

Rocks capture North tourney

It was May Day in January, the 10th to be exact, as Plymouth Salem's wrestling team, led by 112-pounder Sean May, successfully defended its first Farmington Invitational title.

Salem won its first tournament title of the season by scoring 188 points, outpacing Wayne Memorial by 78. (See statistical summary.) May, a senior, turned back May's highly-touted Rob Eeles for the 112-pound final, 6-4.

"He's beaten Eeles two weeks in a row and it wasn't a fluke," said Salem coach Ron Kroeger. "And we have high regards for Eeles."

May, who finished second last year at the North tournament, raised his season record to 17-5 with three straight victories at the invitational.

"SEAN HAS BEEN around in our program and last year he wrestled behind Dave Dameron (a state Class A champion at 150)," Kroeger explained. "Sean is starting to do well. He's come on and has been beating some good people."

"Early in the season he was only going half a match, but now he's not making the mistakes and he's finishing his matches."

Several other Salem wrestlers finished off their opponents including once-beaten Dennis Dameron, who took the 128-pound title, pinning North's Bill Hurley in 2:38.

Other Salem first-place finishers included heavyweight Richard Johnson, an 8-2 decision over Plymouth Canton's Tony Callaway; Tim Ott (132), a pin in 4:38 against Farmington's Bob Woodbeck; and Lem Yeung (155), a come-from-be-

wrestling

hind 9-3 win over Canton's Dan Dwyer, who had beaten two other seeded wrestlers prior to the final. In a mild surprise, Canton's Tom Flores defeated Salem's Jeff DeBeke for the 98-pound crown.

WAYNE WINNERS Included Jeff Shaefer (138), Scott Lapere (145) and Jody Carman (167). The Zbras finished with 108 points on the day.

Third-place North Farmington boasted a pair of individual winners in Dan Starrs (185) and Zain Connolly (189).

Farmington Harrison, although last in the eight-team field, claimed the 105-pound title as Cliff Alcantara raised his record to 22-2, winning his third tournament of the year with a technical fall against Salem's Todd Bourlier.

Salem wrestlers gaining third-place finishes included Scott Connell (119), Bill Atwell (138), Brian Burleson (145) and Chuck Gracely (158).

Kroeger and his Salem Rocks team now turn their attention to the Catholic Central Invitational, which will bring together the state's top teams.

"We may be setting back and watching a lot of good matches," said the Salem coaches. "I just hope some of our kids get to participate. Some of our kids will be lucky to get the fourth or fifth seeds."

Big weekend ahead for area grapplers

This is a big weekend for fans of high school wrestling.

Two of Oostersland's most popular wrestling tournaments will take place Saturday. The Redford Catholic Central Invitational and the Plymouth Canton Civilian Invitational.

Fifteen teams will invade Catholic Central including powerful Temperance-Bedford. The Mules have won the CC tourney the last four years.

Among the serious contenders to dethrone the Mules will be Catholic Central, Plymouth Salem, Lansing Sexton and Davison. Others competing are Grandville, Birmingham Brother Rice, Grand Ledge, Flin Northern, Livonia Churchill, Warren Woods Tower, Lansing Eastern, Mount Clemens, Holt and Howell.

The preliminary bouts will begin at 11 a.m. The finals are scheduled to commence at 7 p.m. All-day passes will be sold: \$3 adults and \$2 students.

CLASS C powerhouse Stevensville-Lakeshore has won the Plymouth Canton Civilian tournament the last two years. Seven teams will attempt to wrestle the title away from the Lancers Saturday at Canton.

Those teams are Canton, Belleville, Livonia Franklin, Livonia Stevenson, Birmingham Senholm, Oxford and Southgate Anderson.

The prelims will begin at 9:30 a.m. with the finals set for 5 p.m. Tickets for the prelims will go for \$1.50 for adults and \$1 for students. Admission to the finals will be \$1.

Hero role eludes Brennan

By Marty Budner
staff writer

THE CATCH could have lived forever in history as one of those "Moments to Remember."

Brian Brennan was so close to National Football League immortality. He nearly carried his spot right alongside such stars as Franco Harris, Dwight Clark and Lynn Swann — all heroes after legendary game-winning touchdown receptions.

Brennan made what appeared to be the game-winning catch for the Cleveland Browns Sunday in the American Football Conference championship game against Denver. His dramatic 48-yard touchdown reception from quarterback Bernie Kosar allowed the Browns to surge ahead, 20-13.

Just a little more than five minutes separated Brennan from super stardom and Cleveland from Super Bowl XXI.

But it just didn't come to pass as Denver quarterback John Elway engineered a historical moment of his own.

The Broncos marched 98 yards for the game-winning touchdown and an eventual 23-20 overtime victory. The pulsating drive not only erased Brennan's heroics but set up delivery of the AFC

crown to Denver and the franchise's second appearance in a Super Bowl.

Brennan's fleeting moment of glory has been converted to a dose of frustration.

"I went from a game winner to total disappointment," said Brennan Tuesday from his Ohio home. "I didn't feel for myself, but for the team. I was just sorry we couldn't win."

"But you have to give Denver credit for going 98 yards in front of all those screaming Browns fans. Throughout the season there are a lot of emotional highs and lows. And to see (Denver) win in overtime, it makes me know what the Jets must have felt like (Cleveland beat the New York Jets the previous week in double overtime by the same score)."

"The further you get in the playoffs the more disappointed you get," Brennan said.

BRENNAN, A former prep standout at Birmingham Brother Rice and collegiate star at Boston College, called "The Catch" the biggest of his career.

"It was the biggest catch of my career — either at Boston College or in the National Football League," he said. "It happened in front of a national audience and my family was there."

"It was a big thrill."

Gritty Schoolcraft outgunned by Highland Park

By Brad Emmons
staff writer

The cards were stacked heavily against the Schoolcraft College men's basketball team on Saturday.

The Ocelots were playing high-powered Highland Park Community College minus six players, including three starters who were recently declared academically ineligible.

With several new faces in the lineup, Schoolcraft was also facing former head coach Rocky Watkins, who took the assistant's job at Highland Park this season. (He was released last spring after seven years.)

Although Schoolcraft was beaten, 111-100, the Ocelots, under first-year coach Bob Wetzel, did not suffer the embarrassment some feared.

"It was a tremendous job and I was pleased to play like we did," said Wetzel, whose team fell to 5-3 in the Eastern Conference and 9-10 overall. "We had some guys who have only been with us a few days. They really weren't sure what we

were doing offensively and defensively."

HIGHLAND PARK, now 17-3 overall and 5-0 in the conference, led by as many as 20 points in the first half but couldn't deliver the knockout punch.

Schoolcraft pulled within eight with 3:10 to go on Jeff Vakratsis' short jumper, but the Ocelots never got any closer against the talented Panthers.

"We did a good job of breaking their press or we never would have scored 100," Wetzel said. "The key was rebounding and second shots. We rebounded hard, but our kids just are not as big."

Highland Park's two 6-foot-7 centers, starter Clauzel Williams and reserve Johnnie Bell, combined for 23 rebounds and six blocked shots.

Guard Antoine Williamson, a 6-footer from Detroit Coley, was also a thorn in Schoolcraft's side, scoring a team-high 21 points.

"He (Williamson) stepped in the

gap (of Schoolcraft's zone defense) and made some big shots," said Wetzel. "Just about everybody on their team has that penetration ability."

Five other Panthers scored in double figures including Derrick Gilliam (17 points), James Gillispie (16), Rodney Heard (13), Clauzel Williams (11) and Willie Vasco (10).

"WE DIDN'T PLAY with intensity and we didn't play smart," said Highland Park coach Bob Dawson. "They wanted it for Rocky, so they tried to do it all on offense."

This was Brennan's best professional season. The third-year wide receiver was Cleveland's leader in both receptions (35) and yards gained (818). He also led the Browns with six touchdowns — the longest a 57-yard touchdown against San Diego.

Brennan was second on the team to Reggie Langhorne in average yards per catch (15.2) and third on the team behind Matt Bahr and Kevin Mack in points scored with 42.

In the playoffs, Brennan caught eight passes for 141 yards and one touchdown. He had a 17.6 yard-per-catch average. Brennan had four receptions for 72 yards against the Broncos.

"In the end I felt this was my best year," said Brennan. "It was a thrill for me to have the success I had. Unfortunately we didn't go as far as we would have liked."

"I think I'm starting to play better. I'm learning the league and our own offense this year really helped out. And (Cleveland quarterback) Bernie Kosar has a lot of confidence in me."

"It's been a nice relationship so far between us," he said. "I have a lot of fond memories of this season."

And who does Brennan like in the Super Bowl? "I'd like to see the AFC team win it, but I see the Giants winning it," he said.

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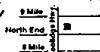
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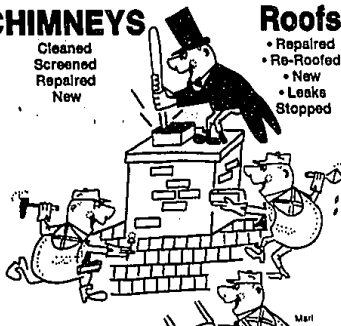


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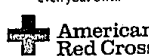
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