

Sports

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Monday, March 8, 1989 O&E



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Raiders reign N. Farmington repeats in WLAA

By Dan O'Meara
staff writer

A long-standing tradition was extended and another may have been started Thursday at the Western Lakes Activities Association gymnastics meet.

North Farmington continued its dominance in the sport by winning its 13th consecutive league championship, including the last five in the WLAA.

On an individual level, Westland John Glenn sophomore Wendy Minch won every event and captured the all-around title. With two years of high school competition still ahead, she has the potential to dominate the WLAA for some time.

North had all but wrapped up the championship by the time it completed the four events, making the eighth and final rotation of teams a mere formality.

Up to that point, it was a close meet between the Raiders, Glenn and Northville, and North needed a strong showing in its last event, the bars, to secure a safe lead.

THE RAIDERS, with their second-best score of the season at 137.45, finished ahead of Minch and the Rockets (134.55) and host Northville (132.95). Plymouth Canton was fourth with Plymouth Salem, Farmington, Farmington Hills Harrison and Wallied Lake Western following in that order.

"We haven't had a lot of meets like this, but it makes it a lot more fun," North coach Jeff Dwyer said.

gymnastics

"Any of three teams could have won it. Fortunately, we came out on top." Because the competition was so keen and the meet close, North's latest championship was especially meaningful to Dwyer, who has now coached the Raiders to three straight titles.

"I was a nervous wreck," he said. "This is what competition is all about. Even though you feel pressure, it's a lot of fun, I think."

Going into the seventh team rotation and the last one for North, the Raiders had accumulated 103.55 points, Glenn 101.75 and the Mustangs 100.60.

North scored 33.90 on the uneven bars to strengthen its lead, but the Raiders needed some solid performances from Heather Kahn, Kim Heller and Kristin Szutarski after a slow start in that event.

KAHN AND HELLER had their season-best scores on bars with 9.25 and 8.95, respectively, and Szutarski was around her average with an 8.60. Kahn was runner-up to Minch, Heller placed fourth and Szutarski was eighth.

"The first two (gymnasts) were below their average, and that put a lot of pressure on the last three," Dwyer said. "We needed those scores. When you can hit under that pressure,

that's a credit to those three."

The strong finish on bars meant Glenn had to score 35.70 on the bars, its last event, to catch the Raiders. That would have meant getting the highest single-event score by any team.

"I think that would have been very tough," Glenn coach Pam Yockey said. "We had a bad floor set (of scores), and we had too many falls on beam. Had the girls stuck their beam routines, we would have been more solid going into the last event."

"In the first two events (33.60 on beam and 33.40 on floor exercise), we were took shaky but still hit the average we've been scoring all year."

North had the best team scores on vault (35.55) and floor (34.60), was second to Northville (35.05) on bars and third behind Canton (33.00) and Glenn on beam. Rita Dunn, Jamoshah Gater and Ellen Wesselman were important to North's team scoring, too.

"WHEN YOU have to count four scores, it doesn't matter if you have one or two superstars," Dwyer said. "It's the third and fourth scores that make or break it for the team. It was all four (in each event), and the girls deserve this meet."

Minch gave a spectacular performance, scoring 9.60 on vault, 9.15 on floor, 9.45 on bars and 9.55 on beam for an all-around total of 37.75. Heller and Kahn tied for second at 35.80.

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RANDY BORST/staff photographer
Jenny Rick of Harrison scored 7.85 on beam and was 21st in the all-around.

Lakers halt Farmington

By Keith Postler
staff writer

West Bloomfield's 12-year dry spell ended in grand fashion Saturday as the Lakers rolled over Farmington 69-55 to capture their first district title since 1977.

The Lakers, who raced to a double-digit lead early in the contest, kept Farmington off balance with a stifling half-court, man-to-man defense, which prevented the Falcons from mounting any serious scoring threats.

Falcons coach Bob Kaump believed the biggest factor in the game was the team's inability to convert easy baskets or hit the open man.

"It wasn't turnovers or their speed that beat us," he said. "We just didn't hit our shots when we had them."

West Bloomfield took a commanding 35-20 lead into the locker room at halftime, fueled by 12 points from sophomore forward Josh Kobay and 13 points from senior guard Chuck Selinger.

TOGETHER, KOBAY and Selinger scored 46 of

basketball

the Lakers' 69 points with Kobay knocking down 25 points and Selinger adding 21. Kobay also had 12 assists and 10 rebounds. Selinger was particularly devastating from outside as he hit five 3-point baskets.

"I think if you look at his stats, Chuck may be leading the county in 3-point baskets," West Bloomfield Tim Domke said. "I wasn't surprised by it, because he's been doing it all year."

If Domke wasn't surprised, the Falcons certainly were. Farmington's defense was set up to clog the middle and keep Kobay from penetrating, not to stop Selinger and the Lakers' perimeter game. Every time Kobay penetrated and found too much traffic under the hoop, he sent the ball back outside — mostly to Selinger.

Kobay scored West Bloomfield's first five points on a field goal and 3-point basket, then disabed off

to Selinger and the Lakers led 9-5 midway through the first quarter. West Bloomfield led 17-8 at the end of the quarter.

SELINGER HIT three triples in the second quarter, including two on back-to-back possessions. His third 3-point bucket came off a steal by Kobay and an assist from senior guard Brian Lord, which gave the Lakers a 31-11 lead with 3:30 left before halftime.

Farmington made a strong run in the second half, scoring 35 points while holding the Lakers to 25. Senior center Mike Myers led the Falcons with 14 points while junior guard Chris Schmid scored 12. Brian Browne and Dennis Raimi each scored nine points, also.

"I'm proud of my kids," Kaump said. "They played hard and they didn't give up. They made a nice run in the second half."

Domke, whose team plays Birmingham Brother Rice at 8 p.m. Wednesday at Ferndale High School in the regionals, called it an honor to play the Warriors, but he said the Lakers won't be anything differently against Brother Rice than they did in the districts.

Borgess wins 'B' showdown

By Dan O'Meara
staff writer

Dwayne Hayes didn't expect to score 18 points Saturday night, and neither did the Farmington Hills Harrison basketball team.

Hayes usually fills a non-scoring role for Bishop Borgess, but he exploded for a season-high total as the Spartans defeated Harrison in the final of their own Class B district tournament, 70-51.

Borgess, 14-9, advances to the regional at Warren Woods-Tower to play Mount Clemens Clintondale at 7:30 p.m. Wednesday. The championship is scheduled for 7:30 p.m. Friday.

"I was looking to play good 'D' and help out where I could," said Hayes, a 5-foot-9 point guard. "Tonight, they were giving it to me, so I was taking it."

"I've had a bad year so far. I guess they assumed I wouldn't hit those shots, but somehow I came through."

HAYES WAS right. Harrison coach Mike Teachman had scouted the Spartans five times and knew Hayes, averaging only two points, wasn't one of Borgess' regular scoring threats.

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Salem retains championship at league meet

By C.J. Risak
staff writer

After 27 heats in 10 swimming events, after 18 divers, the outcome of Friday's Western Lakes Activities Association boys meet came down to the last man in the last heat of the last relay.

Which gave meet host Plymouth Salem a distinct advantage. Because the Rocks' last man was Ron Orris.

Through 10 previous events, Salem and Plymouth Canton had engaged in a dual-meet like war, with first one team, then the other surging into the lead. With only the 400-yard freestyle relay remaining, Canton had the edge: 416 points to Salem's 414. North Farmington was a distant third with 295.

The Chiefs, dual-meet winners in the Western Division, were seeded fifth entering the finals with a preliminary time of 3:24.33. Salem was No. 1; the Rocks had gone 3:23.09 in Wednesday's prelims.

THE ROCKS were never better than fifth during the first three legs of the relay, swum by Chris Calola, Rick Stetsch and Eric Bunch. They kept their team close, however.

swimming

Jeff Schwinn, Jim Harinett and Steve Geddes — Canton's first three relay swimmers — were as high as third. They were close to that position when anchorman Mike Helmsdaler hit the water.

Orris caught Helmsdaler in the first 25 yards. He caught everyone else after 50. By then, there was little doubt who would win the relay, and the meet.

Orris touched in 3:20.71. North was second in 3:21.58, with Northville third in 3:22.39 and Canton fourth in 3:23.45.

Salem claimed its second-straight WLAA title with 463 points. Canton was second with 454, followed by North (337), Northville (312), Livonia Stevenson (230) and Westland John Glenn (207).

ASKED WHETHER he was worried with his team trailing by two points with one event left, Salem

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Scott Hawkins of Farmington won the 50-yard freestyle Friday in the WLAA swimming meet at Plymouth Salem. Hawkins swam 22.41 to defeat runner-up Chuck Chuba of North Farm-

ington. The Raiders were third in the team standings, Farmington seventh and Harrison eighth.