

# Sports

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(F1C)



C.J. Risak

## Talk comes cheaply at recruitment time

**P**ROMISES, PROMISES. College recruiters are full of them. Not just for the Tarin Dorns or Tony Boles, either. College coaches need insurance, too. Just in case they sign a dud, they have to be sure they have a back-up. And a back-up to the back-up. So they use any leftover scholarship money as bait. They tell high school athletes labeled borderline prospects to come out as a walk-on. Win a spot on the team, they say, and you'll get a scholarship. Problem is, promises like that aren't always kept. These aren't world-wise adults recruiters are dealing with. These are kids, young athletes who believe in fair play. They grab at any opportunity because they figure they'll get a chance to prove they're worth a scholarship. Ray Nagy, for one, found out differently.

A YEAR AGO, Nagy was in the nets when Bloomfield Hills Cranbrook swept to the Class B state hockey crown. He was not highly recruited, so he took an offer to walk-on at Western Michigan. After one semester, he quit. "I can't say anything good about Western," Nagy said. "I guess that's how college hockey is. If you don't have a scholarship, you don't play." Nagy says he was misled by WMU coach Bill Wilkinson. The Broncos had two other unproven goalies — both on scholarship — and Nagy said he was told all three would be given a shot at the No. 1 spot. Nagy never played in a game, never got a chance to prove himself during the first semester. When Wilkinson designated him as No. 3, he left. "They don't tell you anything while you're there," Nagy said. "They say you're going to play, but they didn't treat me equally."

NAGY SAID the other goalies both had equipment allowances. Both had a dozen sticks before the season started. Nagy got nothing. He was to supply his own sticks. To Nagy, it all added up to one thing: no chance to play. And without an opportunity to play, he could never win a scholarship. "I can't sit around and wait four years to get a chance," Nagy said. "I have to play. School was hard enough with hockey. To make it worthwhile, I have to have a scholarship." Wilkinson claims he did not play favorites, although he admitted Nagy didn't get into a game early in the season and he was designated as the third goalie. But scholarships had nothing to do with it, he said. He went with his best players.

NAGY THOUGHT he was the best. But he left because he never got a chance to prove it. And he didn't feel he could afford to wait for that chance. Nagy is playing now for the Hennessey Crushers, a junior hockey league team based in Redford. And Nagy is waiting. Waiting for a chance, hoping for a college scholarship or perhaps to be drafted by the pros. "Whatever happens, happens," he said. "I've been the college route, and it wasn't the best. I wish I could say it was my fault. It just didn't work out. "I guess it's just a business."

THAT'S JUST how the Kimberlys found college recruiting. The family now is in Troy, but 1½ years ago they lived in Apple Valley, Minn., a town just south of Minneapolis. Keith Kimberly was a star at Apple Valley High in football, basketball, soccer and baseball. Keith's career plans were clear: He wanted to study sports medicine. As a placekicker, several colleges were interested in him, but they either weren't NCAA Division I — which Keith's coaches said he was good enough to play — or they didn't offer him academic programs.

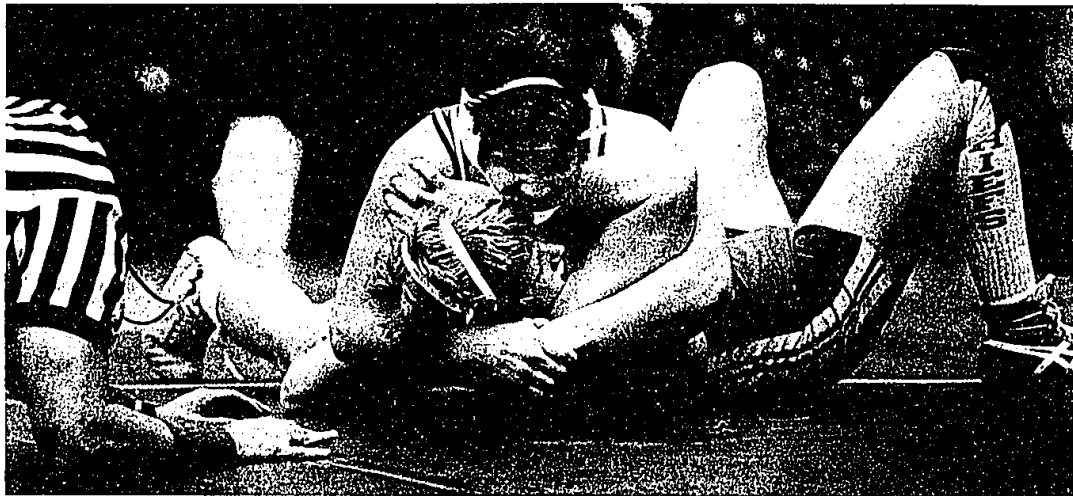
So Keith talked to Kirby Cannon, a graduate assistant football coach at Iowa State. Cannon told Keith he couldn't get him a scholarship, but if he walked on and made the team he'd earn one. Keith Kimberly decided to attend ISU. He made the travel team as the No. 2 kicker his freshman year. Cannon left to coach elsewhere after that, and last year Keith was redshirted. He's been told he fits into ISU's plans (the No. 1 placekicker graduated), but ISU coach Jim Criner still hasn't offered a scholarship.

The Kimberlys are caught. Keith has decided to remain at ISU through spring practice, but if no scholarship is offered he figures he'll have to transfer.

"IT'S TOO BAD seniors and parents coming into this don't know how to handle it," said Keith's mother, Joan, of the recruiting process. "Parents, totally, absolutely, have no idea what's going on. "I really think some kind of seminar is needed to make parents aware of the (recruiting) rules, and that recruiters don't always tell the truth. I mean, some of the fantastic promises they make these kids."

It's true that athletes often hear only what they choose. For many, praise and compliments are things they feel they've earned. But they need to remember that talk is cheap. They need to listen carefully to what's offered. Separate facts from mere chatter. If guidance or advice is needed, consult the coach or school athletic director, for starters.

Nothing is for certain, so athletes and their parents, sooner or later, will have to trust their instincts. If a promise of a scholarship is made if an athlete makes the team, Joan Kimberly suggests to record it in writing if possible. That idea is worth remembering. And what's most important is the education the college will provide. That should dominate any decision.



Dan Parillo, putting the crunch on Canton's Jim Crews, was the class of 198 pounds at the Western Lakes league tourney Saturday.

## Salem wins 4th WLAA mat title



photos by BILL BREGLER/staff photographer

North's Paul Cook, taking down Salem's Kirk Renz, was runner-up at 138 pounds.

By Chris McCosky  
staff writer

Ron Krueger could barely talk, his throat so abused by nearly 12 hours of screaming. His chest ached from the incessant pounding of his heart. His head pounded too.

But Ron Krueger never felt better in his life. His Plymouth Salem wrestling team had just won its fourth straight Western Lakes conference wrestling tournament, its fifth straight league title dating back to the disbanded Suburban 8 League.

On Saturday, at Westland John Glenn, Salem amassed 210 points to defeat the determined 12-team field. Walled Lake Central finished second with 184 points and Glenn took third with 140.5. (See statistical summary for complete results.) "This meet was a lot tougher than last year, and I really didn't think we had the same type of team we had last year," Krueger said. "But we scored more points today than we did last year, so I guess we did a better job. I'm just really pleased, proud of all the kids."

THE ROCKS placed wrestlers in the finals in 11 of the 13 weight classes. Ten of those finished in the top four. Seven placed among the top two. Two were crowned champions. All of that takes on greater significance consider-

ing each weight class has the potential of 12 participants.

Afterward, though, Krueger's thoughts were on his four wrestlers who fell short in their championship match.

"A lot of people don't think I care as much as I should (about those who lose)," he said. "But some of these boys have worked hard for me for four years, and it hurts to see them miss out in the end. It's just not fun when you lose."

The championship trophy presented at the meet's conclusion helped dry many of the tears shed by the fallen Rocks.

THE DAMERON brothers, as they were last year, were the Rocks' top scorers.

Senior Dave won his third straight league title, this one at 126. He simply overpowered Livonia Churchill's Mike Krause in the finals, pinning him in 3:15.

The three wins during the meet put his seasonal record at 40-0. Thirty-one of the wins were by pins, that's one shy of Salem's single-season record.

Dennis, a junior, won his second consecutive league title. He was presented a serious challenge from Plymouth Canton's Dave Dunford in the title match at 112 pounds, but Dennis prevailed 17-6.

Please turn to Page 3

## Mercy's Yager quits swim post

By Chris McCosky  
staff writer

No coach in the state of Michigan, in any sport, will ever post a better winning percentage than De Loris Yager.

In 22 years as swim coach at Farmington Hills Mercy, Yager has compiled a 448-0 dual meet record. Her teams have won 22 consecutive Catholic League titles. In 1972, Mercy won the first Michigan High School Athletic Association-sponsored state girls swim meet — an event Yager helped initiate.

De Loris Yager will not return as Mercy's swim coach next year.

"I really don't want to quit, but I think it would be better if I did," Yager said Monday.

Although she would not be specific, Yager said there were several factors that prompted her resignation.

"One thing was that no one wanted to swim us," she said. "It's getting disgusting. I ask people to swim us, and they all say they're booked up. I really enjoy the competition, but you can't get better just swimming against people you can beat."

MERCY ONLY had five dual meets scheduled last fall, all five within the Catholic League.

Yager said that part of the difficulty stems from an Oakland County athletic directors meeting several years ago.

"The A's all got together and they had suspected Brother Rice of doing some recruiting. Ever since then, there has been kind of a taboo against the Catholic League," she said. "It's getting to be a real headache. I think it's time for a change. Another factor involved with Yager's

decision to quit was her workload at Mercy. She teaches a full schedule and is a department head.

"I still wear many hats," she said. "It all makes for a long day. But I still enjoyed coaching. We have some nice girls, and we are going to be very good again next year."

YAGER ALSO bemoaned a gradual shift in the attitudes of some of her swimmers.

"I miss the old days when the girls pushed themselves to the point where they wanted to get better and better. That made me feel good," she said. "Kids these days are more indulged than in the past."

Yager has coached 21 All-American swimmers at Mercy, including Kara McGrath, the nation's top 200-yard freestyler, and Tracy Johnson, the top sprinter at Notre Dame.

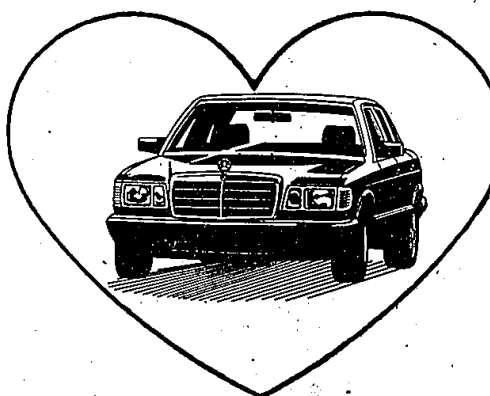
"That's the nice thing," Yager said. "Coaching all those nice kids and getting them scholarships to college. Swim scholarships are very hard to come by; there's so much competition for them."

Despite the unbeaten record, the string of league titles, the 21 All-Americans and her induction into the Catholic League Hall of Fame, De Loris Yager has never been named coach of the year.

"That doesn't bother me," she said. "I'm a quiet person. I'm not an extrovert. I just get excited when the girls swim well."

Yager also coaches the boys swim team at Redford Catholic Central (ranked No. 2 in Observerland). She said she hasn't decided whether she'll keep the CC post after this season.

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