

Swim meet over football? No way

GIVEN THE CHOICE on a rainy Saturday afternoon, what would you do? Go to the Michigan-Ohio State football game, the Brother Rice-Henry Ford mud wrestling fiasco, stay home and clean, paint and repair the house, or go to the Northwest Suburban League swim meet?

None of the above is not one of the choices.

I chose the swim meet. (Call me crazy. My wife did, along with a few other choice adjectives.)

To be honest with you, I didn't expect to have much fun. But I was pretty sure North Farmington would win for the fourth year in a row and that accomplishment, I tried to explain to my chagrined wife, deserved some press.

MY FIRST MISTAKE was wearing a sweater. Ever wear a sweater in a sauna? I thought I was going to melt from the heat and humidity inside the Redford Thurston pool.

My next mistake was not bringing a pair of ear plugs. Every sound made inside the tiny pool reverberated a zil-

lion times and there was enough sound to make you go deaf.

You see, everybody there — the swimmers, the parents, the coaches, the fans, the timers, everybody — all had their own cheers. Then they would cheer back and forth between teams. They would cheer to themselves. There was enough cheer to last a century of holidays.

The North swimmers did a cheer for their fans. Their fans cheered back. John Glenn came marching single-file out of the lockerroom chanting, "Toga, toga, toga" a la the movie "Animal House". (I'm must be getting old because I didn't understand the relevance of that one.)

Then Thurston began a cheer. "Gimme an E. Gimme an L. Gimme an A. Gimme an X. What's it spell? (ELAX?) What's it make you do? Go, go, go!" They blew it. They spelled "Elax" wrong.

THEN THE TEAMS began cheering among themselves. "Hey, Garden City, how do you feel?" North screamed.



Chris McCosky

"We feel so-o-o-o good!" GC yelled back.

"How 'bout you, Thurston, how do you feel?"

"We feel AWESOME!"

"How 'bout you, RU, how do you feel?"

Redford Union replied with embarrassed silence.

RU wasn't feeling too cheery. See, they were the smallest contingent at the meet, as reflected by their last-place point total. They would just as soon be left alone, thank you.

North coach Jordy Hatch, no doubt impersonating a Marine drill sergeant,

huddled his team together and went through the most inspiring, extended pep talk I've ever heard. When he was done I was so pumped that I was ready to jump in the pool and make like Mark Spitz. (That would have been something — I swim like a rock.)

THE YELLING didn't stop when the swimming started. In fact, it may have picked up a few decibels.

Especially during the second event. That was the 200-yard freestyle and it featured GC's Kim Dorsey (she should change her name to Dorsey, as in tin), a fantastic swimmer, against North freshman Jennifer Rowe, the best race of the day, with the possible exception of the final relay.

In the prelims, Dorsey blew Rowe away with a 1:59.96. But when it counted most, Rowe and Dorsey swam head to head. The computer-timer said Dorsey won by a touch, 1:58.67 to Rowe's 1:58.9. Rowe had knocked two seconds off her time but still fell short. Dorsey had set a pool and league record.

The meet, as far as team stats go, was over early. North had a pretty good lock on its fourth straight title by the diving competition. It was North's

11th NSL title in 13 years. A dynasty, no question.

THE COMMON THEORY as to why North always wins in swimming and tennis, the so-called leisure sports, is that North Farmington is attended by kids from affluent families. The kids have time and money and more access to such goodies as swim clubs, tennis clubs, and private coaching.

The less affluent districts — Garden City, Thurston, Redford Union — may take the attitude that North has an unfair advantage.

To some degree they are right. I have even heard North Farmington administrators, principal Clayton Graham for one, say that the affluence of their community attributes to the Raiders' success.

But there is more to it than that. The kids still have to be willing to work. To be able to compete in swimming or tennis means to play year 'round. There is no such thing as the "swim season" or the "tennis season." The season is 12 months long.

And there has to be competent coaching. Without that, the best talent

in the world won't win 11 championships in 13 years.

NORTH HAS hard-working kids and competent, dedicated coaches. And more. They have an unbelievably enthusiastic band of parental boosters. Those parents filled the bleachers at Thurston Saturday and cheered their collective heads off.

The smiles on their faces, and the happiness, were all they required in return for their tremendous support.

The final relay, North lined up a team of seniors: Katie Harnden, Jody Kottenstock, Mary Manderfield, Helen Sue Howard. These seniors have swam for four years and have won four championships. This was their last race. They finished third.

After the race, the four sat together underneath the starting block. The tears would not stop. But as coach Hatch no doubt told them, after four years of being the best, no third-place finish in a relay could tarnish their record. They were champions.

The tears went away and the smiles returned. Hatch was tossed in the drink. I was glad I came.

Eagle cagers split a pair

David Howard's 22 points paced a four-player assault on double figures as Orchard Lake St. Mary ripped MacMurray (11), College, 86-73, in the consolation final of the Hilldale Tipoff Tournament Saturday.

OLSM lost its first game of the season in Friday's opener, dropping a 93-83 decision to Defiance (Ohio) College in double overtime. The Eagles are now 5-1 overall.

Against MacMurray, OLSM jumped to a 40-33 halftime lead and never trailed. Joining Howard in double figures was Joe Wargington (12), Mike Cezard (11) and George Winn (10). Winn also had 10 assists and Lar-

basketball

ry Brundriks netted eight points and 10 rebounds.

Ferdinand Lamar's 16 points was tops for MacMurray.

IN THE LOSS to Defiance, David James swished through a 35-foot prayer with three

seconds left in regulation to tie it at 75-all and force the overtime. The two teams remained knotted at 77 apiece after the first extra period before Defiance took command in the second.

Howard again paced the Eagle scoring effort with 20 points. Brundriks contributed 19 points and seven rebounds, Brian Griesinger had 13 points and six assists and James finished with 10 points.

Defiance was led by Jerome Floyd and Bill Szabo with 23 points each.

OLSM will play in the Flint Mott Community College Classic Friday and Saturday.

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