

## Sports

Dan O'Meara editor/591-2312



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## Head of the class

## Slosar chosen best female athlete

By Dan O'Meara  
staff writer

Jennifer Slosar thought basketball was going to be her sport when she entered high school four years ago.

The Farmington Hills Mercy graduate did play four years of basketball for coach Larry Baker, but it was in volleyball that she became a great player.

Slosar contributed to Mercy's longstanding hoop tradition last fall as a 6-foot-1 center, but college coaches from across the country already were pursuing her for volleyball.

A three-sport athlete who also played golf in the spring, Slosar eventually settled on the University of Notre Dame, where she will apply her excellent academic ability as well.

For outstanding achievement in the sports arena and the classroom, Slosar has been selected the Observer's Female Athlete of the Year in Farmington.

WHILE ATTENDING Dunekel Middle School, Slosar played volleyball for North Farmington coach Sandy Lubieniecki, who encouraged her to give priority to that sport and attend North.

But Slosar anticipated a future in basketball, and Mercy had an established program with an impressive record of success.

"I told Sandy: 'I'm looking at basketball right now,'" Slosar recalled. "I went to all basketball camps; I never went to a volleyball camp."

"I went to Mercy, basically, for the basketball program and the education I knew I would get."

But when Tim DeBeliso took over



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— Jennifer Slosar  
Former Mercy athlete

as Mercy's volleyball coach in Slosar's junior year and started to turn the program around, she began to realize the potential she had.

"I didn't lose interest in basketball, but volleyball became the sport with college potential," she said. "It just seemed like my sport."

IF DeBELISO WAS the driving force, Slosar was the vehicle that made Mercy's volleyball fortunes improve dramatically. The Marlins went from 9-14 the first year under DeBeliso to 33-8 last season.

"(DeBeliso) always brought out the best in us," Slosar said. "We knew we could be better, and that's all Mercy really needed. He made us see how good we could be."

Mercy was runnerup to eventual Class A champion Livonia Ladywood in the Catholic League and was a regional finalist.

Slosar, who recently participated in the first high school all-star game, earned all-state honors while recording 123 kills and a .415 hitting percentage. Her natural position was middle striker, but her versatility was what impressed college coaches.

An early-season injury, however, nearly prevented Slosar from enjoying the fine senior season that she did.

In December, she dislocated the ring finger on her right hand, and it was feared she might miss the rest of the season. But she returned in time for the second half of the league schedule in January.

"I JUST WRAPPED (the hand) up so I couldn't feel the ball when I hit it," she said.

"It was really upset that I wouldn't be playing. I was so looking forward to my senior season, because Tim

had done such a good job.

"For any athlete, it's tough sitting out and watching your teammates, and I wanted to get back to playing," she added.

The injury didn't jeopardize her chances of receiving a scholarship since the college scouts knew what talent she had after seeing her play the previous summer.

"I took all of my recruiting trips during that time, so I made the most of it," Slosar said.

She reports to Notre Dame for the start of preseason practice Thursday, and the team leaves for a tour of China on Friday, Aug. 12. She returns from that trip the day before classes start on Monday, Aug. 29.

SLOSAR, WHO carried a 3.9 grade-point average at Mercy and will continue a family tradition in engineering, will tackle a challenging academic load while playing volleyball, a fall sport in college.

"I just got a letter (from the university), saying I have to take chemistry and physics in my freshman year," she said. "Plus, I'm taking a higher level of calculus in addition to the regular courses."

"It's going to be hard my freshman year, but I'm going to be ready. I'm prepared."

Slosar, whose family moved to Birmingham when she was a sophomore and lives down the street from arch-rival Marian, started on the basketball team as a junior but assumed a greater role as a senior.

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THOMAS ARNETT/staff photographer

Jennifer Slosar played basketball, volleyball and golf in her four years at Mercy High School. In her final honor as a prep student, she has been chosen the Observer's Female Athlete of the Year.

## South stages amazing rally

Mark MacDonald was not lost for words in attempting to explain his team's incredible comeback victory, but it was enough to leave one speechless.

"It was the weirdest and most spectacular thing I've seen in baseball," he said after South Farmington Connie Mack did an about-face Friday and stayed alive in the ABC tournament in Ann Arbor.

With one loss already on its record, South was losing 9-1 to Mount Clemens, but the Farmington ballclub came back to win 17-9, invoking the mercy rule after six innings.

The triumph left only South and Taylor Post 200 as the remaining teams in the tournament. South faced an uphill battle Saturday, needing two wins over Taylor, which had beaten Farmington 9-1 Thursday night, to take the championship.

MacDonald said he spotted the Taylor coaches leaving the field at Ann Arbor Huron High School after Mount Clemens had taken an eight-run lead Friday.

"THEY'RE GOING to get the shock of their life when they see South Farmington getting out of their cars to play them," he said.

South scored 13 runs in the bottom of the third inning, a wild affair in which the winners sent 17 batters to the plate. Farmington did its amazing reversal with eight hits, six walks and one Mount Clemens error.

"Being on the verge of being mercied and coming back to mercy the other team was my biggest

## baseball

coaching thrill," MacDonald said. "The kids hung in; they stayed up."

Rob MacDonald had a two-run double and an RBI single in that inning, and Joe Whitefoot contributed a two-run single and a bases-loaded walk.

Joe Jentzer, Jeff Skinner, who was 5-for-5 in the game, and Mike Dorocak chipped in RBI singles, and Mike Harding and Jason Lichtman had RBI walks.

"It was sorta ugly; it was an ugly game," MacDonald said. "The umpires were pulling their hair out."

"BUT WE ENDED up on top, and I enjoyed every bit of it."

Rob MacDonald, who stood at 8-for-15 in the tournament, was 4-for-5 with three RBI, Dorocak 2-for-4 with four RBI and Lichtman 2-for-3 with one RBI. Whitefoot knocked in three runs and Jentzer two.

Craig Murray was the winning pitcher in relief. He blanked Mount Clemens over the last 2½ innings while holding the opponent to one hit.

"It was great for his confidence and great for the team, because he was all we had left, really," said South coach Dave Turnquist, noting the team had used most of its pitching in the previous 3½ games.

Jason Hicks started and went 3½ innings, being charged for six runs. Whitefoot pitched the next

inning, allowing three runs, before Murray entered with South facing a 9-1 deficit.

Farmington opened the tournament Thursday with a 6-5, comeback win over Wendy's of Ann Arbor.

WITH THE SCORE tied 5-5 in the sixth inning, Lichtman walked with two out, stole second and scored on Jentzer's infield hit, beating the throw to the plate after the second baseman started to go to first base but changed his mind.

Leo Devine's two-run homer tied the game in the fifth. Whitefoot led off with an infield single, and Devine, the next batter, put one over the left-field fence.

Jentzer, Devine, who had three RBI, and MacDonald had two hits apiece.

After Wendy's took a 5-2 lead against Jentzer and Murray in the first two innings, Whitefoot pitched one-hit ball over the next 3½ to get the win. He retired 12 of the last 13 batters he faced.

Whitefoot's solo homer gave South a 1-0 against Taylor Thursday night, but the American Legion team pounded five home runs to take command. Dorocak, who gave up seven earned runs in four-plus innings, was the loser.

Farmington rebounded on Friday by taking a 7-4 win from Jackson FOP. Jentzer pitched a complete game, allowing six hits and six walks but holding on until the end.

Jentzer helped his cause with two hits and two RBI, and MacDonald keyed a four-run second that gave South a 5-0 lead with a two-run double. Dorocak and Devine added RBI singles.

## Proben glad to be touring pro again

By Brad Emone  
staff writer

With no job and no place to go, Bob Proben's only alternative was to try to get back on the Professional Golfers Tour.

But all golfers know that cracking the PGA Tour is no easy task. It's like swimming the English Channel or scaling the Himalaya Mountains. It's not impossible, but often improbable.

Encouraged by his faith in God, the Thurston High product regained his card and is back on the tour after finishing 12th at the PGA's Tour School last winter in Florida.

There are no guarantees he'll remain there. Proben missed his first nine cuts in 1990, 16 all together including last weekend's Buick Open at Warwick Hills in Grand Blanc.

But the lack of success hasn't soured his desire or optimism.

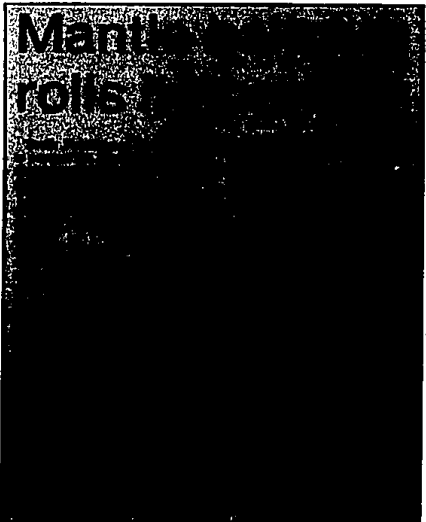
## golf

"I've been enjoying myself, getting a little better, making some cuts and having a good time," said Proben, who has won \$35,000 on the tour so far this year.

Despite the disappointment of Friday's round of 73 after shooting a 1-under 71 on Thursday (he missed the cut by two), the Redford native was glad to be in familiar territory.

AMONG THE GALLERY Thursday was his mother and his younger brother. His girlfriend, whom he met at his church in Redford, N.Y., where he now makes his home, was

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Redford native Bob Proben blasts out of a fairway bunker, his third shot on the 590-yard, par-5 16th hole during Thursday's

opening round of the Buick Open at Warwick Hills Country Club in Grand Blanc. Proben shot a 1-under 71.