



Hawk football, North hoop top stories

By Dan O'Meara
staff writer

Before a new sports year is ushered in next week, a look back at the past year seems appropriate during these final days of 1988.

Many stories were written about a wide range of sports in the previous 12 months, but no story was bigger than Farmington Harrison's successful football season.

The Hawks began the season as the No. 1-rated team in Class B, and the season ended that way, too, as Harrison whipped St. Joseph 44-0 to win the state championship in the Pontiac Silverdome.

Coach John Herrington guided the Hawks to their fifth undefeated regular season in his 19 years at the helm, another Western Lakes Activities Association championship, a fifth appearance in the state finals, a third Michigan High School Athletic Association crown since 1981 and a 13-0 record.

Harrison also boasted a pair of all-stars: junior quarterback Mill Coleman and senior end Bryan Wuldro, both of whom combined to rewrite the school and state-final passing records.

A story on a par with that of the Harrison football team was the one involving the North Farmington basketball team: the death of North player Matthew Leiter last January and the Raiders' subsequent late-

year in review

season surge to capture the WLA A title.

Following a loss to Westland John Glenn in late January, Leiter, a junior forward, collapsed in the locker room and died of cardiac arrest. He had scored his first varsity points that night.

His teammates voted to play their game at Farmington that Friday night. The players wore black bands on their uniforms for the duration of the season.

North claimed a come-from-behind, 53-52, victory over the Falcons, winning the game on center Jim Ratajski's basket with one second remaining. Coach Tom Negoshian called it the most emotional game in his 20 years of coaching.

Sophomore guard Matt Hoffman scored 22 points, which included six triples, and passed to Ratajski for an assist on the game-winning basket.

The following is a synopsis of the year's major sports news as well as further details on the top stories:

JANUARY

• North won its second straight vol-

leyball tournament at Bloomfield Hills Andover and did so without its top hitter: Suz Butcher and Stephanie Knapp, both of whom were injured.

• After winning one of its first seven games, Farmington's boys basketball team got a shot in the arm by beating undefeated Plymouth Canton 63-60.

FEBRUARY

• Farmington Mercy knocked off the state's No. 1-ranked volleyball team, Livonia Ladywood, in Catholic League play with straight 15-13 victories. The Marlins were led by all-stater Jennifer Slosar and Meg Pinkerton.

• Mercy also won the University of Michigan-Dearborn tournament. Slosar and setter Kandi Boyle were named to the all-tournament team.

• Farmington won its last three basketball games of the regular season, including a 69-63 victory over North. But the Falcons were shut out of the WLA A playoffs when the Raiders toppled un-seaten Walled Lake Central the next night.

• North's surprising 67-53 victory over the Lakes Division champs started the Raiders on the path to the WLA A title. North knocked off Western Division winner Plymouth Canton 66-45 in overtime, John Glenn 47-45 and Plymouth Salem 58-46. Senior forward John Shelton

paced North with 15 points, including 9-of-11 free throw shooting, in the championship game.

• February also is the month when high school football players can sign letters of intent. Harrison's center-linebacker Chris Cox went to Eastern Michigan University, and North's receiver-defensive back Todd Grund opted for Grand Valley State College.

• North junior Zalm Cunniff was a regional wrestling champion at 198 pounds. He defeated Ohio's Ian Hearn in the final, pushing his record to 39-4 with 33 pins. He later finished fifth in Class A.

• Oakland Community College beat Highland Park in the MCCA semifinals but lost to Lansing Community College, the No. 1 team in NJCAA Division II, in the final. It is the second straight year the Raiders had beaten HPOC only to lose in the championship game. OOC was unsuccessful later in its bid to repeat as NJCAA champ.

MARCH

• Chris Lemanski of Farmington played a key role in Redford Catholic Central's march to the Class A title in the first team wrestling tournament. The 167-pounder pinned Jason Guthrie to clinch CC's 49-10 victory over Hazel Park in the final.

• North won the WLA A gymnastics title in close competition with Canton, 132.9 to 131.25. Farmington's Jackie Daly was the individual all-around victor on vault and balance beam.

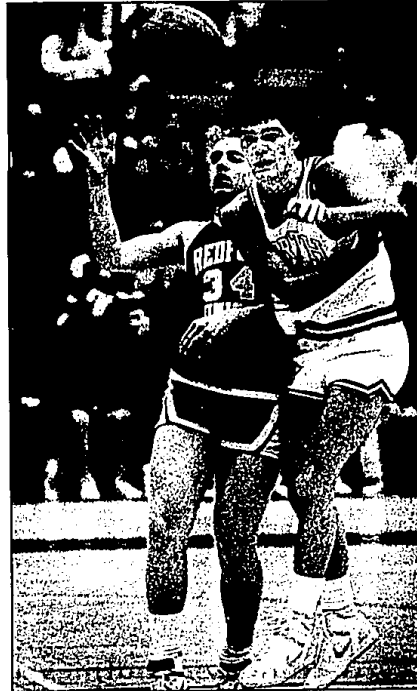
• Mercy won a district volleyball title and advanced to the regional final before Temperance Bedford eliminated the Marlins, who finished with a 33-8 record after going 9-14 the previous year. North also had a successful year, winning 30-plus games for the first time.

• Mercy athletes were in the news as future college players. Basketball guard Adrienne Clark, who averaged 13 points and 6½ rebounds, signed with Drake University, and the 6-foot-1 Slosar, a basketball teammate of Clark, accepted a volleyball scholarship to Notre Dame. She had 123 kills and a .418 hitting percentage as a senior.

• Junior forward Chad Burgess scored a school-record 44 points as Harrison routed Livonia Clarenceville in Class B district action.

• Oakland University swimmers were second in the NCAA Division II championships. OU's Mark VanderMey was named swimmer of the year, and Jim

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RANDY BORST/staff photographer

Jim Ratajski, a senior center, pictured here in a game against Redford Union, scored the winning basket for North Farmington in an emotional victory over Farmington last January.



RANDY BORST/staff photographer

Joe Hannawa, a senior defensive tackle, drops St. Joseph running back Gary Layton for a loss in the Silverdome. Harrison was 13-0 and state champion in Class B.

CC overcomes Tolbert, Eagles for initial victory

By Brad Emmons
staff writer

A rat, lat, lat, lat, lat... Those were the sounds echoing throughout the Southgate Aquinas gym Tuesday as Redford Catholic Central got a shot in the arm, out-gunning Tony Tolbert and Detroit DePorres for its first basketball victory of the season, 70-65.

The Shamrocks overcame a 47-point performance, including five dunks, by the 6-foot-3 Tolbert, to gain a first-round win over the previously unbeaten Eagles in the Aquinas Holiday Tourney.

CC, now 1-3, will play for the title at 8 p.m. Friday against the host school.

Tolbert's machine-gun style shooting was offset by CC's balanced attack, led by 6-3 senior guard Jeff Schaner, who brandished some heavy ammunition of his own, pouring in a team-high 28 points, including a pair of three-pointers.

Making the most of his first starting assignment, the left-handed sharpshooter drilled eight straight free throws in the final quarter to help preserve the hard-fought win.

"JEFF'S FREE THROW shooting was clutch," said CC coach Bernie Holowicki. "We started him because he has worked so hard. He earned it and deserved it."

Senior center Ray Richards added 15 points, while Scott Haucher (eight), Jon Barbara (seven) and the bench, Terry Boykin (six) and

basketball

Steve Whitlow (six) divided up the remaining share.

"We needed this one badly," said Holowicki. "We knew DePorres had a great team, but we also knew that CC has a tradition of rising up another level when they're going up against any person of notoriety. We've done it in the past against people like Magic (Johnson) and (Antoine) Joubert."

It would be stretching it to say Tolbert belongs in the same class as Magic, but it's safe to say he is more than an equal to Joubert, who starred a few years back at Detroit Southwestern and later went on to become a four-year starter at Michigan.

And it's apparent that Bill Frieder (U-M's coach) is no dummy when it comes to recruiting. Tolbert will be wearing the maize and blue in college.

"Tolbert is tough and he was sure unbelievable tonight," said the CC coach. "We'd put one kid on him and he'd wear out another. Everything converged on him. He'd sure fit into our plans (laugh). I just hope we don't play him again."

WITH HOLOWICKI yelling "patience, patience" from the bench, CC methodically built an 11-0 lead at the game's outset.

And the Shamrocks were able

carry that initial advantage throughout the night.

CC led 32-20 at the half with Barbara scoring a layup as the buzzer sounded after the 6-3 Richards blocked two shots in a row, one against Tolbert.

But Tolbert, who had only four first-quarter points and 14 at half, started to heat things up in the third quarter, scoring 17 points, including three, three-pointers and a dunk.

The Shamrocks carried a 10-point lead into the final period and led by as many as 14 early in the quarter after Schaner made a pair of free throws resulting from a technical called on Tolbert, who was caught elbowing.

But CC couldn't stand prosperly as DePorres made a late run.

DePorres' pressing defense forced CC into some late miscues as the Eagles trimmed the deficit to 64-61 with 55 seconds remaining on a basket by Tolbert.

DePorres stole the inbound pass and scored, but the basket, a tip-in by Tolbert, was waved off because of a foul. (Schaner responded with two free throws.)

THE FOUL HAPPENED to be Tolbert's fifth, but that didn't stop the Eagles, who continued to press the issue, particularly after Terrell Thornton's basket with 28 seconds to play cut the deficit to one, 66-65.

With only 15 seconds to play, Schaner came out a pair of free throws, but the game wasn't decid-

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