

WC skaters make use of city's two ice rinks

As record breaking early winter cold weather envelopes much of the midwest, and Iowa fireplaces are alive with the burning embers of oak, there are those in Webster City whose spirits aren't dampened by a little cold weather. These persons are out night after night with their ice skates at one of the two city operated ice rinks.

At Twin Parks rink (summer tennis courts iced over for skating) the young at heart, both figuratively and literally speaking, are out at night braving the brisk wind, snow and often sub-zero temperatures to play games such as pom pom pullaway, freeze tag (quite adequately named) and do some racing around the rink.

"No matter how cold it gets the kids are always out here," said 17-year-old Tim Snider who runs the rink after he gets out of school.

"We usually get anywhere from 25-35 kids out here every night," said Snider. "My main job is to keep the skater under control but generally they are pretty well behaved most of the time and they are out here just to have a good time."

Most of the skaters range in age from 9-13 although on weekends they are often joined by a bit older crowd, according to Snider.

"On weekends we get around fifty people of all ages out here skating," said Snider.

The skating at Twin Parks isn't frequented by only male skaters 15-year-old Becky Lacey was quick to point out.

"There are usually more boys than girls out here but I usually come out

here with my sisters just about every night no matter how cold it is."

The skaters at Twin Parks have music piped out to them throughout the skating hours and there is a warming house next to the rink for everyone's use.

For those who vie for a bit faster action such as hockey, the Riverview rink is the place to go. Some 23 Webster City High School skaters come out to practice at 9 p.m. every night in preparation for Des Moines Metro League competition. Opening game for the team is Jan. 8 against Ankeny.

John Wilcox, Jeff Laytham, Steve Schorzmann and Mike Anderson all 17-years-old oversee the rink for the city when they aren't at school or in the middle of a hockey game.

"We flood and scrape the ice every day," said Wilcox. "The rink is open for anybody's use from 3:30 on but at night the hockey team pretty much takes it over."

Said Steve Schorzmann, "We handle most of the upkeep here at the rink but the city does all of the funding. They provide a tractor to clear off the snow if it's really deep and they pay for the electricity and gas in the warming house and for the overhead lights."

The hockey bug has also struck some of the younger boys in town. Brad Johnson, Pat Johnston, David Kliegl, all 12 years old and Rob Torrance, a 14-year-old, come out just about every night to practice up on their game although there isn't any organized competition for their age group.