with ten days of vacation? For those of you who aren't taking off for sunny Florida or the snow covered slopes, Neirad went in search of ideas to keep you busy.

With extra hours of sleep, you should have an added amount of energy. Weather permitting, Willow's Pond, Gorham's Pond, Cove (Holly Pond), and the Cherry Lawn Pond offer good skating. The Kings Highway Indoor Tennis Club and the Ward Pound Ridge Reservation in New York State provide excellent hills for sledding, tobogganing, and beginning skiing.

If it is not cold enough, try the Darien Ice Rink (655-8251). For the more ambitious, Landmark Square Ice Rink (357-6868), an open-air rink modeled more like the Rockefeller Center, is open to the public. Call for times.

Kings Highway Indoor Tennis Club (655-8789) rents courts from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. daily. The paddle tennis courts at Weed Beach (655-8511) are open from 9 a.m. to 10 p.m. at the cost of $1 per person.

Through Dec. 20, The Stamford Museum and Nature Center has a photograph exhibit, "Cas Stroess: Man With a Camera," and Dec. 28 through Jan. 5 they will have a coverlet display.

But what about those long and cold winter nights? How about Bridgeport jazz bands (333-2866) weekdays at 7:15 p.m., Sat. at 7 p.m., and matinees on Wed. and Sat. at noon. Admission is $.65 and up.

Cousin's (Shapiro's)
For The Best Price Around
(We fax for $20)
Reserve now for special holiday occasions.
441 Atlantic Street 322-1961
Dear Santa Claus,

I am writing this letter to you because I am somewhat in a state of confusion. I am a high school student who truly does believe in you and always will. My problem is that I can’t get anyone else to believe in you. When I told some teachers that they should believe in Santa Claus, they just laughed. Little do they realize that you will put coal in their stockings if they do not believe. Some of the comments the teachers made about you during their lunch break I recorded. They are as follows:

Santa Claus is a fat tub of lard, saw him floating in my toilet tank last night... He had an affair with my wife last year... Watch out for “Let’s Make a Deal!”... I think Santa would make a great centerfold... My dog got excited after he saw him floating in my toilet tank last night...

I have tried very hard to make students understand that you are real. As a desperate attempt to convey my idea I sang, “I Saw Mommy Kissing Santa Claus” at the spring concert last year, but people only laughed.

Santa, what am I going to do? Please write back so I can show everyone your letter and prove to them that you are real.

Mr. S. Claus

---

Wonder, Browne: Good Tunes

By DAVID BAUER and HEIDI FRANKIE

After two long years since his last release, Stevie Wonder has finally put out a Christmas album, and in all likelihood will be his third record in a row to capture a host of Grammy Awards.

Songs in the Key of Life was supposed to have been released about a year ago but Wonder, a musical perfectionist, kept holding it back. The genius exhibited in the production and melody of this disc has proved it to be worth waiting for.

The album is a two-LP package, with a 45 R.P.M. “bonus” record added. It takes one hour and forty minutes to play Songs in the Key of Life through, and despite its enormous length, there are very few songs that can be considered dispensable (“Village Ghetto Land” and “If It’s Magic” are the only ones that come to mind). Even tunes that are not standouts have a tendency to stick in your mind.

Some of the best numbers are: “Sir Duke”, a big band sound-alike; “Master Blaster” to Duke Ellington; “I Wish” — an excellent fast tune that has Wonder pleasantly reminiscing on his childhood; “Isn’t She Lovely” — a song about Wonder’s baby daughter, Aisha, that includes a five-minute workout for Stevie on the harmonica.

The album has a listed price of $13.98, but you can usually get it for around $10. Whatever the cost, it is an excellent Christmas gift that will give many hours of listening pleasure.

Jackson Browne displays his musical arts in The Pretender, a phenomenal LP that in many ways reflects his lyrical and musical strengths. This album contains Browne’s past experiences, in which he has dealt with life, death, staying, and leaving. The mood is consistent in the disc, with one song flowing into the next, and the entire recording should be considered one prolonged piece, rather than just a collection of songs.

He expresses himself emotionally — in “Here Comes Those Tears Again,” “Sleep’s Dark and Silent Gate,” and “The Pretender,” to name a few. “The Fuse,” the first song of the album, is closely related lyrically to “The Pretender,” and gives the album a feeling of unity. After hearing “Sleep’s Dark and Silent Gate,” you realize the song contains Jackson’s got feelings to his wife’s tragic death.

You will find the album greatly appealing. The lyrics and singing supplied by Jackson Browne are superlative.
Tracksters Aim For Counties

By JEANNE MUELLER

If you go down to the track one sunny afternoon you just might see a group of about 17 girls and 35 boys jogging around it.

They are not running because they are cold; they are the DHS boys' and girls' indoor track teams.

The teams, both coached by Del Mautte, William Brazee, and (unofficially) Stephen Norris, practice outdoors a good deal of the time. It is called "indoor" track because the meets are held indoors at the Wilton Field House.

The tracksters are now getting into shape for their meets by running L.S.D. (which stands for long slow distance). The shot-putters are lifting weights, the high jumpers and long jumpers run stairs and jump rope.

The first developmental meets, which are practice meets in which the entire county participates, will be held on January 4 for the girls and j.v. boys, and on January 8 for the varsity boys.

Coach Mautte's major goal for the team, though, is not to excel in these preparatory meets, but in the counties. His strategy is to have everyone place by getting at least a fifth so that the team will win.

"We've got to do better if we're going to win," comments Coach Mautte of last year's returning team members.

In order to place in the 50-yard dash, Coach Mautte said Matt Maley will have to run at about 5.6 or 5.5. Bill Waters and Randy Stairs should run the 300-yard dash in 34.2. For the 500-yard run, Justin Worwer and Pat Jackson will have to bring their times down by about five seconds. Whoever runs the mile should run it at about 4:30, and in the two miles, 10 minutes or less. As of yet Coach Mautte does not know who will-though. The long distance runner of last year, Tom Rollins, has graduated.

The girls' team in general does not have graduation problems, but many of the team members quit after their junior year. "What disappoints me," said Coach Mautte, "is that there are only two twelfth grade girls left." Those two senior co-captains, Lynne Ellison and Kathy Shanahan, took first in their events last year. The team won the FCIAC title. Coach Mautte hopes that this year Lynne Ellison will take first in the 50-yard dash and Kathy Shanahan will win the 600.

In the longer distances the mentor is counting on junior Joan Corsiglia. Coach Brazee, who is in charge of field events, explained, "This track team is a very good track team, except for the field events." He believes that the team does not have enough good field event participants. Nevertheless, he looks forward to fine performances from Eileen Pollart, Lynne Ellison, and Tom Lechak in the high jump, and Kathy Schulz in the shot-put. He doesn't know of any boys who will throw the shot yet.

When the new gym is finished, around January, the team will be allowed to use half of it for half an hour a day.

"High Hopes Held For Girls' Hoop Team"

By MARY ELLEN KIGGINS

In a very close opening game against Milford, the girls' basketball team lost by the score of 62-54 on Thursday, December 9.

Led by the scoring of junior Cindy Davis with 25 points and senior Amy Pollard with 12, the girls played exceptionally well in the first two quarters, which can be attributed to good rebounding and an aggressive offense. It wasn't until the third quarter that Milford tied and then pulled ahead.

The girls were pressed full-court, Coach Deborah Billington explained, which is unusual for girls' basketball, and Davis became fatigued and made some mental errors that cost them the game.

This year the girls' basketball team is led by Co-captains Amy Pollard and Jinsey Dauk and consists of twenty-two players, of which only two have had any previous significant varsity playing experience.

Amy Pollard, who is the only senior on the team, is an exceptional basketball player who has improved tremendously since last year, according to Ms. Billington. As a co-captain and team leader, she helps to pull the team together.

At P. J. Senior Jinsey Dauk does an impressive job playing center for the team and according to Ms. Billington, she is "pleased with her progress." With the improvement that she will make this year, she will certainly be one of the players to watch out for next year.

A pleasant surprise for the team this year has been the abilities shown by junior Cindy Davis. Showing exceptional speed, aggressiveness, and jumpshooting abilities, Cindy is termed by Ms. Billington as "one of the coolest players on the floor."

Ms. Billington also noted that she is impressed with the abilities of sophomores Mary Cavanaugh, Debbie Karin, and Patty McKenna. Karin competed all-around for DHS for two years. She commented that the loss of seniors last June hasn't caused any concern about this year's performance — it has only affected the depth of the team. "We've made our point," she says, and last year's record proves that.

The girls finished the 1976 season undefeated, placing first in the FCIAC and third in the state competition. Greenwich and Simsbury will be the toughest competition this year, as they placed second and first respectively in the states last year.

Darien opens their season on January 10 against Westhill in the Viking gym.

MERRY CHRISTMAS and
HAPPY NEW YEAR
from
Nielsen's
Florist and Garden Center
HOURS: Daily 8-6; Sunday 9-1.
1465 Post Rd., Darien, 655-5341
Kratky, MacDonald Lead Young Wrestling Team

By JOHN C. NELSON

The Darien High varsity wrestling team, coming off its best season ever, has been preparing to grapple with their opponents. Their first action was at the Westhill Christmas Tournament in Stamford on December 18. Results were not available at press time.

Leading the matmen this year will be Co-captains John Kratky and Dave MacDonald. Kratky placed third in the state in the 125-pound class last year, while MacDonald placed fourth in the 140-pound class.

This early in the season there are no definite starters, but the probable starting lineup for varsity will be Joe Augustus at 100 pounds, Cliff Poynter in the 106-pound class. Chris Kratky, who placed fourth in the state last year in the 100-pound class, will wrestle in the 114 class this year.

In the 121-pound class it is a toss-up between Ron Ferre and Mark Giarrastina. Co-captain Kratky will handle the 128-pound duties with Jack Humphrey wrestling in the 138-pound class. Co-captain Dave MacDonald will be in the 146-pound bracket with Scott Savage at 147 pounds. The 157-pound class will be handled by Keith Dayton. The unlimited and the 187 classes will be split with Paul Lupinacci and Dave Adams wrestling in either class.

Both Kratky and Coach Jim Girard agreed that "the important point or key to this season is if the team stays healthy and stays away from injuries. We have to get over the injuries plaguing us now." Coach Girard, who is in his fifth year as head mentor for the squad, commented, "We have a young team with a good group of sophomores and the upperclassmen have the experience to do well."

Last year the team boasted its best record in the history of the sport at DHS with a 12-1 win mark and they placed third in the state. Coach Girard pointed out, "This year will be a rebuilding year, but we have a strong nucleus to work from."

Pucksters Head for Roundball State Tourney

By DAVIN BAUDER

The time for another roundball season has arrived at DHS and the Wavers come into the campaign with a new head coach and, for the most part, a new team.

Richard Ericson, known to many people for his work at Middlesex Senior High School, is new at the helm this year, replacing Richard Feruciando, who retired after four years at the top spot.

Darien lost graduation the services of four out of five starters, including Paul Sellew and Bob Walliser, who combined to average over 36 points per game. Among the returnees are Co-captains Bob Harford and Tom Larkin.

"Bob Harford will be one of the best guards in Fairfield County," said Coach Ericson. "He's quick, has a good shot, and has developed into an excellent defensive bailplayer and team leader." Harford's experience and poise under pressure should be an invaluable asset to the club, and he's being counted on to carry much of the scoring burden.

"Tom Larkin has shown more desire than has been seen for many years in Darien basketball," commented Ericson. "He's a hustler who works exceptionally hard." Larkin will be counted on to play the power forward position for this year's unit.

Gary Wyckoff, a 6'7" center, has been mentioned many times by his coach as being one of the keys to the success of the team. Ericson explained, "The reason is that in the game of basketball, domination of the boards is very important. We have some big opposing centers to go up against this year, and we need somebody who can hold his own against them."

Steve Watkins, a small guard, is "very quick, especially on the fast break," according to Coach Ericson. The pull-up jumper off the fast break is Steve's favorite shot."

"A player who could be very important to the team is junior Matt McCurdy. "I look to him to contribute on offense a good deal this year," said Coach Ericson, but he mentioned that Matt would have to improve some on defense."

Junior Clay Colbath, who could get a lot of work at center or forward, has been "a pleasant surprise." He missed playing his sophomore year due to illness but made a comeback this season.

Tom McNamara, only a sophomore, comes off "an exceptionally fine year in junior high school. He should see a lot of playing time," said Ericson. He said that 'Mac' is "a great hustler. . very dedicated."

"Our goal this year is to win our division and to have a good enough record to get into the states," said Coach Ericson. To win a berth in the state tournament the Wavers must win at least nine of their 17 games.

At press time, Neird was informed that the Wavers were beaten by Catholic, 70-62, in the season opener.

Icemen Break Even in Early Action

By KEN CARELLA

The Darien High School Hockey Team opened its season with a win, playing in front of a lively Saturday night crowd at the Darien Ice Rink on December 4. The Icemen outskated the Cardinals of Greenwich by the score of 5 to 3. Darien lit up the scoreboard first when junior Matt McCurdy slipped the puck past the Greenwich goalie halfway through the first period. The Sinclair goal gave Darien a 5-3 win.

Tom 'Mac' McNamara scored two consecutive goals within thirty seconds to boost the score to 3-1. Brian Peoples played a respectable game in goal, stopping all but three of the 24 Greenwich shots. At the other end of the ice Darien peppered the Cardinal goalie with 42 shots on goal. Two of those 42 shots were put in by Tom Holland, who is credited with the game winning goal.

Coming off the 5-3 win over Greenwich, the Blue Wave was flying high for Norwalk, but Norwalk was flying higher and simply outskated Darien to gain a 5-4 tie.

Tom Holland, star of the first game, initiated the scoring by netting his third goal of the season in the second period. Sophomore Bill McGill made it 2-0 by scoring his first goal of the year.

It looked as though the game would end in a 4-4 tie, but with 32 seconds left, Craig Sinclair fired in a shot from outside the Norwalk blue line. The Sinclair goal gave Darien a 5-4 lead with just 32 seconds left to kill. They managed to kill 31 seconds of that time, but Jim Canal of Norwalk beat Tom Christy with a last second desperation shot that tied the score at 5-5.

The pucketers faced the New Canaan Rams on December 9, and came away with a disappointing 4-2 loss. Details were not available at press time. The defeat evened the Wavers' record at 1-1-1.