

Sports

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JIM JAGGELD/staff photographer

Mercy's luck runs out against Blazers

By Ray Getlock
staff writer

It was supposed to have been Farmington Hills Mercy's year in volleyball.

The Marlins had beaten two-time defending state champion Livonia Ladywood four times during the season and were the odds-on favorite to get to the state final this year.

Unfortunately for Mercy, its good fortune in matches with the Blazers expired in the Class A semifinals Saturday morning at Nazareth College in Kalamazoo.

The No. 2-rated Marlins, who had just beaten Ladywood to win the Catholic League championship, were upset by the Blazers 15-10, 12-15, 15-17.

"We enjoyed a great season," Mercy coach Tim DeBello said. "It's just too bad we couldn't have won our match with Ladywood. This team has a lot of heart, and that was evident by today's comeback in the third game."

MERCY, WHICH finished 55-5 and broke the school record (51) for wins in one season, carried the momentum of the first game.

The Marlins wasted little time in the second game and jumped to a quick 7-3 lead, but Ladywood ran off seven consecutive points to take a 10-7 advantage and eventually win the game.

"I was real pleased with the way we fought back to win that second game," Ladywood coach Tom Teeters said. "It tells you about the type of team we have. This team has a tremendous fortitude."

The Blazers' momentum from the second game carried over to the finale, and they took a quick 11-3 lead.

'I don't think the four matches we won (over Ladywood) came into play here today. When you get to the state tournament, those things don't matter.'

— Tim DeBello
Mercy volleyball coach

Mercy, however, managed to rebound and cut the deficit to 11-10.

Ladywood's Karl Domanski then made three consecutive kills to give the Blazers a 14-10 advantage.

The Marlins answered with five straight kills of their own to take a 15-14 lead.

BUT LADYWOOD scored three points on a service ace by Peggy Knittel and kills by Domanski and Rebecca Willey to win the match.

"It was a team effort, but I was particularly pleased with Domanski," Teeters said. "She played an excellent game. She's a hard worker."

Domanski, a senior, led Ladywood's offense with 16 kills. Knittel, a senior hitter, had 13. Janice Koneczal and Julie Wilson were the leaders on defense for the Blazers.

"Give Ladywood credit; they played well," DeBello said. "This was a typical, hard-fought, state semifinal match."

DeBello didn't think Mercy's previous dominance in the series with

the Blazers this year was a factor Saturday.

"I don't think the four matches we won came into play here today," he said. "When you get to the state tournament, those things don't matter."

ANDREA VELTHOVEN recorded 15 kills in a losing cause for the Marlins. Jennifer Goff added 14.

"We played well in the first game and early in the second game," DeBello said. "It was just a tough day. I thought all the kids played well."

"Good team unity has been our emphasis all season. We win as a team and lose as a team. It's unfortunate that today we lost."

Teeters said Mercy deserves a lot of credit for the tough match it played.

"Mercy was tough, and they, by no means, made it easy for us," he said. "We had to work for everything we got. That also is a credit to our girls. We beat a good team today."

In getting to Saturday's semifinals, the Marlins defeated Wayne Memorial 2-1 in the quarterfinals on Friday.

MERCY WON the first game 15-11 but lost the second 15-13. The Marlins found the right chemistry in the final game and overwhelmed the Blazers 15-2.

"The girls rose to the occasion in the third game and did a nice job," DeBello said. "It was a big win for our team."

Velthoven led Mercy with 18 kills, and Goff added 16.

Mercy volleyball players console each other Saturday after losing to rival Livonia Ladywood in the semifinals of the Class A tournament in

Kalamazoo. The 15-10, 12-15, 15-17 loss to the Blazers was Mercy's only loss in five meetings with Ladywood.

No title for Ladywood this year

By Ray Getlock
staff writer

Livonia Ladywood made it to the Class A volleyball final for the third consecutive year Saturday, but the Blazers didn't have reason to celebrate this time.

Ladywood walked away with state championships the last two years, but the 1990 crown belongs to East Kentwood, which defeated the Blazers two games to none at Kalamazoo Central High School and claimed its first state championship.

"This is a great win," said East Kentwood coach Bud Cole following the Falcons' 15-10, 15-6 victory. "We play a lot of tough teams throughout the season, but Ladywood was one of the toughest."

The Blazers (49-12-2) established themselves early in the first game, taking a 5-2 lead. But Ladywood's momentum was short-lived, as East Kentwood rallied to tie the score at seven.

The remainder of the game was controlled by the Falcons, who took leads of 11-8 and 12-10 before finishing off the Blazers.

"I WAS worried during that first game," Cole said. "But that's my job. We didn't play to our capabilities."

Ladywood coach Tom Teeters was pleased with his team's performance in the opening game.

"I think we had them thinking after that first game," Teeters said. "It's too bad we couldn't have continued our roll, but East Kentwood is just too tough a team."

The Falcons displayed their talent in the second game, dominating play more than in the first opener.

East Kentwood finishes the season with a record of 75-1-1, the most wins by a volleyball team in the school's history, shattering the old mark of 70.

"They proved that they are the best team in the state," Teeters said. "They have a lot of good athletes."

SENIOR MIDDLE hitter Amy Westhouse led East Kentwood with 10 kills and also had eight digs. Teri Wilhoit posted nine digs to lead the winners defensively.

Senior Karl Domanski guided the Blazers with

13 kills and seven digs. She had an attack percentage of .550.

"Karl Domanski was unstoppable," Teeters said. "We go to her whenever we can."

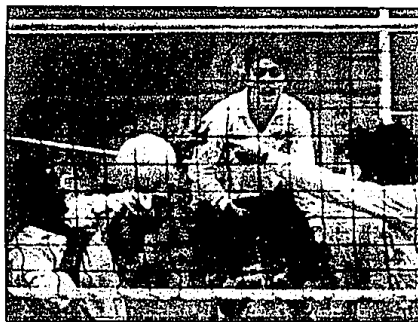
As a team, Ladywood had 21 digs, while the winners had 39. Senior hitter April Oswald recorded four service aces to lead East Kentwood. Ladywood, as a team, tallied just three service aces. Kentwood had seven team blocks, the Blazers one.

"Kentwood did all the things they needed to do to win," Teeters said. "They played their type of game tonight."

In Friday's quarterfinals, Ladywood defeated Sterling Heights Stevenson 15-12, 10-15, 15-9.

Domanski recorded 12 kills to lead the Blazers. Senior Evette Sluder led Stevenson with 16 kills. Junior Denise Walsh had 22 digs.

ON SATURDAY morning, Ladywood faced Catholic League champion Farmington Hills Mercy in the semifinals, and the Blazers, who had lost four previous matches to the Marlins this year, had their revenge, 10-15, 15-12, 17-15.



JIM JAGGELD/staff photographer

Nikki Burns (left) and Lee Albrecht try to keep the ball alive Saturday. Maureen Paulin (center) is ready if needed on the play.

Observerland talent among state's best

Lucian Van Cleave
N. FarmingtonAdam Cook
N. FarmingtonSoren Murphy
W.L. CentralJay Heim
Catholic CentralJulian Sell
SalemSteve Burlison
SalemBy Bill Parker
staff writer

LED BY two-time defending Class A state champion Jay Heim, the 1990 All-Area wrestling team is stacked higher than the rafters at Kellogg Arena with talent.

Seven of the 12 wrestlers gracing the team qualified for the Class A state meet at Kellogg Arena. The remaining five wrestlers, although lacking in state meet experience this year, compiled impressive enough statistics over the course of the season to lift them to first team honors.

In all, the first team is made up of one state champion, three third-place state finalists and six league champions. On the average, first-team members won 87 percent of their matches. The combined season record of all 12 wrestlers is 452-98-1.

The following is a brief profile of each first-team member as selected by a panel of Observerland coaches:

ALL-AREA FIRST TEAM

Dan Vaughan, Wayne Memorial, heavyweight Vaughn, a senior, compiled a 26-17 record this season at Wayne. He earned a trip to regionals with a second-place finish in the district tournament. He also placed second at the Belleville Invitational, third at the CC Invitational, third at the Westland John Glenn Invitational and third in the Wolverine A

all-area wrestling

League

"Dan was one of the best heavyweights ever at Wayne High, as far as technique goes," said Wayne coach Jim Daniel. "He only wrestled for three years and he didn't do much his first year. He has really come on the past two seasons. He led the team in plus with 18, and total points with 155, and was second on the team in takedowns with 37."

Dan Horvath, Garden City, 103 pounds: Horvath was forced to battle both injuries and opponents this year and the junior grappler still managed to put together a solid 19-14 personal record. He won the Redford Thurston Invitational and finished second in the Northwest Suburban League tournament, suffering an injury during the finals. He was undefeated in league duals and 18 of his 18 victories were by pin. His career record stands at 41-11.

"Dan, unfortunately, spent much of the season hampered with injuries," said GC coach Paul Freeman. "He is relentless in his aggressive style of wrestling, putting his opponents on the defensive from the opening whistle until the match has ended."

Soren Murphy, Walled Lake Central, 112: Murphy, a senior, wrapped up his wrestling career with a third-place

finish at the Class A state meet. He finished the season with a 36-3 overall record, which peaked his career total to 101-21. Murphy won the Clio, John Glenn, Clarkston and South Lyon Invitational championships, was the Western Lakes league champ for the second year in a row, won the district title and finished second at the regional tournament.

"Soren's secret to success was that he has terrific athletic ability and has a great desire to excel," said Central coach Carl McBride. "He worked hard at it dedicated himself. He was a leader by example."

Ryan Carriere, Livonia Stevenson, 119: En route to running up a 29-13 personal record, Carriere, a junior, finished second in the Western Lakes Activities Association and fourth in the district tournament. He is a two-time regional qualifier and boasts a 53-23 career record.

"Ryan is a hard worker and a leader of his team," said Stevenson coach Don Berg. "He has overcome many obstacles on the road to the state meet. With continued hard work, the 1990-91 season will be his year."

Ken Stopa, Plymouth Salem, 125: Stopa has only wrestled for two years, but owns an impressive 63-31 career

record. This year, the senior grappler compiled a 33-12 record that included winning the championship of the tough Temperance-Bedford Invitational. He placed second in the Western Lakes Activities Association, and third in the district tournament and the Salem Invitational.

"Ken was one of our top pinners," said Salem coach Ron Krueger. "When we needed six (points) in a meet you could count on Ken. He had a very tough weight class. At Lansing Senior he wrestled the state champion for fifth and sixth place. Ken was a two-year wrestler. If he would have wrestled from his freshman year on he would have been a real good wrestler. We will miss him."

Julian Sell, Plymouth Salem, 135: Sell, a senior, improved his career record to 70-18 after racking up a 38-7 record this season. He was the Western Lakes Activities Association champ and also won individual championships at both the Plymouth Salem and Lincoln Park Invitational. Sell placed second at the district tournament and qualified for the Class A state meet with a fourth-place finish at regionals.

"Julian is one of the all-time favorites. We will miss him next year," said Salem coach Ron Krueger. "He was a good wrestler and a good student with a 4.33 grade-point-average, which is first in his class."

Lucian Van Cleave, North Farmington, 135: Van Cleave, a senior, recorded 18 pins while compiling a 53-13

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