

C.J. Risak

## Titan relishes Devils' delight

**S**O MANY WAYS to rate success. Consider the following scenario and try to imagine what Greg Wendt must be thinking. Then prepare for something quite different.

Wendt was expected to lead University of Detroit's basketball team into contention for the Midwestern Collegiate Conference (MCC) title. The team's success seemingly balanced on his performance.

That assessment proved inaccurate. Wendt struggled early and never was the consistent offensive force he hoped to be, that he thought he could be.

But U-D still succeeded, and even though his shots weren't falling, Wendt did his share. He rebounded with authority, played defense expertly, and passed with precision.

And the Titans won. After a sluggish 5-7 start, they succeeded in eight of their next 11 games. Seven of those wins, and just one loss, came in MCC play. They beat Xavier, the preseason title favorite, twice. They beat Iowa State — a team Michigan fans will remember — and battled Kansas evenly before falling by nine.

THEN, AS WENDT described it, "The floor caved in on us." Back-to-back-to-back-to-back defeats, all to MCC opponents. U-D fell from the conference lead. Its stay in the MCC tournament lasted two games, a win over Evansville followed by a loss (for the third time in three meetings) to St. Louis.

Xavier won the MCC's berth to the NCAA tournament. And Wendt?

"I went to Fort Lauderdale for spring break," he said, then added, "I would have rather gone to a (NCAA) regional somewhere."

That's the breaks. The Titans were left to plan their future and commiserate their 14-15 season. And as Wendt, vacationing in Florida, mullied over his final campaign at U-D, he tuned in the NCAA tournament on TV.

Watching that and trying not to think what-might-have-been would be difficult for any of the Titans. It was different for Wendt. Because there, in living color on national TV, was the tournament favorite and No. 1 team in the nation: the Duke Blue Devils, the team Wendt left to come to U-D.

WHEN WENDT went from Livonia to Duke after graduating from Redford Catholic Central in 1981, he was thought to be part of a rebuilding process. He performed well as a freshman, but then Coach Mike Krzyzewski brought in a recruiting class that included Johnny Dawkins, Mark Alarie, Jay Bilas and David Henderson.

Those names sound familiar? They should. They are the reasons Duke is No. 1. Wendt's playing time as a sophomore diminished, and with it went his desire to remain a Blue Devil. He was a basketball player, and he wanted to play.

Antagonism, even regret, would be natural — perhaps even expected — from Wendt. His former mates are still in the hunt for a national title. They were on national television almost every week this season, while U-D's games were picked up occasionally by Channel 52.

Logic dictates second-guessing. But Wendt won't. In retrospect, his transfer still makes perfect sense to him.

"I watch Duke all the time, whenever they're on TV," the 6-foot-6 forward said, "because I still have a lot of friends there. We went through a lot of the same things together."

"I have no regrets. I'm happy to see them do well. There are no grudges. After we beat Memphis State last year and got a lot of publicity for it, Coach K (Krzyzewski) sent me a nice letter saying he was glad to see me doing so well."

Had Wendt stayed at Duke, he would have graduated last year. And, he is certain, had he stayed he would "probably be working on Wall Street somewhere. I would have played only 10 minutes a game for them."

Still, transferring from a potential national champion sounds like solid evidence for commitment to a mental hospital. But as Wendt noted, "When I left, the team was 11-17. It wasn't like they were on top of the world."

ANYWAY, HE hasn't done badly at U-D. He averaged more than 36 minutes a game this season, instead of 10. He scored 13.3 points, grabbed 7.3 rebounds and dished out three assists per contest.

And even though his shooting percentages lagged (45.5 percent from the floor, 65.2 percent from the free throw line), Wendt did well enough to earn all-MCC honors for the second straight year and keep a longtime dream alive: a chance to play pro basketball.

"I thought I did have a good year," he said, "I didn't have the kind of season I had hoped for, but it wasn't bad."

"Right now, what I really want to do is play pro ball. I want to see how far I can take it."

Wendt figures he has the size and strength necessary to play small forward, and the ball-handling and passing abilities to play off-guard.

He plans on waiting to see what happens in the pro basketball draft; if that doesn't work out, he plans on going to Europe to play.

Wendt will graduate in May, with a major in communications and a minor in business. Grad school is another possibility, but not right now, not right away. First comes basketball and the hope that somewhere, he'll get a chance to prove he can play.



DAN DEAN/staff photographer

Mercy's Terri Ford is a versatile runner who will be counted on in the Marlins' Catholic League championship plans.

# Raiders face a new challenge in WLAA

By Larry O'Connor  
staff writer

North Farmington's girls track team, along with Westland John Glenn's and Livonia Franklin's, have sought asylum in the Western Lakes Activities Association from the Northwest Suburban League this season.

Some place to take up refuge.

The Raiders now have to contend with the likes of Livonia Stevenson, Plymouth Salem, Plymouth Canton, etc. . . . Anyway, you get the picture.

But, while it certainly won't be a picnic for the Raiders, coach Ralph Temby is optimistic just the same. Last season, his squad posted a 7-2 dual-meet record in the NSL. North Farmington finished second behind John Glenn in the league meet.

"We know this league is very competitive," said Temby. "We're looking forward to the challenge."

With only two notable losses, high-jumper Chris Carrier and shot-putter Beth Bryne, the Raiders have some experience back. Yet only five seniors dot the roster as a good portion (33 in fact) of the 55-member squad is made up of freshmen.

In the field events, the Raiders have Nancy Cutran to toss the shot put and discus. There's also the Spengler twins of Terri and Tammy, who both participate in the long jump and high jump. Plus, both also run in the sprint events. Wendy Love returns as a long jumper and a sprinter.

The middle distance events are well-represented by Maria Feldman and Kathy Roteras. Alice Jewell and Wendy Nevers are both back as distance runners.

### FARMINGTON MERCY

Only three things matter to Farmington Mercy this season.

Unfortunately for the Marlins, Dearborn Divine Child and Redford Bishop Borgess are two of them. Mercy coach Bob Kirkland is expecting yet another three-team battle for the Catholic League championship.

Last season, with a 6-1 dual-meet mark, the Marlins won the Catholic League Central Division title. Divine Child and Bishop Borgess, though, prevented the Marlins from doing the same in the league meet.

It's also three losses that have Kirkland con-

## girls track

cerned. Gone are all-area hurdler Tracey Balog, distance runner Ellen McCarthy and shot putter Aimee DePutter.

Balog took care of the hurdles events last season, and McCarthy brought the Marlins plenty of firsts in the distance events.

Balog's sister, Carrie Balog, returns to give some help in the 300-yard low hurdles. But there's still some holes.

"We're looking for somebody in the distance events," said Kirkland. "Ellen McCarthy ran in all of them last season. The big strength is Terri Ford."

Ford, a versatile performer, does everything except drive the bus on road trips. She runs in the 100- and 200-meter events, all of the relays and is a high jumper to boot.

Giving her a nudge is sophomore Andrea Clark, who runs the quarter mile and sprints.

Back are distance runners Moira Kordel and Barb Cheaney, along with discus thrower Heather Acemisseger.

### FARMINGTON HARRISON

In terms of depth, Farmington Harrison doesn't have much on its girls track team.

Yet coach Mark Babecek still thinks it's enough to bury a few teams this season. The Hawks, a Class B school, have only 25 tracksters to compete against the likes of Plymouth Salem and Livonia Stevenson.

"We're small compared to most schools," said Babecek. "It works for us. We get a lot done with just 25 on our team. There's a lot more individual coaching."

Some of the top individuals to coach include hurdler Jenny Holcomb, who was a state qualifier last season for the Hawks. She also runs in the sprint relay team.

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# CC contingent makes waves

By Brad Emons  
staff writer

Redford Catholic Central is always noted for its prowess in cross country, wrestling, football and basketball.

Despite little fanfare, the Shamrock swim team continues to make waves on a statewide level, finishing 10th recently at the Class A meet after winning the Catholic League title for the third straight year.

In DeLoris Yager's 20 years as CC coach, the Shamrocks have been among the top 10 on nine different occasions.

Area coaches gathered recently to select the best among Observersland. CC captured four of 11 first-team berths.

The remaining first-team and at-large picks have been filled by teams out of the 12-team Western Lakes Activities Association, one of the top swim circuits in the state.

League champion Plymouth Salem grabbed three spots as did fellow WLAA members North Farmington and Livonia Stevenson.

Introducing the 1985-86 All-Area boys swim team:

### FIRST TEAM

Sean McDermott, Catholic Central, 200-yard freestyle: A senior, McDermott was the Catholic League champion in the 200 and 500 freestyles.

His best times in those events were 1:48.9 and 4:51.3, respectively.

The Shamrocks captain also played a key role in CC's record-breaking 200 medley relay squad.

John Jonson, Westland John Glenn, 200 IM: A junior, Jonson was Glenn's top swimmer, qualifying for the state meet in four different events.

The team captain, Jonson finished ninth at the state meet in the 200 IM with a best time of 2:00.7.

He tied the league record in the 200 IM at the WLAA meet and took second in the 500 freestyle. Jonson also holds two school records.

Springing a 4.0 grade point average, Jonson's leadership qualities are unmatched, according to his coach, Larry McCrone.

## swimming rankings

formance of the season by winning the Class A title with 466.35 points on 11 dives.

The Canton co-captain holds school and league marks for diving. He was named MVP two straight years.

John Kovach, Catholic Central, 100 butterfly: At the state meet, Kovach finished third in the 100 butterfly (52:29) and third in the 100 backstroke (54:33).

The CC junior was also league champion in both the butterfly and backstroke. He holds four Catholic League records and three CC pool records.

Called the "hardest worker on the team" by his coach, Kovach was also a member of CC's record-setting 200 medley relay squad.

Mike Buatti, North Farmington, 100 freestyle: A senior, Buatti posted an area best in the 100 freestyle with a time of 48:37.

He holds the WLAA record in the 100 and added an area best time of 2:11.14 in the 500 freestyle and anchored North's record-setting 400 freestyle relay squad.

In the 15-16 age category, Turney holds long course record in the 800 and 1,000-meter freestyles.

Joe Spandora, Livonia Stevenson, 100 backstroke: A sophomore, Spandora's best time in the 100 backstroke is 56.4.

The Stevenson standout won both the 100 butterfly (53:30) and 100 backstroke at the WLAA meet. He also swam for Stevenson's medley relay squad at the state meet.

"Joe is just one great kid to coach," said Stevenson coach Doug Buckler. "His will to win is unmatched."

Jim Surowick, Catholic Central, 100 breaststroke: A junior, Surowick broke a 21-year-old Catholic League record in the 100 breaststroke.

With an area-best clocking of 1:00.73, Surowick finished 11th in the state meet.

He was also a member of CC's record-breaking 200 medley relay team.

A hard worker, Surowick is only in his second year of swimming.

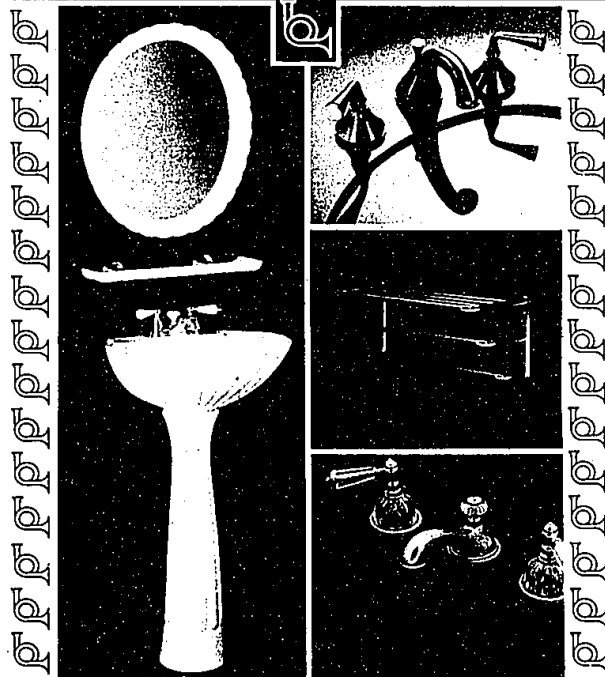
### RELAY EVENTS

John Kovach, Jim Surowick, Sean McDermott and Jon Teal, Catholic

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# HERALD WHOLESALE

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