

Sports

Dan O'Meara editor/591-2312



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Mercy building up wins, respect

Marlins clobber Regina to go 7-0

By Dan O'Meara
staff writer

The rest of the state is finally beginning to take note of Farmington Hills Mercy's volleyball team.

Oh, sure, the Marlins were ranked No. 6 in Class A last week, but Mercy's stock still seemed underpriced, considering it had beaten the defending state champion and won three invitational.

But the Marlins jumped to No. 2 in the latest poll after winning their fourth tournament, which included the team's second victory in a week over reigning Class A queen Livonia Ladywood.

Mercy, 35-3-2, edged the Blazers in the semifinals and polished off Brighton in the final to win the City By The Bay Tournament at Essexville-Garber High School.

"By the end of the day, it was an endurance contest," Mercy coach Tim DeBeliso said. The Marlins started playing at 8:30 a.m., and the championship match didn't end until about 9:30 p.m.

Jennifer Goff served 10 of the 15 points in the second game.

volleyball

"IT WAS a matter of who was a little stronger mentally and physically. Maybe that's why we were there at the end."

"We've been stressing that all year," DeBeliso said. "In the beginning, we said we needed the corps of seniors to come through, and we had to be mentally tough. I thought our mental toughness helped us down the stretch when the other teams were getting tired."

The Marlins had several individual standouts, including senior outside hitter Jennifer Goff and senior setter Nikki Burns, both of whom were named to the all-tournament team.

Goff, who voted the most valuable player in the tournament, registered 35 kills out of 87 spike attempts for a .400 hitting percentage. She also served eight aces.

"In terms of her hitting, I don't think she has been as consistent as she has wanted to be throughout the year," DeBeliso said. "But, in terms of getting the ball over the net and keeping it in play, it had to be one of her best days. She had less than 10 hitting errors in 87 attacks."

Burns averaged 12 assists per game and served five aces. Mercy had 167 total kills, which is a reflection of her outstanding playmaking, according to DeBeliso.

"YOU'RE ONLY as good as your setter is going to make you," he said. Andrea Velthoven, the other outside hitter, enjoyed a fine tournament, too, with 36 kills and nine aces. She counted kills on 44 percent of her spikes.

But senior Lee Albrecht, the un-

ing player on the team to some extent, according to DeBeliso, also played exceptionally well. She had 36 kills out of 65 attacks for a percentage that was better than 500.

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RANDY BORST/staff photographer

Hawks win again

Blaze Sarceovich of Harrison grabs a rebound away from Walled Lake Central's Eric Leaf (24) and Chris Gerulla. Andy Smith scored 23 points as the Hawks kept their winning streak alive 48-43. See story on Page 4D.

Strong beam gives North crown

North Farmington shattered a team scoring record Monday to claim the Lakes Division dual-meet gymnastics championship.

The Raiders scored 142.2 in their gym, just two days after setting the record of 137.8 at the Plymouth Invitational.

North, however, needed to score that well to defeat Plymouth Salem, which compiled an impressive 140.6 total.

The Rocks led by three quarters of a point after the vault and bars competition, but the balance beam results turned the meet in North's favor. The Raiders were on the plus side by 1.15 points after three events.

"We were real tough on beam," North coach Jeff Dwyer said. "Our first two (gymnasts) didn't fall. You could just feel the momentum swing after beam."

"A LOT OF meets are decided by who stays on beam, and tonight just happened to be our night."

The Raiders, 3-0 in the division and 7-3 overall, were led by Heather Kahn and Kym Heller. Salem 12-2-1 and 4-1.

Kahn won the vault (9.4) and scored 36.75 as an all-arounder, and Heller was the floor exercise winner (9.4) who had a 36.15 meet total.

But individual honors went to Salem freshman Kim Miller, who won the other events and had the best all-around score at 37.45. She scored 9.3 on bars and 9.5 on beam, and she was second on vault (9.35) and floor (9.3).

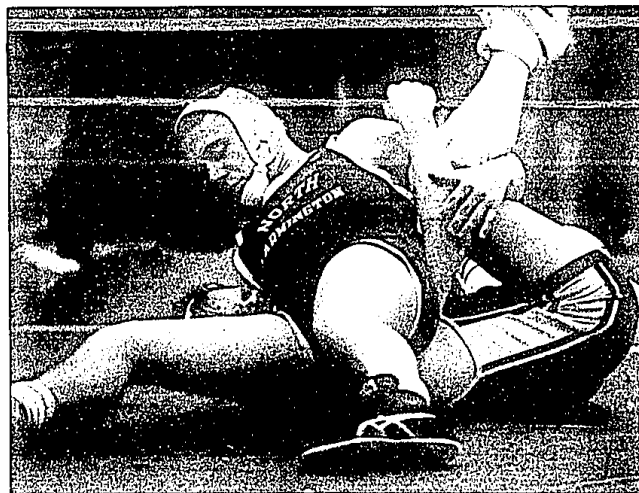
Kahn rounded out her all-around performance with a second on bars (9.1), third on beam (9.05) and third on floor (9.2). Heller placed fifth on vault (9.0), fourth on bars (8.5) and second on beam (9.25).

Salem's Courtney Gonyea took third on vault (9.15) and fourth on floor (9.15), and teammate Autumn Bunch finished fourth on vault (9.1) and fifth on bars (8.45). Almee Wong was third on bars (8.7).

KRISTIN Sautarski of North posted a season-best score of 34.55 in the all-around, which included fifth places on floor (9.05) and beam (8.65).

"The last couple of meets we've had more spirit on the team," Dwyer said, adding the Raiders are applying themselves a bit more after losing to Troy last week.

"It must have done something. We went from 129 in one meet to 137.8. It shows the girls we have a good team with a shot at the league."



LEE EKSTROM/staff photographer

Rob Jamrog maneuvers for a pin in his match with Walled Lake Central's Ed Holmes in the Western Lakes Activities Association wrestling tournament Saturday. Jamrog finished sixth at 160 pounds and the Raiders eighth in the team standings.

Rocks rule again in WLAA

By Dan O'Meara
staff writer

When the curtain rose on one of the wrestling season's biggest shows Saturday, the Plymouth Salem Rocks performed like real troups.

Salem was heavily favored to repeat as Western Lakes Activities Association champion, and there was little suspense to the meet at Westland John Glenn. The Rocks won their eighth league championship in nine years.

"When you get to the league meet, that's when showtime starts," Salem senior and defending champion Steve Burilson said. "There's no more chances to goof up."

"We were pretty confident but not so confident to lay back. We knew what we had to do."

The host Rocks were runners-up once again. Salem was a runaway winner with 215½ points, and the first division included Glenn (147), Northville (142), Livonia Churchill (104), Walled Lake Western (99½) and Plymouth Canton (94).

wrestling

THE SECOND tier consisted of Livonia Stevenson, North Farmington, Walled Lake Central, Livonia Franklin, Farmington Hills Harrison and Farmington.

Burilson was one of five Salem champions. The Rocks also had three runners-up and three others place among the top six.

Salem had its share of wrestlers favored to win individual titles, but there were some surprises, too.

Julian Sell (130), Burilson (160) and Brian Burilson (189) were seeded No. 1 at their weights, and each lived up to his pre-meet billing. The Rocks did what was expected of them at five weights and better than expected at four others.

Scott Martin (103) and heavy-weight Scott Breithaupt were No. 2 seeds but staged mild upsets to capture championships, too. Teammates Dan Bonnett (112) and

Pete Israel (171) finished as seeded in second place, and Ken Stopa (125), Jeff Shumate (135) and Ron Miller (145) finished higher than they were seeded.

"SOME OF them overachieved," Salem coach Ron Krueger said. "We had more kids who did better than they were supposed to do than didn't and that helps. Only one underachieved."

"I was real surprised and happy with Breithaupt and Martin. Three guys were seeded first and supposed to do that — and I'm pleased they did — but (Martin and Breithaupt) were not supposed to do that well and did."

Three wrestlers — the Burilson brothers and Central's Soren Murphy — repeated as league champions. Murphy (112), a three-time winner, was the 102 champ last year. Steve Burilson defended his 160 crown, and Brian Burilson also stepped up a weight after winning at 171 a year ago.

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Mott shoots down OCC

By C.J. Rink
staff writer

They took their shot -- and missed.

Actually, Oakland Community College's men's basketball team had a lot of shots. Problem was, the Raiders missed a most of them. They fell behind early last night at Mott Community College in Flint, and although they challenged the front-running Bears, they never overtook them, losing 88-79.

The defeat dropped OCC to 10-14 in the Eastern Conference. Mott improved to 12-2, and, barring a complete collapse in its final two conference games against cellar-dwellers St. Clair CCC and Schoolcraft College, assured itself of a regular-season conference championship.

This was the second meeting between the two teams. OCC blasted the Bears a month ago in Farmington Hills. However, Mott was without its starting backcourt of Clarence Wilson and Van Evans for the first meeting, which made OCC's press more effective.

Both Wilson and Evans were on hand for Wednesday night's game, and both were integral parts of Mott's triumph.

EVANS PLAYED Raider-killer. OCC fell behind early, trailing 14-6 when the Raiders mounted a comeback. Evans crushed it with a three-pointer. He finished the game with five treys, four in the first half. The Raiders combined had one.

A sample of what was ahead was delivered by Evans with 11:36 left in the first half. Three straight OCC baskets trimmed Mott's lead to 14-12, but the Bears had an answer — a Carlos Fordham bucket and a triple by Evans. 19-12.

It was like that throughout the game. OCC would rally. Mott would answer — and it was usually Evans.

He finished with 32 points. The Raiders were stubborn, if not always successful. They stayed close to Mott, in spite of Evans' 19 first-half points and Fordham's 10, trailing 46-40 at the intermission.

However, any OCC advantage melted away quickly in the second half. Mott reached the bonus with

14:44 remaining; from then on, the Bears shot free throws. They had committed just one foul against OCC.

"A LOT OF the fouls came because of our stupidity," said OCC coach Lynn Reed. "Pushing, shoving, hand-checking."

Indeed, if Mott hadn't shot so poorly from the line down the stretch — the Bears were two of nine on free throws in the final 2:12, missing five one-and-ones — the final score could have been far greater.

"I think, the way we played, we were lucky to be as close as we were," said Reed.

"Still," the OCC coach added, "We didn't rise to the occasion. We didn't shoot well. And I think they handled our press well, too."

That, too, was the work of Wilson and Evans, and assorted others.

Mike Bailey's 24 points and 14 rebounds paced OCC. Tim Robertson had 18 points and Taine Murphy scored 16. Fordham finished with 13 for Mott; Paige had 13 and Bobby Jones notched 10.

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