

Sports

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Falcon runners claim both titles at Schoolcraft

By Chris McCosky
staff writer

How impressive was Farmington's double victory at the 21st annual Schoolcraft College Cross Country Invitational Saturday?

First off, the Falcons' boys team beat its nearest competitor, Wayne Memorial, by 62 points. It was their third consecutive Schoolcraft championship. No other team has won it three straight years.

The Falcons' girls team bested its nearest challenger, Plymouth Salem, by 92 points. It was Farmington's first girls title.

But that ain't all, folks.

Farmington was without its No. 2 boys runner, All-America Al Stebbins, who was sidelined with a stomach injury. No problem. You could even take away the Falcons' top two finishers Saturday and the team would have still won convincingly.

Same for the Falcon girls. That's impressive.

"IT'S ALWAYS nice to win the Schoolcraft Invitational," said Farmington boys coach Jerry Young, whose teams have won it five times. "We've been very fortunate to have a lot of good, hard-working kids come through here. We have eight exceptional kids."

Chris Inch, All-America, all-state, All-Area, won the individual title for the second straight year. The senior finished the 5,000-meter course in 16:32.91, which is about 20 seconds slow for him.

"He ran a 15:55 on Thursday and he was pushed all the way by John

Glenn's Dan Liedel," Young said. "The humidity was a killer on Saturday. None of the times were that good. But I'll tell you, Chris just does not want to lose a race. That's his goal for this year: not to lose a race."

So far, so good. He has won all his dual meets and placed first at both the West Bloomfield and Schoolcraft invitational.

But the key to Farmington's easy win was a talented supporting cast. All seven Falcon runners placed among the top 24. Brandon London, a junior running in only his second varsity race, placed fifth in 16:54.94. Ron Smedley (17:37.73) and Ken Dunneback (17:44.94) took 14th and 15th. Freshman Rob Holloway (17:46.71) was 17th. Matt Walter (17:50.77) was 20th and Steve Quenneville (17:59.30) was 24th.

"I KEEP telling those kids that they are the reason we're so tough," Young said. "Look at Plymouth Salem. They have three outstanding runners but look where they finished. They fell off after the top three."

Salem's Bill Atwell (17:04.33) placed eighth. Kevin Jones (17:25.31) and Doug Vergari (17:34.09) came in 11th and 12th. But the Hocks placed sixth overall. Finishing second to Inch was Northville's John Frisbie (16:27.21). Glenn's Dan Liedel was third (16:39.80) and Walled Lake Western's Brian Grosso (16:42.78) was fourth.

Rounding out the all-tournament team (the top 10) were London; Deric Allen (Wayne), 16:56.93; Kevin Haas (Northville), 16:56.93; Atwell; Chris Hart (Farmington Harrison),



STEVE FECHT/staff photographer

Chris Inch led the Farmington boys cross country team to the Schoolcraft Invitational title, as he has for three straight years. He won the individual race for the second straight year.

17:12.50; and, Matt Smith (Bishop Borgess), 17:16.18.

IN THE GIRLS RACE, Farmington (45 points) placed three runners

in the top 10.

Bonnie Stecker placed third (20:45.38), freshman Jennifer Kiel fourth (20:52.80) and Nicole Jelly sixth (21:04.05).

Rounding out the Falcons finish were Judy McKeever (21:47.46), 15th; Leslie Martin (21:54.48), 17th; and freshman Amy Trunk (22:00.26), 21st.

Livonia Ladywood senior Janine Kloc won the girls race with a 20:27.44. She edged Livonia Churchill junior Karen Kantor (20:36.32), 21st.

girls basketball

Mercy hosts Salem

All of a sudden, it has become the hottest girls basketball rivalry in Observerland.

Plymouth Salem vs. Farmington Hills Mercy. They are ranked 1-2 in Observerland. Salem is ranked No. 1 in the Detroit News Class A poll, No. 3 in the Detroit Free Press. Mercy is ranked No. 5 in both. Salem is ranked No. 3 in the Michigan High School Girls Basketball Coaches Association poll, Mercy No. 6.

Salem (5-1) travels to Mercy (4-1) Saturday night. Look out.

"We expect a jam-packed gym for this one," said Mercy coach Larry Baker. "Anyone familiar with the recent history of this matchup knows that it will be a pressure cooker for both teams."

Neither team has shied away from pressure cooker-type games this season.

MERCY, BEATEN Saturday 65-61 at Saginaw, has already won games against Utica Eisenhower and Sarina St. Patrick's. Salem has beaten Class B power Dearborn Divine Child and Walled Lake Central and lost to Detroit St. Martin dePorres.

"Obviously, we haven't scheduled ourselves to be in an undefeated position coming into the Catholic League season," Baker said. "The idea is to play the best competition available to prepare for the league season and for what might happen later on."

Against Saginaw, currently ranked No. 1 by the Free Press, Mercy squandered a nine-point lead with three minutes left to play. "We missed a one-and-one opportunity and they came right down and scored," Baker said. "Then they created two quick turnovers off inbounds plays and the lead went from nine points to three instantly. Both the girls and I were stunned by the change in circumstances. From that point we were a very disorganized crew."

Yvette Maison, senior guard, led



RANDY BORST/staff photographer

Jean Anzlovar lunges for a loose ball in North Farmington's win at Harrison Tuesday night.

Raiders top Hawks; Farmington winless

North Farmington handed Farmington Harrison's girls basketball team its 66th consecutive loss Tuesday night 59-24.

The Hawks played with North for much of the first half. But North ran off a 15-2 spurt in the third quarter to put Harrison away.

"North is probably two notches ahead of us right now," Harrison coach Jim Neve said. "They aren't in the class with Salem and Glenn, but they are well coached. We made a lot of floor mistakes that just killed us. We must have thrown the ball

away 14 times." Suzi Butcher led North with 12 points and Mo O'Brien added 10. Tracy Ratke scored nine for Harrison. Kris Waldman added six. North improves to 2-4.

W.L. WESTERN 47, FARMINGTON 35: The Falcons showed up a quarter too late Thursday. Walled Lake Western joined Farmington 19-7 in the first quarter, then withstood a gradual Falcon comeback bid. Becky Philp paced Farmington (0-6) with 15 points. Diane Hall scored 10 for Western (2-3).

North wins Gee golf tourney

Two of the three lowest shooters at Monday's Bill Gee Tournament hailed from North Farmington. Their performances helped seal the Raiders' victory at Oakland Hills Country Club.

North's Mark Taylor was the only golfer in the eight-team field to break 80. He finished with a 78. Lake Orion's Mike Sherwood shot

80 for individual runners-up honors, followed by Chris Bayer of North with an 81. R.J. Thompson of Detroit Country Day, which hosted the tournament, and Milford's Jeff Johnson were next at 82.

North's winning total was 330, seven strokes better than Lake Orion. Farmington Harrison placed third

(350), with Walled Lake Western fourth (354). West Bloomfield fifth (355), DCDS sixth (358), Milford seventh (363) and Pontiac Catholic eighth (412).

"The course played a little tough and long," said DCDS coach Jerry Hansen. Harrison's low scorer was Mike Jacques (84). Mike Brenner paced West Bloomfield (85).

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