

Sports

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RANDY BORST/staff photographer

Unbeaten season

Adanne Amanze passes the baton to Farmington Hills Mercy teammate Gail Murie at the first exchange in the 800-meter relay Monday. The Marlins won that event with Yvonne Bostic and Kim Cook rounding out

the foursome. Mercy routed Livonia Ladywood 104-24 to complete an undefeated season in Central Division dual meets. See story on Page 2D.

Playoff game turns into Mercy debacle

By Steve Kowalski
staff writer

Amy Edward, Farmington Hills Mercy's senior pitching sensation, proved Wednesday what we suspected all along: She's human.

Edward, who has tossed several no-hitters this year, got pasted by visiting Livonia Ladywood, 11-1, in a game that decided second place and a berth in Friday's Catholic League playoffs.

The two teams ended the regular season tied for second at 13-7 so they met Wednesday to determine the second representative from the Catholic League Central Division. On this day, there was no doubt who was the better team.

Ladywood, 18-12 overall, will play Dearborn Divine Child in a first-round playoff game Friday at 5:30 p.m. at King Boring Field in Dearborn.

LADYWOOD COLLECTED eight hits off Edward, including three consecutive triples in the top of the seventh inning when the Blazers scored seven runs to put the game out of reach.

The triples belonged to Dana Domanski, Kim Sopron and Jo Marie Skurtovich. A dropped fly ball by Mercy center fielder Kathleen Berrigan also keyed the rally.

Edward also uncharacteristically hit three batters and walked three others in the seventh before coach Suzanne Brown replaced her with two outs.

Ladywood led 4-1 heading into the seventh, scoring three runs in the fourth highlighted by Jenny Kennedy's two-run single.

"I don't think it was her (Edward's) fault," Brown said. "Amy

soccer

'I don't think it was (Amy Edward's) fault. Amy works hard and sometimes she doesn't have the defense behind her. We put our quickest kid in center field, and she's inexperienced and sometimes that's a little scary.'

— Suzanne Brown
Mercy softball coach

works hard and sometimes she doesn't have the defense behind her. We put our quickest kid in center field (Berrigan) and she's inexperienced and sometimes that's a little scary. Maybe we were a little sluggish or tight. It just wasn't meant to be."

Ladywood coach Kim Linenger felt good about her team's hitting after the win — which put the Blazers into the league playoffs for the first time in, well, even she doesn't know how long.

"I DON'T even remember them making it," said Linenger, the second-year coach. "We haven't hit well all season. If we're going to peak,

this is the time to do it. Our defense has pulled us through all season and they kept believing our offense would come. Finally our offense caught up with our defense."

The pitching, meanwhile, was in the capable hands of Shannon White. The senior right-hander allowed only one hit — a fifth-inning leadoff single to Jenny Gondek, who eventually scored Mercy's only run on a throwing error by Kennedy, the third sacker.

White set the slide down in order in the first three innings and struck out four throughout. White, who issued five free bases on balls, walked the bases loaded in the fourth but got Mercy's Maureen Paulin to line out and Kim Reichard to ground out to end the threat without a run.

"She's pitched it all — every pitch, every inning this year," Linenger said. "They (Mercy) like to punt a lot. They're definitely a bunt-and-run team. Edward hits the ball well for them but today she couldn't."

THERE'S A chance the two teams will meet again in district play at Redford Union. Ladywood swept a doubleheader from Mercy earlier this year, but the Marlins returned the favor the second time the two teams played.

"We're evenly matched," Brown said. "It's hard to say what's going to happen. It depends on a given day. I have my bunters and runners and I have my hitters. When they don't come through, we don't score any runs."

Said Linenger: "We've played them four other times and all have been decided by one, two or three runs. We'll probably meet them again in the districts, and it will probably go back to the 2-1, 3-1 ball games."

Figuring out WLAA downright confusing

I ADMIT IT, I'm confused. Which comes as no surprise, at least not to anyone who's ever met me.

But it might be surprising (at least I hope it is) to discover that I am confused about something in sports. This is a subject I am, or should be, well-versed in. After all, I get paid for presenting different sides of sports; it is taken for granted I should know what I am writing about (please, no snickers).

But I am not too proud to admit when I am baffled. And I am.

By the Western Lakes Activities Association. Furthermore, I am not alone. WLAA coaches — the very people who draw up league bylaws for their particular sport — are confused, too.

Can you fully comprehend the delicate intricacies of a hostile takeover in the corporate world? Then chances are you would be better equipped to decipher the machinations of this league (after absorbing part of the Northwest Suburban League a few years ago, WLAA officials should know how to define hostile takeover).

Ever-changing rules make confusion constant. The WLAA's multi-championship rules are prime evidence.

SPRING is a season of confusion. Who can say if, on any given day, it's going to rain, or snow, or be hot and sunny?



C.J. Risak

Spring is also the end of the school year, so it's no shock to discover that the WLAA has saved its best — translated, that means most confusing — for last.

In every sport sponsored by the 12-team conference, there is some type of season-ending championship. Some sports have tournaments, like basketball; others, like football and soccer, hold one-game championships. And still others, like swimming, are decided in a league meet.

This is true for all sports, except two. If you guessed both are in the spring, you win a chance for a WLAA all-events pass (to win your pass, you must correctly guess the number of schedule changes made in the league during the last decade).

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Controversial call gives Farmington 3-2 victory

By Dan O'Meara
staff writer

Eighty minutes of soccer produced a winner in the Farmington-Plymouth Canton game but spawned another debate in the process.

Emotions were still running high at the end of Monday's game after the host Falcons achieved a 3-2 victory on a controversial penalty kick.

Julie Dugan's goal with time running down broke a 2-2 tie and allowed No. 3-rated Farmington to remain unbeaten. The Falcons are 6-0-3 in the Western Lakes Activities Association and 11-0-3 overall.

The Chiefs, ranked No. 2 at the start of the week, suffered only their second loss against eight victories and slipped to 7-2 in the league. Despite the defeat, Canton had already won the Western Division championship and will meet Plymouth Salem for the WLAA title at 7 p.m. Friday. "Maybe we needed something like



that to get us ready for the rest of the campaign," said Canton coach Don Smith, trying to find a silver lining in the outcome. "The girls were upset, but I think they know they can still do the job."

REFEREE IVAN Neubauer was the object of the Canton spectator's ire after his call for pushing gave the Falcons, who blew a 2-0 halftime lead, the opportunity to break the deadlock.

Neubauer, according to Canton coach Don Smith, ruled Canton defender Chris Zawacki had pushed Farmington's Eileen Mombianco in front of the Canton goal. "There was pushing in the penalty area, which requires a penalty kick,"

Neubauer said. "I'm the kind of official who does award penalty kicks. I'm not afraid to make a call."

Smith agreed there was contact between the players, but he said the ball was passed when it occurred, adding the contact was incidental. Smith said Zawacki was going for the ball, too, when Mombianco crossed it.

"The ball already was in front of the goal when she ran into her," he said. "She did run into her but didn't knock her down."

"You very seldom see it. You almost have to tackle someone down there in the box to get a penalty these days. It seemed strange to get one so easily."

"That's the kinda call (Neubauer) had been making all day," Smith added. "What I really dislike is it takes the flow out of the game. And then if somebody gets decked there's

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