

## Sports

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## WLAA puts Farmington title on hold

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By Dan O'Meara  
staff writer

The Western Lakes Activities Association has delayed official recognition of a league champion in girls track and field pending the outcome of an athletic directors meeting today.

The action stems from the decision Wednesday night to suspend the league meet with two events remaining due to inclement weather. Plymouth-Canton was host for the meet.

At the conclusion of the 200-meter dash, the meet was stopped, but a vote by the 12 coaches on whether to finish it Thursday or suspend it with Farmington being the winner resulted in a 6-6 tie. The uncontested events were the 3,200-meter run and 1,600 relay.

Referee Ed Gabrys broke the stalemate when he ruled the meet would be suspended with Farmington, which had a 108-108 lead over Livonia Stevenson at that point, being declared the winner.

After he was contacted by Roger Frayer, athletic director at Stevenson, Plymouth-Canton Athletic Director Paul Cummings called the league meeting for 8 a.m. today in Farmington Hills.

Cummings, who was reportedly out of town and unavailable for comment late Thursday and Friday, also refused to release meet results until the athletic directors reviewed the matter.

THE WLAA asked the Michigan High School Athletic Association for permission to finish the meet this week but was refused. MHSAA rules state all competition must cease following the state finals, which took place Saturday.

While the boys meet was suspended Tues-



day for the same reason and concluded prior to the girls meet Wednesday, the coaches elected not to do the same for the girls because of the proximity to the state meet and the Farmington schools had scheduled their proms for Thursday night.

"As far as I'm concerned, we won," said Farmington coach Bruce Brown, who added he was in favor of a co-championship at the time of the vote. "Everyone shook my hand and said congratulations."

"If the ADs felt strongly they were not going to have a champion (based on the Wednesday decision), they should have been there to act as meet officials and should explain that to my kids."

According to Brown, the coaches agreed, prior to updating the team scores to include results of the 200 dash, to compile the score to that point and let the results stand.

Brown added Stevenson coach Paul Holmberg was "very gracious" about the situation and added he sympathized with his coaching counterpart. Stevenson won the Lakes Division dual-meet title by beating Farmington a week earlier, and both teams had been headed for a season-long showdown in the WLAA meet.

"We both knew we were taking a risk, but we agreed to end it there," Brown said. "We made a decision to count up the points and let the chips fall where they may."

FRAYER'S CONCERN, besides the fact a league champion was apparently named without conducting a complete meet, is that league policy is being determined by the coaches and meet referee when only the principals are empowered to do that, according to the WLAA bylaws.

The referee has the power to make the decision he did as long as it doesn't supersede a league or MHSAA rule, according to Frayer. The problem is the WLAA has no contingency plan in its bylaws that might resolve such a matter.

"There is no provision for inclement weather," Frayer said. "Thus, the referee is making policy for the Western Lakes." Frayer said he would encourage the athletic directors to have the league meets a week earlier and allow for the implementation of a contingency plan in the future.

As to whether Stevenson might seek a reversal of the decision to make Farmington the champion, Frayer said he wanted to address that matter with his fellow ADs first.

"It's a tainted championship one way or the other," he said. "We'd rather see the champion in any sport decided on the playing field."

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## Falcons step closer

By Tim Smith  
staff writer

Missed scoring chances cost Birmingham Marian's girls soccer team in Saturday's Class A state regional championship game against Farmington at Southfield High. Unbeaten Farmington, the state's No. 1 ranked team, won 1-0.

Farmington (16-0-4) now advances to play Troy Athens in the state semifinals at 6 p.m. Wednesday at Fraser High School. The Falcons gained that berth thanks to a goal by junior forward Amy Trunk six minutes into the second half. It was the first regional championship for the team, according to coach Cathy Cole. Athens qualified for the semifinals with a 3-1 regional championship victory over Ulica Ford. Freshman Lisa Grace led the Red Hawks with a sterling three-goal performance.

Meanwhile, the lone goal in the Farmington-Marian match was scored when Trunk converted Margaret Martin's long lead pass from midfield, slipping it past Mustangs goalkeeper Cheryl Feldman, who was caught out of position.

According to coach Morris Lupenec, the Mustangs (13-4-1) were their own worst enemies. Twice in the second half, Marian kicked the ball over the top of a nearly-empty goal, once on a breakaway.

"WE'RE NOT keeping it on the ground," said Lupenec about the misses. "And that's basic soccer."

Lupenec said his team outplayed the Falcons. But he added that Farmington deserved credit for cashing in when they had the chance.

As chances go, however, it wasn't that obvious of an opportunity.

Martin's long pass found speedy teammate Trunk on

the right side and the latter found the mark from long range. Trunk booted it past the Marian goalkeeper, who had come far from her usual station in an unsuccessful attempt to retrieve the ball.

Cole, who said the teams were evenly-matched, gave her squad a halftime pep talk following a scoreless, uneventful first half.

"We weren't winning possession of the ball or hitting our passes to have an offensive attack," Cole said. At halftime, she told the Falcons they could control their own fate with more intensity.

THE WINNING coach praised freshmen defenders Sue Gibson and Kim Popyle, goalkeeper Debrah Westerkamp and Martin.

"She (Martin) played a physical game and won possession of a lot of balls, which created the few offensive opportunities we had," Cole said.

Good fortune also was in Farmington's corner.

Minutes after Farmington scored its goal, sophomore Marian forward Jennifer Holowka sprinted in all alone on a retreating Westerkamp — only to boot the ball several feet above the top crossbar.

Although the Falcons did a stellar job of controlling the ball for much of the rest of the contest, Marian just missed two other times.

First, Jennifer Riker's direct free kick sailed past the far post. Bonnie Doyle — who hit the crossbar with a shot in the first half — later lifted the ball over the goal from close range.

On one occasion when the Mustangs did keep the ball down, with two minutes to play, it was blocked splendidly by a diving Westerkamp.

"DEB'S A GOOD keeper who's always game ready," Cole said. "She did keep us in the game on that one save."



JERRY ZOLYNSKY/staff photographer

Farmington players gather to celebrate Saturday after Farmington's Amy Trunk scored the only goal in the championship game of the regional soccer tournament at Southfield. The No. 1-rated Falcons play in the semifinals at 6 p.m. Wednesday.

## Cranbrook forces stalemate with Harrison

By Ken George  
staff writer

One pitch away!

Twice in the top of the seventh inning, Farmington Hills Harrison (15-5) was one strike from beating Bloomfield Hills Cranbrook (23-1) and advancing to the Class B district baseball final at Madison Heights.

With two outs in the inning, Hawks pitcher Craig Murray let fly a wild pitch that allowed Duane Pankopf to score from third to tie the game. After Murray struck out Mike Mandt to end the inning, the game was suspended because of rain. It will be resumed today at 3:30 p.m.

Rain fell steadily from the fifth inning on, and several players had trouble handling the wet ball. Harrison coach John Herrington thought the game should have been called earlier.

"I thought it should have been stopped when the lightning started," Herrington said. "That was in about the sixth inning."

For 5 1/2 innings, the game was a classic pitchers' duel between Murray and Mandt. Murray struck out nine and allowed just two hits, while Mandt was equally impressive with six strikeouts and four hits allowed.

HAWKS SECOND baseman Dave Najarian drove in what seemed to be the winning

run in the bottom of the sixth. With Millard Coleman on third following a walk, a stolen base and an overthrow, Najarian picked on the first pitch from Mandt and hit it sharply into right field for a single.

With the rain falling even harder, Jon Schaeffer followed with a single and Dan Justice walked to load the bases with two outs. The rally ended, however, when Tim Horton popped out to second baseman Jason McLanaghan.

Then came the dramatic seventh inning that was set up by walks to Pankopf and Matt Desantis, a stolen base and a passed ball.

Cranbrook had threatened only one other

time against Murray, the hard-throwing senior right-hander. With one out in the fourth, John Edman hit a line drive to the wall in left-center, but he was cut down on a good relay as he tried to stretch it to a triple. Pankopf then walked and stole second, before Sean Ortiz flew out to end the threat.

Harrison had loaded the bases two other times against Mandt. In the third inning, Schaeffer singled and Justice and Jason Lichman walked to load the bases. Hawks catcher Rob MacDonald took a called third strike to end the inning. In the fourth, following three straight walks, Justice grounded out to end a bases-loaded threat.

In the fifth inning, Cranbrook center fielder Jeff Perkinson took an extra-base hit away from Horton with a major-league diving catch in left-center field. The pitching duel continued.

Herrington blamed the game-tying wild pitch on the rain.

"THE BALL just got too wet," he said. "Murray couldn't hold onto it. That's the only way they got a run."

Desantis and Edman had the hits for Cranbrook, while Schaeffer (two singles), Najarian and Jason Fox collected hits for Harrison.



JIM JACOBEL/staff photographer

Pam Thompson, second baseman on the Mercy softball team, attends over teammate Kerry Sayers and Livonia Ladywood's Lori Knoll after the fallen players collided during an attempted steal of second Saturday in the Class A regional softball tournament at Claude Allison Field. Thompson proceeded to tag Knoll for an important putout in the seventh inning. Sayers and Knoll were OK.

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## Marlins aim for 3rd district title

By Dan O'Meara  
staff writer

Rain washed out the final game of the Class A district softball tournament at Redford Union, but neither coach was shedding any tears over the postponement Saturday.

Livonia Franklin, 18-8, and Farmington Hills Mercy, 24-11, will return to Claude Allison Field today and play for the championship at 3:30 p.m.

Mercy had the final say in its rivalry with Livonia Ladywood, getting past the first round with a 2-1 victory behind Amy Edward's three-hit pitching.

Jenny Mayle pitched a no-hitter as Franklin advanced with a mercy-shortened, 14-0 victory over Detroit Henry Ford, which was minus a handful of players who went on a senior trip instead. That included regular pitcher Roslyn White, and the Patriots teed off on slow-throwing Jennell Johnson.

"I don't like a balsalmie like that only because you face a slow pitcher and have to come back and face someone who's throwing hard," Franklin coach Joe Epstein said. "Then it takes two or three innings to adjust."

## softball

The Patriots got the final out against Henry Ford, 11-3-1, just as the rain started to fall and didn't have to worry about trying to hit a quality pitcher like Edward.

MERCY COACH Suzanne Brown would have liked to take advantage of that situation, but the postponement also gave the Marlins a chance to let Edward and shortstop Kerry Sayers recover from minor injuries.

"I would like to have played them right away if the weather had been nice," Brown said. "It would have been to our advantage to play them. We had an intense game in the first game, and you tend to stay intense. It's hard to play a lesser team with a lesser pitcher and come back and play an intense game."

On the other hand, Edward didn't have to pitch after pulling a back muscle, and Sayers had a chance to recover from a violent collision with Ladywood's Lori Knoll in the seventh inning.

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