

Sports

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Mercy's Annetto Ruggiero tries to shake North defender Sandy Spain in Friday's pre-regional soccer match. Mercy won 2-0.

Will Glenn sweep NSL?

By Chris McCosky staff writer

If you're inclined to wager, the odds are strong that one high school will rule the Northwest Suburban League in both boys and girls track this season.

The school? Westland John Glenn. Ernie Righetti has put together a pair of powerhouse squads and the Rockets will carry the label "favorites" on their backs at the NSL league meet Wednesday at North Farmington High School.

"John Glenn has to be the favorite," said Livonia Franklin girls coach Steve Dolloway. "They went through the girls dual-meet season unbeaten and they have a lot of first-place strength. We'll have to do a super job to beat them."

The irony is the Rockets have only 12 runners on their squad. If anyone can beat the power-hungry Lady Rockets, it's Dolloway's Patriots — and they will have to do it with depth.

THE BOYS SIDE is more in doubt. Three teams finished 4-1 in the dual-meet season: Glenn, North Farmington and Livonia Franklin. Garden City was

3-2 and have two of the top individual performers in the area in high jumper Jeff Felts and distance runner David Homann.

"It's going to come down to who cuts into who in what events," said North coach Rob Henderhan. "Franklin and Glenn both have top sprinters, so they will cut into each other there. As for us, we haven't lost in the 800-meter relay in the league and our 400 team has the best time."

But Henderhan said, individual stars can account for many points in a league meet and the majority of individual stars run for the Rockets. Henderhan figured out that Glenn will be seeded No. 1 in 10 of the 17 events.

Among the top female performers, competing Wednesday is Glenn's Karen Opp. A look through the Observer's most recent girls rankings shows Opp ranked in five events. She is first in the 200-meter dash (28.5) and first in the 400 dash (59.1).

Glenn also owns the fastest times in the 800 relay (1:48.3) and the 1,600 relay (4:05.1).

Franklin's Lisa Dominato will be the premier hurdler at the league meet. She is first in the area in the 100-meter

track

hurdles (16.3) and third in the 300 (49.3).

GLENN'S GIRLS should dominate both the field events (with top performers Opp, Michelle Sanchez, Julie Hysko, Diane Cranston and Anna Parish) and the distance events (with Laura Grassulis and Pam Eldridge).

The sprints and middle distance events may be divided between Glenn, Franklin, Garden City and North Farmington.

On the boys side, North Farmington looks strong in the field. Brian Hood has the best marks in both the shot put (47-7) and discus (138-0), while Victor Shaw has gone farther than any NSL competitor in the long jump (20-8).

Garden City's Felts is the premier high jumper, going 6-3 this year. G.C.'s Pat Cyrus has the best pole vault in the NSL (12-10).

The Cougars should also get a pair of individual firsts from Homann. He has

the best time in Observerland in both the 1,600 (4:24.3) and the 3,200 (9:31.9). Redford Union may not score a lot of points, but they could get 10 in the 3,200 relay. Their time of 8:23.0 hasn't been topped in the NSL.

BUT LOOK for the Rockets to dominate in the individual wars. Jeff Metzner is the NSL's best hurdler going 15.3 in the 110-highs and 49.5 in the 300-lows.

Sean Bono may be the best sprinter. His time of 11.3 is the league's best in the 100 meters and his 33.3 is tied for tops with Franklin's Steve Crawford.

Scott Marsheski (53.0 in the 400) and Kyle Sznaklitts (2:01.1) will be tough to beat in the middle distances.

Glenn also has the best times in the 400 relay (45.0), the 800 relay (1:35.1) and the 1,600 relay (3:32.0).

Obviously, in a league meet, some of these individual performances could be offset by the overall depth of the other teams. That's what it will take if any team hopes to block the Rockets from launching a sweep in the NSL meet Wednesday.

North Farmington High School is on 13 Mile Road, west of Orchard Lake.

DeMattia goals defeat Raiders

By Chris McCosky staff writer

Sid Abel, Detroit Red Wings' commentator, would describe the Farmington Hills Our-Lady of Mercy-North Farmington soccer pre-regional this way:

"It was a chippy sort of a soccer game, Bruce. Both sides are staying with their checks. But, if North Farmington are going to score goals, they are going to have to put the ball on the net. You can't score goals if you don't put the ball on the net."

Try as they might, the Raiders had little success putting the ball on net Friday and subsequently lost to Mercy 2-0.

The fault, however, was not totally with the Raider forward line. The Marlin midfielders, especially Jennifer Horst, were virtually impene-

"The offensive line was not moving to the ball," said North coach Cathy Cole, who has done commendable job with her young team. "They weren't thinking goal. They were too concerned about the players behind them."

THOSE PLAYERS, more often than not, were a sturdy corps of Marlin defenders led by Banu Rangarajan who kept much of the heat away from goalie Betsy Eads.

The first goal of the game was set up by a perfect corner pass from Annetto Ruggiero. She lofted a high soft pass in front of the Raider net and Amy DeMattia deftly headed the ball past goalie Michelle Mackie.

Mercy had another golden scoring opportunity about five minutes later. Mackie overran a loose ball in the crease. Ruggiero, the Catholic League's leading scorer, got an off-balance shot off but kicked it high and wide of the open goal.

The half ended 1-0. North only had one good scoring chance. It came late in the half. Susy Mattoon got loose on the right side of the Marlin net. She got off two shots. One went wide and the other was stopped by Eads.

Hawk kickers on a roll, win 2 straight

Look out, the Farmington Harrison soccer team has caught fire.

The Hawks won their second soccer match of the year beating Novi 4-3 on Tuesday. Victory No. 3 came Wednesday. The Hawks beat Livonia Franklin 5-2.

Michelle Wine has been on a goal scoring binge. She tallied two against Novi and three against Franklin. Jeanine Whittemore and Jody Bennett got a goal apiece on Tuesday.

Boy Holt and Jennifer Hughes added assist against Franklin.

soccer

The Raiders began carrying the play a bit more in the second half. The reason being the outstanding midfield play of freshman Sandy Spain.

Though the play stayed in the Marlin zone, the Raiders didn't get off many good shots. Raider scoring leader Kristie McMinn was completely bottled up by the Marlin defense.

Ruggiero also had to deal with a defensive shadow most of the match. North's Jean Anzlover was all over the place.

"SHE WAS the best center fullback we've seen this year," said Mercy coach Gene Fogel. "We just couldn't get around her."

Ironically, an uncharacteristic mistake by Anzlover gave Mercy its second goal. Anzlover hustled back to steal the ball away from DeMattia who was zoning in on Mackie. Anzlover's momentum was toward her own net. She couldn't stop the ball in time to keep it out of the net — the goal went to DeMattia, her second.

McMinn finally got free with about seven minutes left in the match. She spun around in front of Eads, but her kick went over the crossbar. It was North's best and last scoring chance.

"This may have been our worst game of the year," Fogel said. "I don't want to take anything from North, but we hadn't played a game in a week. We were real sluggish."

Both coaches said it was one of the more physical matches either team had been involved in.

Mercy (12-2) has won 11 straight matches. The Marlin will play Northville at 5:30 p.m. Wednesday at home in the regional semifinals. Northville beat Salem in their pre-regional match Friday 4-1.

Farmington is now 9-1.

By Chris McCosky staff writer

Livonia Stevenson tennis coach George Croll figured this would be the year his team got, as he put it, "kicked around."

Stevenson had an easy time winning the Western Lakes Activities Association tennis title a year ago and was 12th best in the state. But, against his 10 regular players of last year's club graduated. Croll was ready to be eaten alive.

It hasn't happened that way. The Spartans won't have the best dual-meet mark coming into Wednesday's WLA meet at Plymouth's CEP complex. Farmington Harrison is 5-0 having given Stevenson its only loss, 5-2, last week — but they may have the best shot at winning the league title, or at least a share of it.

"We have to hope that Plymouth Canton and Northville win some matches over in the over-division," Croll said. "Then we will have to win in the championship flight."

IN THE WLA, the dual-meet season and the league meet count 50-50 toward the overall league championship. Harrison is the league dual-meet champion. All the Hawks have to do to clinch at least a share of the overall title is finish second Wednesday. If they take first, the title is the Hawks' outright.

"Ideally, we would like to finish first and have Harrison take third," Croll said. "But, I'll be more than happy to share the title."

The Hawks (12-1 overall) have other plans. "If everyone plays well, plays like they can, we should take it," said Ed Goldstein. "We are the strongest team. But, in a one-day tournament, anything can happen."

Working against the Hawks is the way the league meet is structured. The first flight of matches are intra-divisional — that is, the Western Division teams play against each other as do the Lakes Division teams. Then the survivors from each division square off in the championship flight.

The Hawks are in the Western Division, clearly the tougher of the two divisions.

"Oh, our division is much tougher," Goldstein said. "Three of the four best teams in the league are in our division."

He's speaking of Canton and Northville, who may chip away just enough at the Hawks in the first flight to enable Stevenson to pull an upset. Livonia Churchill, another team not to be taken for granted, may also have a voice in who makes it to the final flight.

BUT THE Spartans won't have it too easy in the Lakes. Plymouth Salem, a team that has overcome much adversity this season, could surprise the Spartans and many others.

Harrison's super freshman Ken Davidson will

North a cinch in NSL meet

North Farmington has won the Northwest Suburban League tennis title the last five years. The Raiders have swept through the eight-match dual meet season without a loss. They are 10-0 overall.

North will go after title No. 6 Wednesday at the NSL meet at Westland John Glenn. Will they win it?

"Unless we collapse," said coach Norm Staniszewski.

A collapse is not likely. However, seriously now, the coach does expect his team to be challenged this year.

Team-wise, we're the strongest. But, there will be some interesting individual matches in certain areas."

LIKE IN No. 1 singles, North's Chuck Homolka swept through the NSL last year. But, he and Garden City's Steve Metzner have never met in league matches this season, both going three sets.

tennis

has his hands full with Northville's Arvid Sreedhaaren and Canton's Mike Minton in No. 1 singles. Whoever survives that preliminary flight battle should win the conference championship.

Stevenson's Jack Tatigian has only one defeat in Stevenson's City's Falls in the favorite, Harrison's Mark Kacocy is 11-2, but hasn't beat Tatigian. Salem's Ron Rabillas may also be a factor in No. 2.

Harrison appears to have a lock on the No. 3 and 4 singles spots. Steve Thomas is undefeated at No. 3

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