

Sports

Don O'Meara editor/591-2312



(F11)

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WLAA Relays indicate tight season ahead

By Brad Emms
staff writer

What will likely be the key word this season for boys swimming in the Western Lakes Activities Association?

Parity.

Under a slightly different format, the WLAA held its annual all-relay meet Saturday at Plymouth Salem. It's normally a pre-

view of things to come, but on this day only 25 points separated the top five teams.

Northville came out on top with a team-high 236 points, followed by Livonia Stevenson (224), host Salem (223), Plymouth Canton (212) and North Farmington (211). See statistical summary.

"Five teams had a legitimate shot at winning this meet and it looks like it will be an interesting year," said Salem's Chuck Olson,

coach of the defending WLAA (league meet) champions. "I can't ever remember the boys or the girls relays ever being this close. Nobody had an idea until the final event."

North Farmington appeared to be the frontrunner with two events to go, but the Raiders, who loaded up in earlier events, suddenly found themselves in fifth place when the meet was concluded.

"THIS MEET is more or less a tuneup and usually not a true indicator in this league, but this year it's going to be close," said North coach Sue Gendron. "It's going to be a very interesting season. The dual meets are going to be very exciting."

Northville won the meet's final two events — the 200-yard medley (1:50.4) and the 200 freestyle (1:31.81) — to gain the overall title.

"Northville is a powerful swim team, but I'm happy with our finish," said Stevenson coach Doug Buckler. "We're a very young team with 12 freshmen, 17 sophomores and only four seniors. If we mature, we'll be a force to be reckoned with."

The Spartans' foursome of freshman Alex Goecke, sophomores Aaron Bieder and

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Clutch free throws lift Falcons to win

After a series of spectacular surges and rallies, it all came down to this: a sub shooting free throws with no time left.

What are the chances a guy who came off the bench only a couple of minutes earlier in a tight game be-

tween city rivals will be successful under such trying circumstances?

That was the situation for Farmington's Wes Brockman. The Falcons trailed Farmington Harrison 66-65 when Brockman drove toward the hoop and was fouled as time expired.

With the game on the line, Brockman nailed both foul shots to give Farmington a 67-66 basketball triumph Tuesday at Harrison.

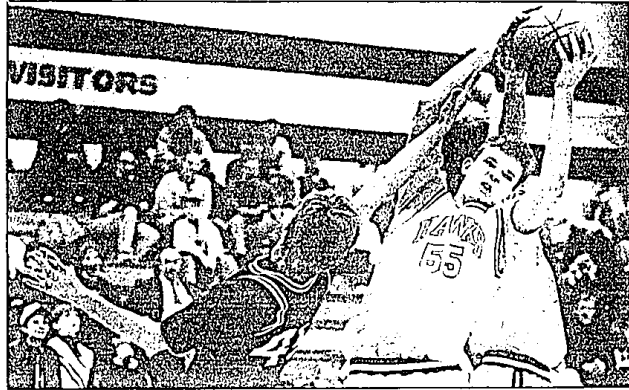
"They kept pounding and pounding at us and they won," Harrison coach Mike Teachman said, adding that the last five minutes of the second quarter was the only time his previously unbeaten Hawks played up to their potential.

That very nearly was enough. It certainly took its toll on the Falcons, who exploded in the first quarter and the opening minutes of the second to open up a 15-point advantage. Farmington extended its lead from 19-10 after one period to 27-12 with an 8-2 run in the first three minutes of the second quarter.

BUT THE HAWKS withstood the Falcon surge and rallied, outscoring the visitors 20-5 in the final five minutes before halftime to knot it at 32-31 at the intermission. Senior center Rob Karbowksi and junior forward Andy Smith provided Harrison with strong inside play in the comeback.

The spurt continued in the second half for the Hawks. They opened up a six-point advantage by the end of the third quarter, 51-45.

But in the fourth period it was Farmington's turn to rally. Harrison helped, turning the ball over several



photos by SHARON LEMIEUX/staff photographer

The Hawks' Paul Gilydis snares a rebound against Farmington Tuesday. Harrison had its

chances at victory, but had trouble holding onto the ball down the stretch.

times down the stretch to keep the Falcons' in the hunt.

A hunt that proved fruitful, as it turned out — thanks to Brockman's free throws. Three Falcons reached double-figures in scoring: P.J. Green (17 points), Brian Browne (16) and Eric Miller (14). Karbowksi and Smith led Harrison with 24 points each. Karbowksi also grabbed 14 rebounds, while Smith had 13.

The win allowed Farmington to even its record at 2-2. Harrison slipped to 3-1.

CLARKSTON 67, NORTH 61: Clarkston handed visiting North Farmington its first loss Tuesday night, and the Wolves did it at the free-throw line. They were 29-of-42 from the stripe; North was nine-of-19.

North outscored Clarkston 15-14 in the first quarter, but lost ground

in second quarter and trailed 35-34 at the half.

In the third quarter, North again went ahead 47-46, but Clarkston's 21-14 fourth-quarter scoring advantage finished the Raiders.

Senior guard Matt Hoffman led North with 25 points. Sophomore guard Dugan Fife topped Clarkston with 29 points — 20 of which were free throws.



Wes Brockman (smiling at left) is congratulated by Farmington coach Bob Kaump after sinking the winning free throws.

Thompson only bright spot for Raiders at County Meet

By Steve Kowalek
staff writer

Southfield-Lathrup wrestling coach Mark Uhlman spent Saturday afternoon at Providence Hospital with his wife, Jamie.

"She told me to get the heck out of there — go coach and pick up me at 11," Uhlman said. "She's pretty tough."

So are his wrestlers.

After learning that Jamie was recovering from pneumonia, Uhlman spent Saturday night at Oakland Community College, where he received more good news from his wrestlers.

Lathrup recorded its best finish in years at the Oakland County Meet, placing 10th out of 43 teams with 113.5 points. Other than that, there were few surprises, including Lake Orion gathering 253 points to win its second Oakland County Meet in the past three years.

Clarkston was second (215.5), followed by Troy Athens (139), Novi (129), Rochester Adams (127.5), Waterford Kettering (126.5), Ortonville-Brandon (121), Ferndale and Holly (117 each) and Lathrup.

ONE NOTICEABLE void from the Top 10 was Hazel Park, which won nine of the previous 11 Oakland County meets. But Uhlman wasn't concerned about Hazel Park's finish.

"This has got to help our program," Uhlman said. "It can't hurt it. I've only got 25 kids (out for the varsity) and most of the good programs have 50 to 75."

"The only bad part about today was I wasn't able to watch the preliminaries. But one of the kids' parents taped it, so I'll watch it at home."

Tom Hoffmeyer won the 119-pound weight class for Lathrup and two other Chargers, Kale Williams (125) and Malik Lowry (135), reacted the finals before losing. Hoffmeyer's win in the finals came over Lake Orion's Jeff Baker, 11-6.

"Tommy was utterly fantastic," Uhlman said. "He really wrestled good. I don't think he's come down yet. They were all happy as can be."

wrestling

Meet stats — 2D

Another elated guy was Athens' coach Bill Wilde, who guided the Red Hawks to their highest finish in 16 years. Athens was eighth last year and Wilde's goal was "to finish in the Top 5."

"I'M OVERJOYED by finishing third, considering before last year we never finished in the Top 10," Wilde said. "This is a tough journey — 43 teams. Outside of the state meet, it's the biggest event of the year."

"Physically, as well as emotionally, you're drained. Eight kids qualified for the second day of wrestling, and that's the most I've ever had. It's tough to get to the second day, almost a milestone."

Athens senior Mike Confilli won the 130-pound weight class and two of his teammates — senior Mark Vleck and Chris Dollar — claimed third-place finishes in the 135- and 140-pound weight classes, respectively.

Vleck's win came over Birmingham Seaholm's Mark Walter, who he pinned in 2:54.

Other Eccentric-area teams who finished in the Top 20 were Rochester (87), North Farmington, 86; Troy, 85; and Auburn Hills Avondale, 78.

Avondale's Randy Blomberg was the Eccentric's other individual champion, winning the 160-pound weight class, 10-6, over Clarkston's Damon Michelsen.

North Farmington's Matt Thompson (140) and Walled Lake Central's Soren Murphy (112) both reached the finals before losing.

Third-place finishes came from Rochester's Sean Rizzo (112), who beat Adams' Tom Fenoseff, 10-8, and Troy's Bob Schur (160). Adams' fifth-place performance also was buoyed by Anthony Sabar, who took fourth place at 130.

derson finished with 23 and Eric Robinson scored 20.

Last Wednesday (Dec. 13), Murphy and Bailey again paced OCC in its 81-63 victory at Alpena College.

Murphy's 21 points was best for the Raiders. Bailey had 18. Tim Hoberson contributed 14, while Jerry Preskorn grabbed 15 rebounds and Ed Whitaker dished out 11 assists.

Bobby Allen notched 18 points for Alpena.

basketball

Park is 3-6 overall, 3-1 in the conference.

Bobby Dinges added 12 points, all on three-point baskets, and six assists to OCC's effort.

Andre Johnson topped Highland Park with 24 points. Deondre An-

Mercy rules at Madonna

The season opened rather conspicuously for Farmington Hills Mercy's volleyball team.

The Marlins played a total of 12 games at the 10-team Madonna College Tournament Saturday.

They won 11 of them.

Included were a pair of triumphs in the match that counted most: the finals. Mercy disposed of Madison in decisive fashion, 15-8, 15-0.

That came after an equally impressive showing in the semifinals against Dearborn Fordson. The Marlins won that match in straight games as well, 15-1, 15-6.

The only team to defeat Mercy all day long was Dearborn. The two

volleyball

teams divided their two-game meeting in pool play, Dearborn winning the first 15-11 and Mercy taking the second 15-1. The Pioneers lost in three games in the semis to Madison.

THERE WERE several reasons for the Marlins' success. Seniors Jennifer Goff and Andrea Belthoven were at the top of the list. Goff finished with 37 kills in the tournament (a .430 attack percentage)

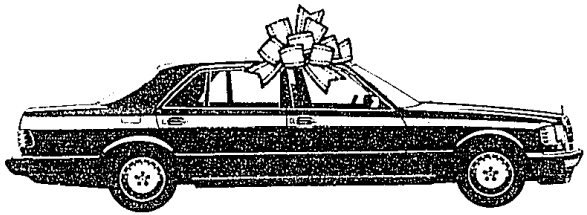
and 12 service aces. Goff contributed 29 kills (432) and nine aces.

There were others. Lee Albrecht, also a senior, had 15 kills (405); Betsy Pope added 13 (.371); setter Nikki Burns averaged 8.7 assists-to-kills per game; and Becky Liddy served up nine aces. Amy Miller provided solid defensive play in the back row.

"It was a nice start," said Mercy coach Tim DeBeliso. "The level of competition will get tougher as we go along. It was an encouraging start, but I saw some areas we need to work on. Our overall play and intensity was good."

Mercy is now idle until Jan. 6, when it will compete in the West Bloomfield Invitational.

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OCC rips Highland Park

Michael Bailey and Toine Murphy combined for 66 points and 20 rebounds in leading Oakland Community College's mens basketball team to a 104-90 win over Highland Park Saturday at OCC's Orchard Ridge campus in Farmington.

Bailey totaled 34 points and 10 boards, while Murphy got 32 points and 10 rebounds as the Raiders improved to 9-2 overall and to 3-1 in the Eastern Conference. Highland

basketball

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