

# CC won with back-to-basics plan

## sports shorts

### • SPEED SKATERS

Two Eagle Elementary School students from Farmington Hills excelled in regional short-track speed skating competition that drew 60 skaters from four Midwest states.

Josh Sklar, 10, finished third against strong competition in the West Michigan Thanksgiving Classic. He won a trophy in the midge boys advanced class.

His sister, Elyse Sklar, 6, led the premier girls novice class on the 111-meter track at Walker Arena in Muskegon. She won a medalion. Both skate out of the Detroit-based Wolverine Sports Club.

### • SOCCER TRYOUTS

Tryouts for the Michigan Wolves, a Livonia V Premier Soccer Club under-19 boys team (Little Caesars High Division) will be at 8 a.m. Saturday, Dec. 15, at the Beechwood Recreation Center. For more information, call Mark Mason at 474-5753.

### • '68 TIGERS APPEAR

A reunion of some of the 1968 World Series champion Detroit Tigers baseball team will occur from 10 a.m. until 2 p.m. Saturday and Sunday, Dec. 1-2 at the Madonna College baseball card show. Autographs are free and over 100 tables are available. Appearing on Saturday, Dec. 1: Denny McLain (noon to 2 p.m.) and Mickey Stanley (2-4 p.m.). Making appearances Sunday, Dec. 2: Willie Horton (noon to 2 p.m.) and Mickey Lolich (2-4 p.m.). For more information, call 591-5029.

### • EMU BASEBALL CAMP

The Eastern Michigan University Winter Baseball Camp (ages 8-16), featuring catcher Chris Holtz of the Baltimore Orioles, will be Saturday and Sunday, Dec. 8-9 at Bowen Field House. The cost for commuters is \$60.

(includes lunch both days and T-shirt). For an overnight stay, the cost is \$95 (includes lunch and dinner on Friday, a room at Howard Johnson Lodge, breakfast and lunch on Saturday, along with a T-shirt).

For more information call 487-1306.

### • COACHES NEEDED

Walled Lake Schools need coaches for the following non-teaching vacancies: boys and girls soccer at both high schools.

Candidates should send resumes to Athletic Director Bob Atkins, 815 N. Pontiac Trail, Walled Lake, 48888. They can call him at 624-6604.

### • SOCCER CHAMPS

The Michigan Lazars '75, affiliated with the Livonia Family Y, recently won the Michigan Youth Soccer League Boys 16 (Premier Division) title with a 10-0, outscoring their opponents by a combined score of 52-2.

Members of the Lazars '75, coached by Bill Emmer, Chris Kover, Bill Binkiewicz, Dave Binkiewicz, Doug Hammond, Tim Graves, Jason Corney, Dan Brody, Matt Borden, Charles Price, Jol Hazinski, Jeremy Pinard, Paul Skoczylas, Brian Collier, Brian Killian, Tom MacDonald and Seamus Russell. Ron Corney is the assistant coach.

• The Livonia V Strikers, an under-10 girls soccer team, recently won the Western Suburban Soccer League crown with an 8-0 record.

Members of the Strikers, coached by Mike McGrath, include: Kristen Catalfo, Carrie DiBasio, Susan Dudley, Stephanie Dulz, Beth Guntzel, Megan Kelly, Carrie Kluska, Katie Knoll, Stephanie Ladd, Kristien Leszczyński, Deanna McGrath, Megan McLeod, Julie Murray, Elizabeth Poulos, Jill Richardson, Katherine Westfall and Michelle Vetrano. Ken Murray is an assistant coach.

IT WAS MIGUEL DE CERVANTES who said, "Can we ever have too much of a good thing?"

Redford Catholic Central High football coach Tom Mach may have repeatedly asked himself that question while waiting outside the bus after his team suffered their second loss in five games, an 8-0 defeat at the hands of Detroit DePorres.

It was pretty dark that night (Sept. 29) at Livonia Clarenceville High (CC's home field) as Mach stood outside the bus, trying to figure out what had gone wrong.

The team that was ranked No. 1 in the state by the Detroit News and No. 2 by the Detroit Free Press was suddenly out of the state playoff picture.

Despite a 15-year career record of 115-31-1 and five playoff appearances (including four state title games), Mach has annually been accused by some CC fans of being too stuffy offensively and too predictable with his play-calling.

WITH A SLEW of talented skill players returning for the 1990 season, Mach tinkered with an offense foreign to even himself. He was fighting the demons within him.

In that loss to DePorres, quarterback Jason Carr threw the ball 27 times, but completed only nine for 68 yards. Faced with several third-and-long type situations, Carr hid himself in "A Pock of Troubles," besieged by a swarm of blitzing DePorres tacklers.



Brad Emmons

"The loss to DePorres turned our season around. It made us re-evaluate things," said the CC coach. "We went back to basic football, less wide-open. It was time to get back to smash-mouth football, the physical brand we like to play."

The rest is history. Mach found his comfort zone and so did his players. CC went on the next week to smash rival Birmingham Brother Rice in the Boys Bowl, 32-0, followed by a 31-0 win over DePorres.

Including 31-0 demolishing of DePorres in the Catholic League finals at the Silverdome.

(Ironically, Rice won the Class A title on Friday and DePorres the state Class CC title on Saturday.)

After sneaking into the playoffs, CC man-handled three more foes — Ypsilanti (17-6), Plymouth Canton (35-22) and Saginaw (21-0).

And on Saturday back in the Silverdome for the AA championship, the Shamrocks put it all together, winning their rematch with Detroit King, the only other team to defeat them this season, 21-0.

"WE KNEW VERY little about both teams (King and DePorres)

when we played them the first time," Mach said. "This time we were controlling the ball instead of throwing it."

The Shamrocks, despite the two regular season losses, erased any doubts about them belonging in the playoffs. And if you check back on the records, CC played five opponents on its schedule who qualified for post-season play.

So it was no shock to me on Saturday that they dominated the Public School League champs in every phase of the game.

"We started believing when we beat DePorres soundly in the Catholic League championships," said fullback Jon Barbara. "We said to ourselves, 'This is our year,' and then we made it happen."

"We just started peaking at the end of the season and we carried that momentum all the way through."

Injuries to two starters midway through the season — tailback Mike Thomas and flanker Jack Davidson — may have also proved to be a blessing.

Thomas is probably CC's most talented all-around player, but his absence forced Mach to incorporate a more balanced backfield, utilizing the thundering Barbara as the power-back and the slippery Aaron Stewart as the lightning tailback. The mix was perfect.

WHEN THOMAS and Davidson returned for the playoffs, it made CC

a deeper and stronger team all the way around.

As Cervantes would say, "Thou has seen nothing yet."

Thomas was used strictly for defense. Meanwhile, Davidson shuttled in-and-out at the flanker spot with junior Frank Yoakam, who, was probably Mach's find of the season.

Yoakam enjoyed a great four-game playoff run, capped by returning a punt 58 yards on Saturday for a touchdown.

All the pieces were in place and the result Saturday was overwhelming. CC whipped a team with loads of talent.

"We've been doing it all year," Barbara said. "Nothing fancy, just power football."

The casual fan at the Silverdome had witnessed a machine-like CC performance. There were no mistakes. They played fundamentally strong football.

"They're an intelligent team as far as football sense goes," said Mach, who now has two state crowns in his hip pocket.

Following the loss to DePorres, the CC coach made things simple and he went back to playing his style of football, ignoring the whispers heard round Breakfast Drive.

Facing adversity often does wonders for a coach and a team. Cervantes, the great 16th century Spanish author, can attest to that.

"Fortune may have yet a better success in reserve for you, and they who lose today may win tomorrow."

# Hawk Football has proud tradition

Continued from Page 1

ida where he does construction work.

"He was our first really great player and the one who started this," Herrington said. "He was our first really tough kid. I guess you could say he's the model for what we like in Hawk football."

If Pink was the school's first great player, Boren, who lives in Las Vegas, was its first great running back. He was a 1,000-yard runner and the big-name player on the first Harrison team to play in a state final in 1976.

"He does the triathlon now," Herrington said. "I couldn't believe it, because he flunked swimming at Harrison. He said that's still the hardest part of it for him."

AND THERE were players like Bill Herpich, who played in 1972 and is still listed among the all-time reception and interception leaders.

"He played on our only losing team, but he never misses a Turkey Bowl," Herrington said. "We were 3-5 his senior year, and he's still proud. So you don't have to be the greatest player to stand out."

In their first year, the Hawks were 4-1 without a senior class in 1976. Harrison went 5-1, 3-0 and 5-4 the next three years and, when Pink was a senior in 1974, finished 8-1 and won its second league title.

That was just the beginning. The Hawks haven't lost more than two games a year but twice (1977 and 1978) in the past 16 seasons. There have been three undefeated teams, nine once-beaten teams.

Harrison is arguably the most successful public school team since the

(Harrison football coach John) Herrington said he'd like to coach into the next decade, another 10 years, if his staff remains together. If so there might be need for another reunion, another night like Friday.

state playoffs were started in 1975. And, during a time when parochial schools are accused of having an unfair advantage, the Hawks have established a better record than most other traditional powers.

Only Crystal Falls Forest Park (12) has qualified for the playoffs more times than Harrison (10), and only Detroit St. Martin DePorres (7) has won more state championships than the Hawks (4). DePorres has qualified 10 times and Birmingham Brother Rice won four titles, too.

The Harrison legacy includes six state-final appearances, 10 semifinals, 13 league championships (six in the Western Six, seven in the Western Lakes Activities Association), nine consecutive Western Division titles in the WLAA, and a 176-42-1 record, including a 24-6 mark in playoff games.

THE ONLY thing missing last weekend and something no amount of planning could guarantee — was a seventh try for a state title. The No. 1-rated Hawks were upset 48-38 by Oxford in the semifinals.

"That was definitely in our minds," Herrington said. "A lot of

kids came in hoping to see us in a championship game (Saturday), but it wasn't meant to be. It still didn't spell the evening."

Herrington said he'd like to coach another 10 years, if his staff remains together. If so there might be need for another reunion, another night like Friday.

"I'd say it was one of the greatest nights of my life, for the coaches to see the success the kids have made of themselves," Herrington said. "Most brought their wives to meet

us. They seemed interested in finding out what (their husbands) have been talking about all these years."

That would be the tradition they call Hawk Football.

"Please, my little girl needs blood."

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GIVE BLOOD, PLEASE

## WLAA likes good sports

The 12-school Western Lakes Activities Association will conduct its first-ever Sportsmanship Jamboree, beginning at 9 a.m. Saturday at Northville High.

The event is the kickoff for the new sportsmanship program, which will commence with the WLAA's winter sports seasons.

The WLAA's sportsmanship program is a continuation of the Michigan High School Athletic Association's "Good Sports are Winners" campaign, which was initiated by MHSAA executive director Jack Roberts.

"What is being attempted by the athletic directors and principals in the WLAA is to place an emphasis on those positive values that are so beneficial to our student-athletes, student bodies and our communities," said Bob Atkins, director of athletics and physical education for the Walled Lake Schools.

The Sportsmanship Jamboree is expected to attract between 400 and 500 athletes, coaches, athletic directors and principals.

LLOYD CARR, former head football coach at Westland John Glenn High and currently defensive coordinator for the Gator Bowl-bound University of Michigan football squad, will be the featured speaker. His topic will be, "Sportsmanship does count, even at the major college level."

Other speakers include Northville principal Dave Bolitto ("Welcome to Northville"), Walled Lake Western principal Dennis Champella ("Why Sportsmanship?"), MHSAA associate director Jerry Cevengros ("Good Sports are Winners"), official and Redford Union Schools administrator Milo Karhu ("The Game Official and the Athlete") and Livonia Stevenson athletic director Roger Frayer ("The WLAA Approach").

Following the jamboree, T-shirts and booklets will be distributed.

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