

Sports

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Monday, May 2, 1989 O&E

(F1C)

Falcon alum returns as football coach



Rick Milhizer Farmington grad returns

By Dan O'Meara staff writer

Rick Milhizer is the new varsity football coach at Farmington High School, but he's certainly no stranger to longtime Falcon fans.

He starred in three sports for Farmington a decade ago and then played four years of football at Michigan State.

Following his college graduation, the 29-year-old Milhizer returned to his alma mater as freshman football coach in 1982 and was a varsity assistant the next year.

He replaces Dave Catherman, who was Milhizer's high school position coach when the Milhizer was an all-state honorable mention defensive back in 1976. Catherman resigned after two seasons as head coach. The Falcons were 2-7 last year.

Milhizer, selected the most outstanding athlete in the Class of '77, returned to Farmington once again after spending the last four years as either a graduate or full-time assistant coach at three universities.

MOST RECENTLY, he was on the coaching staff at Wayne State. Before that, Milhizer served as a graduate assistant at New Mexico State

(1984) and Tulane (1985-86).

The majority of his experience — as both a player and coach — has been on the defensive side of the ball, which causes one to assume he will emphasize defense in his new role with the Falcons. But Milhizer points out he worked with the offensive line at New Mexico and the offensive backs at Wayne.

"Right now, I'm more knowledgeable about defense, but I'm working to overcome that," he said. "It's very important to win with defense and kicking that's what you stress."

"There's nothing more frustrating than a defensive unit that can't stop somebody."

His experience as a college assistant and exposure to the game at that level will undoubtedly be beneficial in his new position, Milhizer believes. Defensively, he has coached the backs, inside and outside linebackers and special teams.

"PLAYING BIG-TIME football and being what I consider a student of the game, I thought I knew football," he said. "But when you go to college and are around (coaches) who make their living that way, you find out what football is all about."

"I found out how much I didn't know. It really sparked my interest and spurred me to want to know as much as they did."

Milhizer, who still looks as if he could start in the MSU secondary at 6-foot-2 and 190 pounds, plans to employ the stunt, 4-3 defense at Farmington, the same pro-style system MSU coach George Perles has made popular with the Rose Bowl champion Spartans.

"Everywhere I've been, we've run the 5-2, but I believe MSU proved last year it's a really effective defense," he said.

"The reason I like the stunt 4-3 is because you need one good athlete at middle linebacker. (At other positions), you can get by with average talent if they're coached properly."

MILHIZER, WHOSE resume reflects his strength in academic areas as well, took his undergraduate degree in hotel, restaurant and institutional management. But, while serving as a graduate assistant coach, he used that time to earn a master's degree in social studies.

He has been constantly on the go this spring, fulfilling his coaching duties at Wayne State, completing his education requirements as a student teacher at Birmingham Groves High and working part time at the Botsford Inn.

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football

"Playing big-time football and being what I consider a student of the game, I thought I knew football. But when you go to college and are around (coaches) who make their living that way, you find out what football is all about."

Rick Milhizer
Farmington football coach

North slips past Central to end winless streak

North Farmington collected the first softball win of the season among Farmington public schools behind Debbie Weltraub's solid pitching and strong hitting from Kelly Coulson and Amy Fletcher.

Fletcher slashed a two-run single to ignite a three-run rally in the first, and the Raiders (now 1-5) never trailed. Fletcher added a run-scoring single in the third. Coulson went three-for-three at the plate and had an RBI.

What proved to be the game-winning run scored in the fourth. Missy Bossacwen walked, Weltraub singled her to third and Coulson hit a sacrifice fly, scoring Bossacwen to make it 5-2. Walked Lake Central (3-3) got single runs in the fourth and fifth, but couldn't catch North.

Weltraub allowed five hits and walked just four, a major improvement over previous performances and a key reason for the victory.

NORTHVILLE 21, HARRISON 0: Amy Freimund did a number on the Hawks, tossing a one-hitter while keeping Harrison winless at 0-5 in the Western Division and 0-6 overall.

Freimund struck out five and walked only two. Four Harrison pitchers tossed a total of 21 walks and allowed nine hits.

"They've got an outstanding pitcher, probably the best in the league," said Harrison coach Mike Teachman of Freimund, a junior. "We're having a walk problem here, because we're breaking in all new pitchers."

Sophomore shortstop Karen Najarian

softball

hit a double to left field for the Hawks' only hit.

Northville is 5-1 in the division, 6-3 overall.

JOHN GLENN 13, FARMINGTON 5: An eight-run fourth inning propelled Westland John Glenn past visiting Farmington Friday.

Glenn managed just four hits, but losing pitcher Lisa Rockefeller contributed to her own demise by walking seven. Tracy Stockwell's two-run single was the key hit in the fourth-inning rally. Michelle Miller had a two-run triple for Farmington.

Beth Wilson was the winning pitcher for Glenn, which improved to 6-1 in the WLA.

GARDEN CITY 1, DEARBORN 0: Kristen Wasil turned in another strong pitching performance and sophomore Vicki Cook stashed the game-winning hit as Garden City stayed unbeaten in Northwest Suburban League.

Wasil allowed just three baserunners on two hits and a walk. She struck out 10. Outfielder Jennifer Perkins added Wasil's shutout performance with a super-charge in the fourth inning. Perkins then got the game-tying rally started in the sixth with a double. Denise Biggs' sacrifice bunt moved Perkins to third, and Cook came through with a double to win the game only run.

Those were the only two hits of the



Katie Doll of Harrison makes the putout on Northville's Megan Abraham in the Western Division vision softball game Friday, but the Hawks remained winless in the 1988 season.

game for the Cougars, who are now 4-0 in the NSL (6-5 overall).

CANTON 11, CHURCHILL 0: Plymouth Canton kept Livonia Churchill winless through eight games Friday, with Carl Herron and Mary George combining to drive in five runs for the visiting Cougars.

Herron had two hits and three RBIs

and George contributed two hits and knocked in two runs. Slacey Thompson slugged a single, double and a triple, collecting an RBI, and Stacy Arnold had two hits.

Debbie Smith was the winning pitcher; she surrendered four hits and three walks, striking out eight. Chris Nikkila was the loser for Churchill. She had two of the Chargers' three hits.

Canton improved to 5-1. Churchill is 0-8 overall, 0-3 in the Western Lakes.

SALEM 4, STEVENSON 1: Livonia Stevenson pitcher Trish Kosikowski gave up just two hits to host Plymouth Salem Friday, but issued 10 walks, and that was good enough to keep the Rocks unbeaten in WLA.

Pat Pettit was the winning pitcher for Salem, which improved to 3-1. Stevenson is 0-4 overall, 0-3 in the Western Lakes.

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Miller sparks Raiders

Brian Miller went 3-for-4 with three RBIs Friday to lead host North Farmington to an 8-3 baseball victory over Walked Lake Central.

Bob Bullach went the distance to pick up his first win against two losses. Bullach allowed just two hits and struck out eight.

Rob Trusty also lasted seven innings, but gave up nine hits.

Miller got the Raiders started with a two-run double in the first inning and added an RBI double in the fifth.

Todd Geunod scored three runs and had a two-run double for North in a three-run sixth inning that finished off the Vikings.

Mike Mackie and Joe Sturtz had RBI singles for North, and Greg Orman smashed a triple and scored a run for the Raiders, 2-2 in the Lakes Division and 2-4 overall.

JOHN GLENN 21, FARMINGTON 2: Westland John Glenn sent 19 batters to the plate and scored 16 runs in the sixth, and raised its perfect record to 7-0 overall.

The Rockets are 5-0 in Lakes play. Farmington fell to 2-5 overall, 1-5 in the Lakes.

Kurt Alexander picked up the win for Glenn, striking out nine and allowing just three hits in seven innings.

Dart Gagnera, the first of three Farmington pitchers, suffered the loss.

Clint Strub hit a two-run homer and went 3-for-4 for Glenn. Pat Pettit was 3-for-4.

Geoff Childress had a two-run single for Farmington in the fourth.

CANTON 9, CHURCHILL 0: Host Plymouth Canton won the Western Division contest behind the two-hit, shutout pitching of Jeff Riegelman, who lasted six innings.

Chris Kennedy threw the last inning for Canton, now 5-3 overall, 3-1 in the Western Division.

Joel Riggs had two doubles and two RBIs for Canton. Derek Humphries drove in three runs with a double and sacrifice fly.

TRENTON 2, WAYNE 1: Trenton upset Wayne Memorial Friday, a loss that could jeopardize Wayne's standing last week as the No. 1 boys baseball team in Class A.

The setback leaves Wayne at 8-1 overall, 4-1 in the Wolverine A Conference. Jim Martin went the distance for Trenton, scattering three hits, and striking out eight. David Abner suffered the defeat for Wayne, lasting 8 2/3 innings, although surrendering just five hits. Abner is 3-1.

Wayne took a 1-0 lead in the fifth on a double by Doug Florn and an infield hit by Chris Dear. Ron Wojewski had the other Zebra hit.

The Wayne defense self-destructed, committing six errors over the last two innings. Trenton scored the winning run in the seventh inning, when the Wayne shortstop bobbled a ground ball for an error.

CVILLE 2, HARPER WOODS 0: Joe Whitford tossed a one-hitter and had two hits Friday for visiting Livonia Clarendonville, which raised its record to 3-1-3 overall, 3-1-3 in the Metro Conference.

Whitford also struck out nine batters and walked two.

Whitford's triple came in the sixth inning and drove in Steve Tyson, who had walked, with the Trojans' second run. Don Geierman also enjoyed the day at the plate for Clarendonville, going 3-for-3.

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Davidson seeks 1st 'Seventeen' net title

By Dan O'Meara staff writer

Kori Davidson travels the country playing in junior tennis tournaments, but she is looking forward to her next challenge with added anticipation.

The 14-year-old Farmington Hills star has been invited to play in her first Seventeen Tournament in Mission Viejo, Calif., beginning Tuesday and continuing through Saturday.

The prestigious event is sponsored by Seventeen Magazine and sanctioned by the United States Tennis Association, and only the USTA national tourney matches the significance of this one, according to Davidson.

That she was asked to compete, however, was not so much a surprise for the Harrison High School student as it was an honor.

DAVIDSON, DESPITE her youth, already is an accomplished player at her age level, having played the sport competitively for the last seven years.

She finished 18th nationally in the 12-14 bracket (also known as 14s or 16s, 18s, etc., depending on the player's age), and Davidson, who won't turn 15 until November, is among the top five returning players still competing in 14s.

"I wasn't surprised because I

"I am a very offensive player. When it's really close, I'll play defensively. But when I feel there's no need for that, I go for winners."

— Kori Davidson, amateur tennis star



least, has as good a chance as any of the others in her class.

HER DOUBLES partner, Amy Chimbinello of Massachusetts, will be among the girls vying for the same honor, and Davidson would welcome a match with the WPA's top-rated player in 14s, Ann Hall of Libertyville, Ill.

"I hope to play her, because it's always close when we play," she said. "There will be a lot of people who will be tough to beat."

Davidson's coach at Harrison,

Bernie Goldstein, has no doubt she should be considered one of the most formidable contestants.

"Someone will have to beat her; she won't beat herself," he said. "It'll be tough competition, but she should do well."

"She's just a tremendous competitor and has all the shots you need. And she's bigger and stronger than she was last year."

Davidson won't sit back and wait for her opponents to make the mistakes. That's not her style. The others will have to contend with her aggressiveness combined with her talent.

"I AM A VERY offensive player," she said. "When it's really close, I'll play defensively. But when I feel there's no need for that, I go for winners."

"Some people sit there and play back and forth, but I don't like that," she added.

One of Davidson's longtime high school rivals will be competing, too, but she won't cross paths with Susan Somerville of Dearborn, who defeated the Harrison star in the Class B final last fall. Somerville will compete in 16s.

Other Michigan players invited to the Seventeen tournament are Class A champion Meredith McGrath of Midland and runner-up Elizabeth Nau of Bloomfield Hills. Both will be in the 16s division, also.

tennis

Davidson left Friday for California with her mother, Nancy, who is former national player and serves as her daughter's "main coach" as well her chaperone on the many road trips.

WHILE ON THE West Coast, they might visit Palo Alto since Davidson's future plans are focused there. She would like to play professional tennis if possible, but she has other aspirations, too.

"When I'm older, I hope to be a teacher, but I want to play college tennis," she said. "It's always been my dream to go to Stanford."

In fact, Davidson, though she practices long and hard to develop her skill, has not limited her interests to tennis like many highly-successful young athletes or individuals with special ability.

She routinely practices three hours each day after school, but she lightens up on the weekends to avoid getting burned out on the sport.

"I have a social life unlike some people," she said. "I love my school and the people in it. I love doing things with friends from school."