

Sports

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Raiders rally to rule Bloomfield

By Chris McCosky
staff writer

From the brink of elimination to the championship in a measly 16 hours. All in a day's work for the rejuvenated North Farmington volleyball team.

The Raiders fought from behind all day Saturday and finally captured the Bloomfield Hills Andover-Lahser Invitational Volleyball Tournament. It was North's fifth Andover-Lahser title in seven years.

"This was a nice victory for us," North coach Sandy Lubieniecki said. "The girls really pulled together."

The Raiders knocked off Grosse Pointe North in the championship match 11-15, 15-13, 15-6. The Raiders trailed 10-2 in the second game. "I kept telling the kids to stay positive, don't let down. The momentum can change," said Lubieniecki.

Charged up by the inspirational play of reserves Misley Bessawen and Kelly Coulson, the Raiders indeed altered the momentum and swiped the match from Grosse Pointe North.

"Misley and Kelly did a super job for us," Lubieniecki said. "They really gave us a spark with their all-around excellent play. It was about 11:30 at night and the kids were kind of dragging. But they came in and were fresh. They really picked us up."

THE RAIDERS began the day by

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*— Sandy Lubieniecki
Raiders coach*

losing three of their first four games during pool play. One more loss and the Raiders would have gone home early and empty-handed.

"We got ourselves into a do-or-die situation. We had to win four straight to get out of pool," Lubieniecki said. "I figured I had to do something to shake things up so I put sophomore Debbie Weintraub in to get things just seemed to come together for us after that."

In Weintraub's first match, North beat Farmington Hills Mercy 15-11, 15-2. That proved to be the match that got the Raiders into the semifinals. Both North and Mercy finished pool play with 5-3 records.

The Raiders began the day without their No. 1 setter, Carrie Lee. Lee was involved in an automobile accident Friday and was nursing various bumps and bruises. Senior Rory Talamini and Weintraub handled the all-important setter position.

"That's why I'm so proud of the girls. They really hung in there and

stayed together as a team," Lubieniecki said.

NORTH FARMINGTON knocked off a hot Farmington Harrison team in two games in the semifinal round, 15-12, 15-13. Harrison had breezed through pool play winning its six-team net.

"The kids really felt comfortable. We got behind 9-4 in the first game and then turned it around," Lubieniecki said. "Janine Whittemore had been hitting real well for Harrison throughout pool play so we put a double-block on her. We were able to control the net against them."

Harrison finished third in the tournament. The Hawks knocked off West Bloomfield in a one-game playoff to decide third and fourth place.

IF THERE was a most valuable player award it would have went to North Farmington's Tammy Spengler. Spengler was successful on 74 of 76 serves with 15 aces. She also nailed 74 of 75 spikes with 25 kills.

Suzi Butcher (25 kills), Stephanie Knapp (18 kills) and Sandy Spahn (21 kills) were the workhorses at the net for North. Kris McMinn and Terry Spengler took care of the back row and passed effectively throughout the tourney.

"I'll tell you, 16 hours is a long time to spend in a gym," Lubieniecki said. "But it was a lot of fun."
North is 10-2 on the season.



RANDY BORST/staff photographer

Falcons serve loss to Chiefs; Walled Lake teams on a tear

Service reception continues to be the biggest thorn in the side of the Plymouth Canton volleyball team.

Farmington pounded in serve after serve Monday to defeat the Chiefs 15-6, 15-5 in a Western Lakes match at the Farmington Training Center.

The match was similar to Canton's loss to North Farmington last week. A lot of service points and very little match play.

Kelli Koss had the hot hand for the Falcons. She scored 16 points off her serves in the two games.

"Everyone else contributed, too," said second-year Farmington coach Maureen McNabb. "It was a good all-around effort."

The win improves Farmington's record 2-1. Canton falls to 0-2. The Falcons host Westland John Glenn Monday and the Chiefs travel to Walled Lake Western.

PLYMOUTH SALEM coach Betty Smith learned a valuable lesson Monday night: Never feed her team lasagna before a match.

The Rocks lost their second straight match of the season, 15-8, 15-9, to Northville.

volleyball

"One big problem: the kids had dinner at my house and we had lasagna. It went right to their feet," Smith said. "They just couldn't move. We couldn't get a pass off and they had a lot of free ball. We beat ourselves."

Despite the loss, Jane Kines and Denise Tackett played well. Kines had four blocks and four kills at the net and Tackett was effective in the back row.

Setter Kara Cummings, Jessica Handley and Chris Kolka also played well for the Rocks (0-2). Salem will host Walled Lake Central Monday.

FARMINGTON HARRISON lost its second straight Western Lakes match Monday as Walled Lake Central topped the Hawks 15-13, 15-8.

"We started out strong and had a good chance to win game one," said Harrison coach Ron Shortt. "We were up 12-7 and started missing

serve. It killed our momentum."

Janine Whittemore had another outstanding match for the Hawks. The powerful senior had seven kills at the net and nine digs in the back row. Theresa Spier also played a strong match with three kill spikes and two ace serves.

The Hawks, 6-4 overall and 0-2 in the league, travel to Livonia Franklin Monday.

NORTH FARMINGTON felt the effects of its 16-hour run to the Andover-Lahser championship last Saturday. Walled Lake Western beat North on Monday 15-7, 15-12.

"We played well. Western is a very good team. But we were a bit leg-weary. We weren't able to block as well," said North coach Sandy Lubieniecki.

Suzi Butcher made only one error in the match. She nailed nine of 10 spikes with three kills. Stephanie Knapp and Kris McMinn also played well.

North, 10-3 overall and 1-1 in the Western Lakes, will host Livonia Stevenson Monday.

Foul line trips St. Mary's

The trip to the National Catholic College Tournament last weekend in Dubuque, Iowa, went about as expected for St. Mary's College — lots of free throws for their opponents.

The results were predictable, too: SMC lost its opener to Loras College, which just happened to be the host of the 16-team NAIA tourney 94-85 Thursday, then followed that with a 68-59 defeat to Cardinal Stritch (Milwaukee) Friday.

The setbacks dropped SMC to 7-11 for the season, and makes the Eagles 1-10 over their last 11 games.

Both games were decided at a painted stripe 15 feet from the basket. SMC shot 19 free throws in the two games, converting a measly seven; its opponents combined to take 65 free throws, making 48.

BEING OUTSCORED at the free throw line 48-7 over two games makes winning a difficult task. The Eagles never really had a chance in their opener against LC, trailing 39-32 at the half and, after LC opened up a 56-41 lead with 16 minutes left, SMC never got closer than seven.

Five Eagles reached double figures in scoring, paced by Bradley Turner, who came off the bench to get 16 points and 10 rebounds. Theo Pearson and Greg Spraggins netted 11 each (Spraggins also had seven assists) and Safiq Qasawa and Mo Steward contributed 10 points apiece, with Steward nabbing seven rebounds.

But SMC hit just four-of-11 foul shots; LC connected on 27-of-38. SMC outshot its foe from the floor, collecting 39 field goals (in 63 shots, 47 percent) to LC's 33 (of 66, 50 percent).

Bob Deroulin's 28 points was best for LC. Greg Revesnek had 22 and Willie Brown chipped in with 13.

IN THE LOSS to Cardinal Stritch, the Eagles took command early and held a 19-9 lead. But CS battled

back to tie it at the half (29-29), and it remained close until the waning minutes.

A key stretch for SMC came with five minutes left. A Spraggins three-pointer tied the score at 49-all, and after a CS miss, Spraggins hit another triple to put the Eagles up 52-49. A technical foul was then called on the CS coach, so Spraggins stepped to the line to try to increase SMC's advantage to five.

The junior guard missed both foul shots, however, and SMC compounded its mistake by failing to score on its possession. CS got baskets in each of its next two possessions to regain the lead (53-52).

The Eagles' failure to open up a lead when they had the chance proved fatal. CS went ahead in the final minutes and kept the lead by sinking 10-of-11 of its free throws down the stretch. For the game, CS hit 21-of-29; SMC was three-of-eight.

QASAWA HAD 15 points, Spraggins notched 14 and Pearson collected 10 points and 11 rebounds. Steward managed just two points but grabbed 10 rebounds. Pete Loyda paced CS with 19 points and 12 boards. Michael Carter had 15 points.

It was not a memorable trip for SMC forward Jon Bow, the team's leading scorer and rebounder. Bow was in foul trouble throughout the opener and managed just eight points before fouling out with seven minutes left.

As disappointing as that performance was, matters were worse against CS. Bow scored four points, then sprained his ankle early in the opening half and was lost for the game.

SMC coaches Tim Domke and Rich Zelenki are hopeful Bow will be ready for Saturday's game against NAIA district 23 rival Spring Arbor at Dombrowski Fieldhouse.

Kelli Koss supplied much of the Falcons' power from the service corner Monday as Farmington zipped Canton in two games.



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