

High school spikers gear up for season

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Lori Minzaff, a senior in her third season on the varsity, and Nancy Hughes, a junior with one year of experience, are the team's co-captains. Minzaff was a first-team choice on the Northwest Suburban League (NSL) All-League team last year, while Hughes was picked on the second squad.
Two seniors, Sue Pacheco and Kelly

Collings, also started. Both are in their second varsity year.

TAMMY O'DELL, a junior, moved up to the varsity last year and Karen Kozicki was a part-time starter. Both will see plenty of playing time this season.

Lubienicki started building North's program two years ago with sopho-

res and many of the seniors are from that group. After posting a 3-10 mark in that first season, Lubienicki was pleased with last season's progress.

But while the Raiders were 10-9 overall, they were only 4-6 in the NSL. That is what Lubienicki wants to improve on this season.

"Our goal is to do the best we can in

the league," the third-year coach said. "We were one of only two teams that beat Garden City East (the NSL co-champs) last year."

"It's a very tough league. Every team had a winning season."

Lubienicki picks East and the other league co-champion, Livonia Franklin, as the teams to beat again this year. She hopes her squad's improvement

will be enough to accomplish that feat.

Harrison coach Robin Ditzhazy will have her share of experienced players to draw from for the season. Linda Bache, an All-Western Six League first-team choice as a junior last year, returns to lead the Hawks.

Also back are senior Donna Sandford, in her third varsity season, and juniors Sharon Agar, Cindy Fink and Ann Corbett, all with one year of experience.

Harrison was third in the WSL last year with a 5-5 record, and Ditzhazy figures this year's squad to be better.

"We should have a pretty strong team," Ditzhazy said. "It'll (the league season) will be closer than last year."

Livonia Churchill and Plymouth Canton tied for the conference championship last year, but both have lost many starters and are in what Ditzhazy termed a "rebuilding year."

Harrison hosts Walled Lake Western tonight at 7 p.m. North is also at home tonight, playing Westland John Glenn at 7 p.m., while Farmington hosts Pontiac Northern Monday at 7 p.m. (All Farmington home matches will be played at the Farmington Training Center gymnasium.)

MERCY VOLLEYBALL

Our Lady of Mercy's volleyball team compiled a 9-1 regular season record last year and finished second in its division of the Catholic League.

The Marlies will be hard pressed to match that mark this year. Only two players with varsity experience return, but coach Linda Barber, now in her fifth season at the helm, is counting heavily on a junior varsity team that showed considerable promise last year.

"We have a lot of good JV kids coming up," Barber said. "But it's hard to tell. Some JVs make the transition (to varsity) better than others."

Two players Barber is counting on are senior Kelly Devers and junior Marcy McGarrigle. Both are in their second seasons on the varsity.

As far as league favorites, Birmingham Marian was the best in the league last year and Barber said, "I would suspect they will be tough again."

She does not count Mercy out of the league chase, but admits she is "counting on everybody. We're depending more on teamwork than on individual stars."

North's boys' coach has high hopes

Dennis Fitzgerald, who coaches boys' gymnastics at North Farmington High School, is optimistic about the upcoming season.

"We think we're in the top three in the state with Alpena and Trenton ahead of us," Fitzgerald said.

"We were eighth in the state last year with a junior team. If everyone stays healthy, works hard and comes up to potential, why shouldn't we be one of the top teams?"

Fitzgerald is looking for good seasons from seniors Jeff Dwyer (all-around) and Bob Burns (side horse). Both scored in last year's state meet in

which North finished eighth.

"We'd like to think that Dwyer will be one of the top all-arounders in the state this year," Fitzgerald said. "He's certainly capable of it."

Some other North prospects include seniors Doug Roberts (all around) and Bob Madden (high bars), juniors Rod Stahlein (all around) and David Gains (parallel bars and still rings) and sophomore Pete George (floor exercise and vaulting).

Fitzgerald calls George a "bright light. He will surprise himself with what he can do," the coach said.
North is a member of the Southeast

Michigan Interscholastic Gymnastics Association. Ann Arbor Pioneer, the defending state champion, competes in the league along with Ann Arbor Huron, Taylor Truman, Taylor Kennedy, Trenton, Clarenceville. Last year, North finished third in the league with a 4-3 record.

Fitzgerald is enthusiastic about the gymnastics program at North — especially the girls' team, which tied Ludington for the state championship last season, and expects to have another strong team this year.

"The guys and girls train together," he said. "Every now and then during

down time, we'll talk about how nice it'd be to have co-champions at North — boys win the state meet and girls win their meet again."

North opens its home boys' gymnastics season Jan. 14 against Southfield-Lathrup. The meet begins at 7 p.m.

NORTH FARMINGTON BOYS' GYMNASTICS SCHEDULE — Jan. 14, Southfield-Lathrup, 7 p.m.; Jan. 28, St. John, 7 p.m.; Jan. 29, Ann Arbor Huron, 7 p.m.; Feb. 2, at Ann Arbor Pioneer Invitational, Feb. 4, Clarenceville, 7 p.m.; Feb. 7, Notre Dame, 7 p.m.; Feb. 8, at East Lansing, Feb. 13, at Taylor Truman, 7 p.m.; Jan. 14, at Trenton, 7 p.m.; March 5, at Southeast Michigan Gymnastics Association conference meet.

North girls seek crown

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hodgepodge finished 19th on the beam in last year's state meet.

"Janet's looking much better than I've ever seen her," Dennis said. "Last year, she didn't seem to have the drive, this year she has it."

HARRISON HAS experience in seniors Debbie Valussi (floor exercise, vaulting and beam) and Rose Finnerty junior Rose Finnerty (every event except bars). Sophomores Anna Mele and Laurie Miller are learning the sport.

"They're a good group of girls," said Dennis, who coached the team to an 8-4 overall record last year. "I think they'll do well, although it'll take a couple of meets before they have everything going for them."

Harrison opened its season last Monday at home against Grosse Pointe North. The Hawks' next meet is next Monday (Jan. 14) at home against Southfield-Lathrup.

At Farmington High School, first-year coach Judy Caplia is working with some promising underclassmen. Farmington opened its season Jan. 9 at Northville. The Falcons travel to Westland John Glenn on Jan. 16.

Some Farmington prospects include junior all-arounders Vera Holdenberg and Tina Bona, and sophomores Sue Purdy (all-around), Mary Anne Shevbridge (vaulting) and Kirsten Goodman (beam, floor exercise).

"We're not going to knock anybody's socks off this year, but we could surprise some people," said Caplia, who taught gymnastics in West Bloomfield's Community Education Department.

Farmington's home meets will be held at the Farmington Training Center. Farmington hosts North Farmington and Harrison at 7 p.m. on Jan. 21.

Girls' schedules

NORTH FARMINGTON GIRLS' GYMNASTICS SCHEDULE — Jan. 14, Walled Lake Dearborn Invitational, Jan. 21, at Plymouth Canton, 7 p.m.; Jan. 19, at Central, 7 p.m.; Jan. 16, at Walled Lake Western, 7 p.m.; Jan. 23, at Bloomfield Hills Andover, 7 p.m.; Jan. 29, Walled Lake Western, 7 p.m.; Feb. 5, at Bloomfield Hills Lathrup, 7 p.m.; Feb. 7, Troy High, 7 p.m.; Feb. 8, at East Lansing, Feb. 11, at Grosse Pointe North, 7 p.m.; Feb. 13, at Farmington Harrison, 7 p.m.; Feb. 18, at Birmingham Groves, 7 p.m.; Feb. 20, Northville High, 7 p.m.; Feb. 27, at Clarenceville High, 7:30 p.m.; March 8, at state regional meet.

FARMINGTON HARRISON GIRLS' GYMNASTICS SCHEDULE — Jan. 14, Southfield-Lathrup, 7 p.m.; Jan. 17, at Walled Lake Western, 7 p.m.; Jan. 21, at Farmington High, 7 p.m.; Jan. 23, Dearborn Edsel Ford, 7 p.m.; Jan. 28, at Oak Park High, 7 p.m.; Jan. 30, Northville High, 7 p.m.; Feb. 4, at Walled Lake Central, 7 p.m.; Feb. 6, Bloomfield Hills Andover, 7 p.m.; Feb. 13, North Farmington, 7 p.m.; Feb. 18, at Clarenceville High, 7:30 p.m.; Feb. 25, at Plymouth Salem, 7 p.m.; Feb. 27, Plymouth Canton, 7 p.m.; March 8, at state regional meet.

FARMINGTON HIGH GIRLS' GYMNASTICS SCHEDULE — Jan. 16, at Westland John Glenn, 7 p.m.; Jan. 21, North Farmington, Harrison, 7 p.m.; Jan. 23, Plymouth Canton, 7 p.m.; Jan. 29, Walled Lake Central, 7 p.m.; Feb. 4, at Walled Lake Western, 7 p.m.; Feb. 13, at Bloomfield Hills Andover, 7 p.m.; Feb. 18, at Southfield-Lathrup, 7 p.m.; Feb. 20, Oak Park, 7 p.m.; Feb. 27, at Dearborn Edsel Ford, 7 p.m.; March 8, at state regional meet.

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