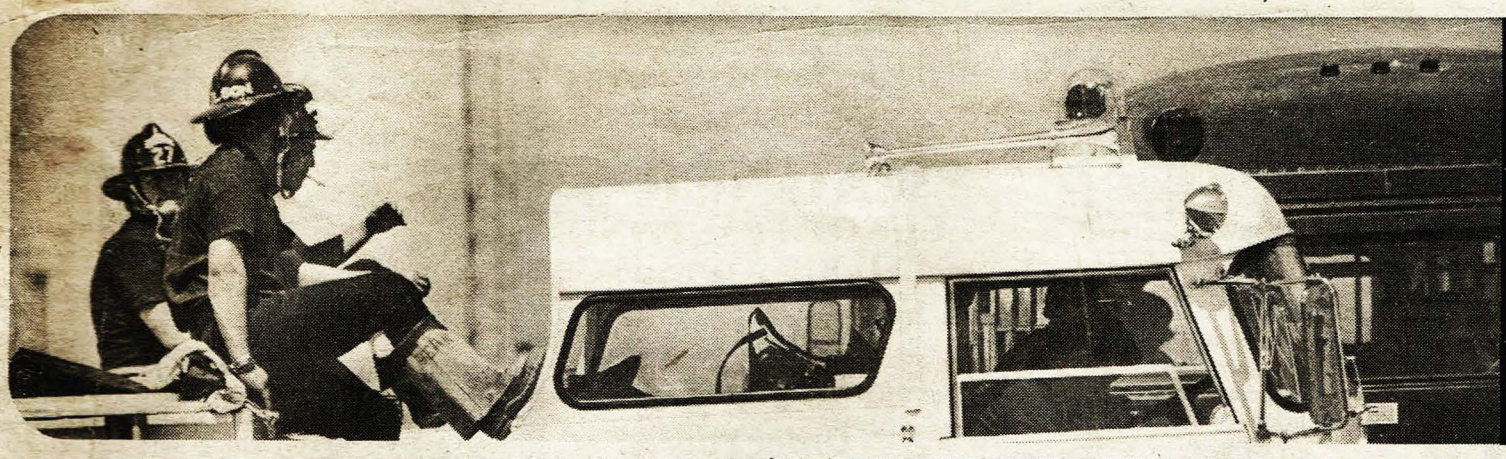


Smoke break

Page 3

Southeast Sentinel

Rugby, anyone?

Rugby enthusiasts — more than 250 of them, some from as far away as Dublin, Ireland — invaded Denver's Washington Park May 29 to participate in a day of organized mayhem officially titled the Sixth Annual National Western Sevens Rugby Championship. Here, one of the Dublin lads moves through the opposition in a hardhitting game. Rugby, a British import that blends elements of American football and soccer, originated in Rugby, England, more than 150 years ago but only recently has become popular in the United States. The rugby tournament is one of many summer attractions (see page 9) planned in south Denver parks. See additional photos and story, pages 30-31. (Sentinel photo by Ben Benschneider)

PUC okays 15 pct. profit for PSCo — and rockets home utility bills

Page 11

Southeast Denver burglars put in busy week- no holiday for them

Crime Reporter, Page 8

6/1/77 Vol. 31 No. 7 • Denver, Colorado • 25 cents •

His students can tell you how long you'll live

By Rose Bacon

Irv Hoffman, a tennis professional who went into teaching to have summers free for the game, was chosen 1977 high school teacher of the year by the Denver Teachers Foundation.

The Sentinel visited his classroom at George Washington High School last week to find out why.

Hoffman's eyes glowed as he showed off the $50,000 worth of computer equipment, scanners, scales, calipers and calculators he bought for the math lab with money he garnered by winning the Denver Public School's Award of Excellence three consecutive years.

"We're the only school in Denver with all this lab equipment, maybe the only one in the country," he said.

"I know we're the only school in Denver with a math lab assistant," he added, introducing Russell Anderson, whose salary is also paid by the award money.

Hoffman and his computer math students were put in the national spotlight in 1973 because of a computer car-pooling program they devised to conserve gasoline. The program drew the attention of the U. S. Dept. of Transportation and Hoffman and one student were flown to Washington to explain it. Private companies, including Blue Cross-Blue Shield, Great Western Sugar, Honeywell and Johns-Manville have had student briefings on the program. The students also presented a car-pooling briefing to the Air Force Accounting and Finance Center for its 3700 employes.

His consumer math and computer math classes use standard texts, and Hoffman has also made up his own. The exercises—he calls them experiments, not problems—are changed constantly to keep up with statistical data.

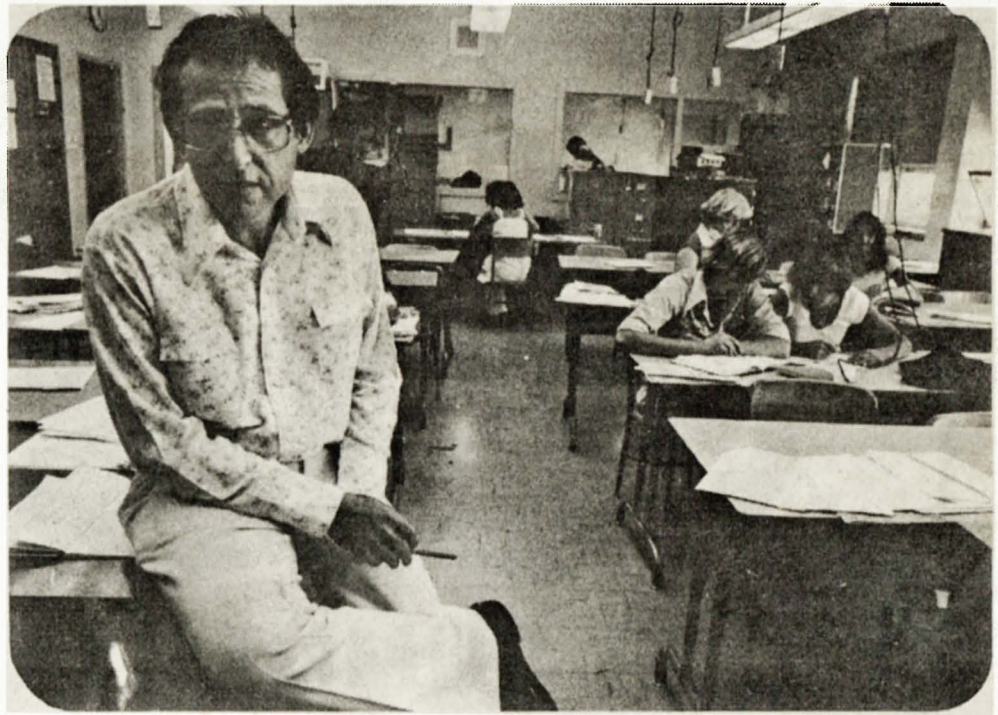
In Brown's consumer math class the day of the interview, one student was busy finding out what the actual monthly cost of his used car would be on a loan from a bank, the dealer or a credit union, for terms of 24 months and 36 months. The data was obtained from the National Automobile Dealers Assn. used car book. The computer class has programmed a similar study to determine the costs of insuring cars, based on rates from an insurance company.

"He puts in his driving record, age, sex, age and make of car. The kid learns a $25 ticket is worth $300 in driving premiums," Hoffman said.

Two girls were playing a board game Hoffman invented to teach the metric system. With a set of cards, students move spaces forward or backward while converting millimeters to centimeters, centimeters to decimeters, decimeters to meters.

"I'm going to copyright it and sell it to

(Continued on Page 17)



Irv Hoffman with his computer kids

Irv Hoffman

(Continued from Page 17)

"WE'VE RECEIVED a request from the Denver Rabbinical Council to devise a computer dating program for Jewish youngsters. One of our kids is working with the City and County of Denver budget department. He's computing a program to predict sales tax revenues on 34 basic industries.

"They do modeling. One girl's doing modeling on epidemics. She's taking that new strain of incurable gonorrhea and showing how it can proliferate through a closed system, making certain assumptions about how many people are susceptible. And to get the information she had to call Denver General Hospital, the Communicable Disease Clinic, and they're working with us. So we're using real data."

Another computer student is plotting biorhythms' three curves to find out a person's high-risk days.

One student, using statistics from medical books, has programmed a life expectancy game using cholesterol and starch intake, hereditary disease patterns, height and weight factors and smoking incidence to predict how many years a person is likely to live.

Hoffman, who came to GW when it opened in 1960, said the school is No. 1 in the city. It has a 50-pct. minority enrollment.

"We used to be a machine that turned out college-bound kids. Now we're in the real world here. Our faculty is the same as it was 20 years ago. Many of them do as much for a low or average ability kid as a high one. All of us take at least two lower level classes and we've developed effective methods of teaching."

Vaughn Aandahl, head of the 13-member math department, said GW just won a seven-state math competition.

"Integration is working. There's a definite awareness now of the need for education in the minority kids. Discipline is no problem," he said.

Hoffman went to DU on a tennis scholarship, then became a meteorologist at UCLA. He returned to DU for a master's degree, did postgraduate work at Wesleyan University in Connecticut, then earned a Ph.D. in math education at DU.

He's president of HeatherRidge Racquet Club, which his wife, Jackie, oversees while he's teaching.

He teaches tennis after school until about 7 p.m.

"It's a long day—12 hours," he said, then smiled as though he wouldn't have it any other way.

What do his students think of him?

"He makes it so it's not boring," said a girl. "He's pretty neat."

— Irv Hoffman

(Continued from Page 3)

raise money for the lab," Hoffman said.

HOFFMAN DEVISED two other games at the request of a teacher of the two dozen or so perceptually handicapped students at GW.

One, painted with various geometric shapes, is played with another set of cards. Oops! Lost? Go back to a hexagon, says a card, painted with a red hexagon. And the perceptually handicapped youngster learns geometric shapes while playing a game.

When he was told the youngsters also have trouble distinguishing left from right and up from down, Hoffman came up with another game, this one of faces. Some faces' left eyes are winking, some faces' right ears wear rings, all to be matched on the board by cards with faces having similarly winking left eyes or ringed right ears.

Hoffman added fraction problems in yards, feet and inches to the geometric shapes board so his consumer math class could play another game.

The students compete in tournaments on the board games. Standings are filled in on a tennis tournament chart on the wall.

At another table a student used a set of scales, wood shavings in place of gunpowder, hollow shotgun shells and a caliper to determine if it is cheaper to weigh and make your own bullets or to buy them.

The bell rang for lunch. The consumer math class left, but the five Teletype machines began clicking as computer math students came to work the machines, all connected to the Univac computer at Emily Griffith Opportunity School downtown.

"I'm really proud of this," Hoffman said. "The kids just drop in and work on their own . . . during lunch and after classes until we close at 3:30. They have a half-hour lunch break so they eat lunch here and run the computers.

"The whole computer course is energy-oriented now. They're analyzing all the terrible things that are happening to natural resources," Hoffman said. "I'm trying to get these kids to learn that it's their heritage we're losing in this depletion of our natural resources."

Using statistics kept current by daily newspaper clippings, students predict exactly how many more years we can use present natural gas, oil or coal reserves.

"The computer kids learn to figure inflation, how to make out payrolls for a plant, how to figure income tax," Hoffman said.

"John, here, is doing a job for the Colorado Tennis Assn. He ranks the tennis players in the state, how they do in all the tournaments, and adds it to a growing file.

(Continued on Page 21)