

## Sports

Dan O'Meara editor/591-2312



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## WLAAs without clear-cut favorite

By Bill Parker  
staff writer

THE ONLY THING certain about the Western Lakes Activities Association volleyball race is that there will be a race.

In a league that prides itself on consistently producing top-notch volleyball teams, there doesn't appear to be a clear-cut favorite as the 1990 season approaches.

"I think it will be a very fascinating race this year," said Mike Hughes, who coached the Livonia Churchill team to the WLAAs championship last year. "I don't see anybody with a significant edge."

North Farmington veteran coach Sandra Lubieniec, whose team won the Lakes division title last year with a 12-1 league record, echoed similar sentiment.

"The league is always tough," Lubieniec said. "They (league opponents) will all be a challenge. I wouldn't make any predictions. There is no team in the league that can't come out and beat you."

The following is a brief preview of each of the Observerland teams competing in the Western Lakes Activity Association.

## LIVONIA CHURCHILL

The Chargers were undefeated in the WLAAs last year (13-0) and advanced to the district finals before falling to the eventual state champ, Livonia Ladywood. Churchill finished the season at 30-6.

Churchill lost six girls from that team to graduation, including five starters. But don't look for the Chargers to slip to the back of the pack this season.

"The one thing that's really helping right now is that the girls have a nice attitude," said Hughes, entering his 14th season at the helm of the Churchill program. "We're very small, the biggest girl is 5-foot-11. So in order for us to do well, we'll have to play defense. If we play excellent defense, play well as a team and do all the little things, we'll be OK."

Middle-hitter Christina Garry (5-8) is the only returning starter from last year's team. Janice Polega, a 5-8 senior hitter, Alyssa Belaire, a 5-7 junior hitter, Stephanie Spier, a 5-3 junior hitter, and Amy Barron, a 5-3 junior setter, all return to the team after seeing limited action last year.

Kelly Musallam, a 5-7 junior hitter, and Keri Hawkins, a 5-7 junior hitter, move



RANDY BOST/Staff photographer

## Eve Clair will serve up some big plays for North.

up from the junior varsity squad and are expected to fill in starting roles. Juniors Jackie Hebert, Jill Hutton, Lori Place, Janine Spruiell, Fran Priebe and Becky Sharrar will also help the team.

Churchill is currently 2-0 on the season and travels Jan. 9 to Walled Lake Central for a rematch of last year's conference championship match.

## WALLED LAKE WESTERN

Second-year coach Shannon Miller is excited about Walled Lake Western's potential to be a contender in the upcoming season.

"We have the ability to win," said Miller, who came to Western last year after playing four years at Central Michigan University. "The girls that I have are really hard workers and want to win. I came into a really good program. Last year was my first year, but this year the girls know the program and what I expect from them."

Kelly Musallam, a 5-7 junior hitter, and Keri Hawkins, a 5-7 junior hitter, move

## volleyball

The Warriors only lost two starters from last year's 28-31 team which finished second in the Lakes Division behind Churchill. Miller is looking for leadership from her four returning starters.

Seniors Shawna Schilling, a 5-7 hitter, Angie Gilbert, a 5-7 setter, Amy Selman, a 5-7 setter, and Laura Call, a 5-10 middle-hitter return to anchor the team. They'll be joined in the starting lineup by senior Tina Gardner and sophomore Dawn Godfrey.

Seniors Monica Cottrell and Jenny DuLac will give the Warriors some depth.

## FARMINGTON HARRISON

The Hawks were young last year and struggled through a 5-24 campaign. Things don't appear to be much improved over last year as Farmington Harrison heads into the 1990 season with just one senior and two returning starters.

"We had a young team last year and we're even younger this year," admitted seventh-year head coach Ronald Short. "We're trying kids at different positions and we'll have to see how they do."

Senior Kristen Skitinski, a 5-3 hitter, and junior Melanie Alcantara, a 5-7 hitter, are the only returning starters from last year's team.

They'll be joined on the floor by juniors Shelly Bouwens, a 5-7 setter, Lisa Vastler, a 5-5 setter, and Carrie Henline, a 5-10 hitter.

Others expected to fill in for the Hawks include freshman Julie Heist, sophomore Stephanie Sprague and junior Keri Hardner. Sprague and Hardner both transferred to Harrison and are ineligible until Jan. 15.

## LIVONIA FRANKLIN

Brenda Bulmanskis steps into the head coaching position at Franklin this year after coaching the junior varsity last season. Bulmanskis, an '86 Franklin grad, returned to the Franklin program last year after playing for two years at University of Michigan-Dearborn.

Although the Patriots struggled through a winless season last year, Bulmanskis hopes she can get the program back on the right track.

"We hope to play some better volleyball than in the past," Bulmanskis said. "We have a young team and not a lot of experience, but we hope we can win more games than last year. Our biggest goal right now is just to play better volleyball."

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Amy Miller (left) and Lee Albrecht set up the nets before the start of practice at Mercy. The

Marlins had a good start and expect to continue that trend in 1990.

## Marlins looking forward to '90

Farmington Hills Mercy's volleyball team played second fiddle to Livonia Ladywood in the Central Division of the Catholic League last year, but that could change in 1990.

Ladywood won division, league and state championships but lost some of its top players to graduation. The Marlins, who were runners-up in the league tournament, return a lot of key players from a team that was 29-12.

The results of the Madonna College tournament last month indicate Mercy should be among the best teams in Observerland. The Marlins won the 10-team competition and took a 6-0 record into the new year.

"Physically, we're talented enough to have a good season," said coach Tim DeBello, who enters his fourth season. "If we get the year we need from our core of seniors and they develop mental toughness, I think we'll have a great year."

Mercy returns a pair of first-team, all-area players in seniors Nikki Burns and Jennifer Goff.

BURNS, A 5-foot-6 setter, is a player the Marlins can build around because of her position. She had 2,161 assist attempts and averaged 9.2 assists per game.

Burns also was a 92-percent server. The 5-10 Goff is one of four hitters with experience. She averaged 2.54 kills and 2.8 digs.

Other returning starters include Lee Albrecht, a 5-11 senior who will play the middle, 5-8 senior Andrea Velthoven and 5-8 junior Maureen Paulin.

Velthoven and Paulin will join Goff as outside attackers.

Seniors Betsy Pope and Amy Miller and junior Becky Leddy also return.

Pope is a 5-9 middle hitter, and Leddy and Miller are back-row specialists.

Varsity newcomers are juniors Gail Murie, Nora Hand and Suzie Atchinson. Murie is an attacker, the other two back-row players.

Mercy competes in the West Bloomfield tournament Saturday and begins dual-meet play Monday at Redford Bishop Borges.

SHARON LEMIEUX/Staff photographer  
Andrea Velthoven is one of several veteran attackers at Mercy.

## Akron team's greeting lacks holiday cheer

By Roy Sellock  
staff writer

The holidays haven't been so happy for the Redford Catholic Central basketball team.

The Shamrocks found themselves up against a much quicker Central-Hower team Thursday, falling 71-51 at home.

CC drops its record to 1-4, while the visitors from Akron, Ohio, remain undefeated at 5-0.

Central-Hower wasted little time in getting a lead, jumping out to a 10-2 margin in the game's opening minutes.

"We came out intimidated," CC coach Bernie Holowicki said. "We had nobody willing to take control and put the ball in the hole. When that happens you're not going to get positive results."

One of the Shamrocks' primary concerns was Central-Hower guard Marquise Smith. He scored eight of his team's first 10 points on a layup and a pair of three-pointers.

"HE IS PROBABLY our most consistent three-point threat," Central-Hower coach Mike Meneer said. "He played real hard for us tonight."

Smith finished the night with a game-high 23 points, four of which came from three-point territory.

With Central-Hower leading by eight, the Shamrocks reeled off 10 points to cut the deficit to 12-10 at the end of the first quarter.

"We started to play like we are capable of playing," Holowicki said.

"Our press was beginning to work and the guys were making their shots."

Central-Hower shut the door on the Shamrocks in the second quarter, building a 13-point lead by taking advantage of costly CC turnovers.

Central-Hower would rally for a 38-25 halftime lead.

"Our downfall in the second quarter was a combination of their quickness and our mistakes," Holowicki said. "We aren't going to get away with many mistakes against a team like this. They are going to get you with their speed."

THE SHAMROCKS would come within seven late in the third quarter, but once again Central-Hower would close the door and walk away with the victory.

"I think when they got close, it was just a case of our team letting up," Meneer said. "There were times when we thought we had the game locked and we didn't. Speed really helped us. We were a much quicker team and that was the key factor."

Junior guard Steve Whitlow and sophomore center Bob Kummer led the Shamrocks with 16 points.

"I think Whitlow played a real steady game tonight," Holowicki said.

"He is starting to adapt to the game guard position. Last year, Terry (Boykin) handled the point position, but since he graduated we are look-



JIM JAGGELD/Staff photographer

Steve Whitlow dishes off after driving the lane against Central-Hower. Whitlow had 16 points, but the Akron team beat Catholic Central 71-51.

ing to Whitlow and he is starting to do the job for us."

Senior forward Robert Thompson contributed 16 points for Central-Hower and junior guard Jed Dunn added 15.

Despite the loss, Holowicki said the game with Central-Hower was beneficial to his team.

"AS WE PREPARE to enter the Catholic League portion of our schedule, it is good to play against solid competition," said the CC coach.

"Hopefully our guys learned something from this loss and will rebound."

The Shamrocks begin Catholic League Central Division play on Friday when they travel to Redford Bishop Borges.

## His team wins, but DCD star is frustrated

By Steve Kowalski  
staff writer

Lorenzo Orr and Chris Webber are good friends, so Thursday at the Palace, Webber decided to take out his frustration on something else.

A backboard.

Webber scored only 14 points and grabbed an uncharacteristically low seven rebounds in Detroit Country Day's 51-46 win over Detroit Pershing in the featured game of the first-ever Big Michigan Shootout.

Those are depressing numbers for Webber — considered one of the nation's finest juniors — but he managed to leave a lasting impression on the 7,303 fans at the end: a two-handed, monstrous dunk at the buzzer.

"I wanted to try to break the backboard," said the 6-foot-10 Webber. "That dunk was out of frustration — for missing all those shots, making turnovers and not playing as well as I could have."

THE GAME was billed as a matchup between Webber and Orr, Pershing's 6-8 senior center who has already signed a letter of intent to attend Southern California. Before the game, both players embraced at half-court, sharing a conversation.

No, they didn't kiss — but they made a pact.

"We just said, 'Let's leave all the publicity and newspapers out of this and just play ball,'" said Webber, who made six-of-10 shots.

"He's the best post-up player I've ever played against."

Said Orr: "That's one of the highest compliments I can get. I thank him for that and believe me, I feel the same about him."

Orr, who missed practice Wednesday because of the flu, did not start and finished with 10 points and only two rebounds before fouling out with 17 seconds left in the game. Orr's most spectacular moment came with 6:30 left in the game when he rose above everyone else in the paint and threw down a one-handed dunk off a rebound, giving Pershing its last lead, 39-35.

DCD scored the next 12 points to take a 47-39 lead with 3:10 remaining. It was unheralded junior guard Lypso Montgomery who triggered the rally, scoring 10 of his 14 points during the run.

MONTGOMERY and Pershing's other senior forward — Sean Rambus — helped take some of the attention away from Webber and Orr. Rambus finished with a game-high 18 points and eight rebounds.

Forward Ryan Ringold scored eight for Class B Country Day, which improved to 4-1 overall. Pershing, one of the top-ranked teams in Class A, fell to 4-2.

"It was no work of art," DCD coach Kurt Keener said. "But it's still December and we want to be a great team in March. Right now, we're rough around the edges."

Montgomery's points in the fourth quarter were key hoops. They changed the momentum. It was an emotional win, for bragging rights on the playgrounds."

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