

Seniors give Marlins cause for optimism

By Dan O'Meara
staff writer

Larry Baker begins his 17th year as the Farmington Hills Mercy basketball coach with the prospects for yet another successful season.

The Marlins, who won their 14th district championship last year, will build their 1991 team around seniors and returning starters Laure DeMatteis and Kathleen Berrigan.

"It's an enviable position," said Baker, who has a career record of 307-74 as the only varsity coach Mercy has had. "With a point guard and big-time post player coming back, we have a nice nucleus."

The 6-foot DeMatteis earned All-Catholic honors while leading Mercy in rebounding with an average of 8 1/2 a game and complemented that with 11 points.

She was chosen one of the top 18 players at the

Inside Camp this summer and, according to Baker, has the potential to play at the Division I level.

"SHE EARNED her spurs last year," Baker said. "She was a very dominant player in our league and performed well against some worthy opponents."

Berrigan plays the point and set a single-season school assist record last year while averaging 8 1/2 per game. Baker has unlimited confidence in Berrigan, who was named the most valuable player of Mercy's tournament and also averaged five points.

"She's capable of completely controlling a game, which she did when we played Waterloo," Kettering for the Mercy Hoops championship. Baker said. "She keyed our fast break, and that was a real dynamic part of our offense. She will be ready to feed the ball to anybody who can get up and down on the break."

"I look for her to increase her scoring contribution this year, and I expect to give Kathleen more of a free rein than I usually do because she's very intelligent and is basketball smart."

The Marlins, who were 17-6 and reached the regional final before losing to Birmingham Marist, also return seniors Mary Bleniewicz and Natalie Cibonski and junior Katie Heffernan.

Bleniewicz, a 5-10 post, figures prominently in Baker's plans, too. She suffered a serious sprain early last season and didn't play much until late in the campaign.

SHE SCORED 19 points in two district games and averaged four rebounds for the year. Bleniewicz played this summer on the Western Wayne Wildcats AAU team that won the 16-and-under state title.

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Sports

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North Farmington coach Lance Davis instructs Danielle Laborde (center) in the technique of playing defense during a practice. Karen Seremet is the player with the basketball.

North gets commitment from 2nd-year mentor

By Dan O'Meara
staff writer

North Farmington girls basketball coach Lance Davis repaid a strong commitment on the part of his players with a renewed commitment of his own.

Davis was offered a position as a graduate assistant coach with the Wayne State University women's team this week and had to make a quick decision.

He turned it down and opted to stay with the Raiders.

"We went to team camp after our regular camp was done," Davis said. "They've come a long way. For me to leave them, it would have been wrong. To change coaches at the last minute, it wouldn't have been nice."

The Raiders, who were 9-13 and qualified for the Western Lakes Activities Association playoffs, won't have a large team, either in terms of numbers or height, with just seven players, three of whom are varsity returners.

BUT THE returning players — seniors Karen Seremet and sophomores Carey Perkins and Rebecca Marek — were starters last year.

North, however, lost one of the state's most prolific scorers in Eve Clair, who averaged 25 points a game and is on scholarship at Central Michigan. The Raiders also graduated Dana Botwick.

"Last year we had a superstar in Eve," Davis said, "but sometimes the other players relaxed knowing we had a great player."

"This year no one player has to do it. All have to contribute. If one is having a bad game, the others will cover for her. That's what I'm most comfortable with."

North got an unexpected addition when sophomore Keegan Keefover moved from Omaha, Neb., where she played for Millard North High, which won six state championships (among Class A-size schools) in the last 10 years.

"She is a fundamentally sound player and will be depended upon heavily," Davis said.

THE VARSITY also will include 5-5 sophomore Danielle Laborde, 5-6 freshman Allisha Gordon and 5-8 sophomore Kerry Richards. All three play a wing position. Laborde was on the JV team last year and Richards didn't play basketball.

Freshmen Renee Dolak (5-8 post) and Stephanie Overton (5-11 center) played with the varsity all summer and have a bundle of potential, Davis said, but they will be needed on the JV team to start the season at least because of low numbers.

"We're going to be all right," Davis said. "We'll look at things in terms of challenges and being up for the challenge. We'll walk off the court knowing we did everything we could and be satisfied with that regardless of the outcome."

"We're in one of the toughest leagues in the state, and saying we'll be competitive is saying a lot."

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Poniatowski, Miller lead Nationals to all-star win

Ariana Poniatowski's two-run homer keyed a four-run third inning that helped the Nationals win the Commercial Carpet Corporation Softball League all-star game Sunday, 9-7 over the Americans at Central Field in Plymouth.

Krista Miller was the winning pitcher, tossing a complete-game five-hitter. She struck out nine and walked 10 in seven innings.

The teams emerged from the first inning deadlocked at 3-3, but the Nationals were ahead to stay after the third-inning rally.

Mary Jo Kelly was the starting and losing pitcher for the Americans. She gave up three hits, seven walks and eight runs in four innings and was replaced by Karen Seremet, who allowed a run and three hits.

Julie Nicastri had an RBI single and later stole home in the National first inning. Beth Blasio added an RBI double. The Americans rallied in the bottom half with Amy Yocum's two-run double and Becca Bloch's run-producing groundout.

RENEE DORY added an RBI single in the third for the Nationals, who got single runs in the fourth and fifth innings. Tina Schaefer drove in a run, and Blasio tripped and scored the last run on an error.

The Americans came back with two-run innings in the fourth and sixth. Erin Kelly had an RBI double and Mary Jo Kelly a solo homer. Ann Zarula hit a triple and scored on Bloch's sacrifice fly.

Blasio had two hits and scored three runs for the winners. Erin Kelly

softball

ly had two hits and Block two RBI for the Americans.

Playing for the Nationals were Miller, Poniatowski, Cyndi Knuta and Kathy Mistravich of the Farmington Hills Majestics; Sarah Schimmling, Nicole Sequin, Dory and Schaefer of the Canton Cobras; Rachel Allor, Blasio and April Switala of the Livonia Commanders; Marian Huhn, Tanya Osborn and Nicole Noch of the Farmington Fantastics.

The American roster included Zarula, Mary Jo Kelly, Amy Yocum and Kim Cincio of the Livonia Spitfires; Seremet, Allison Stein, Kate Mackie and Becky Thursam of the Farmington Hills Diamonds; Amanda Tubaugh, Dawn Marrocco and Jenny Coleman of the Salem Shags; Erin Kelly, Mandy Young, Bloch and Lisa Craven of the Livonia Lasers.

In a pregame ceremony, Lois Mackie, the owner of Commercial Carpet and the league sponsor, presented the championship trophy to Majestics coach Dick Miller and medals to the players.

THE MAJESTICS swept a double-header from the Spitfires Aug. 15 to win the league championship.

The Majestics, who trailed the Spitfires by two games entering the final night of play, won the first game 7-1 and the second 9-4. Both teams finished with 13-3 records.

Krista Miller was the winning pitcher in both games and was 2-for-3 in the nightcap.

Majestics teammate Jackie Rajkovich hit a three-run homer to start the scoring in the first game, and she had a pair of doubles in the second. Knuta hit a pair of homers — a two-run shot in the first game and a solo blast in the second.

Allison Gunn contributed a pair of triples and Mistravich two hits in the opening victory.

Jenny Banish, who had a home run and four RBIs, tied the nightcap at 7-7 and knocked in the winning run with a groundout in the seventh inning. Andrea Thibodeau also was 2-for-3 in that game.

MARY JO KELLY, the losing pitcher in both games, was 5-for-6 in the double-header. She had two hits in the first and was 3-for-3 with three RBIs in the second.

Zarula hit a two-run homer and Cincio a two-run single for the Spitfires in the second game.

The Cobras finished third and were followed in the standings by the Commanders, Diamonds, Shags, Fantastics and Lasers.

Players receiving honorable mentions were Debbie Orzick and Kerri Quint, Majestics; Julie Nicastri and Colleen Baker, Cobras; Nikki Italia and Tracy McManamon, Commanders; Danielle Salzer and Suzanne Carlson, Fantastics; Gerylin Kephare and Melissa Novock, Spitfires; Michelle Romig, Kathy Fitzpatrick and Amy Kelman, Diamonds; Dawn Alex, Shags; Mandy Young, Lasers.

Piston exec heads charity golf event

As chief executive officer of the Detroit Pistons, Tom Wilson realized the dream of winning a pair of NBA championships.

But the Rochester Hills resident hopes he can fulfill another dream Monday in the first annual Boys Hope Open at the Tournament Players Club in Dearborn.

The charity golf event, co-sponsored by Anheuser-Busch Companies and Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Michigan, hopes to raise enough funds to open a second Boys Hope youth home in Sherwood Forest area of Detroit.

"I've never been involved in something like this before where I was able to meet some of the kids and see the program in action," said Wilson, the honorary chairman of the event. "Our goal is funding for a new home. I believe the program has an impact on the lives of these kids. They also get a genuine feel for home."

Boys Hope is a long-term, educationally based pro-

gram which offers a group home living experience for well-adjusted, intelligent young boys (normally ages 10-14). Boys Hope students are provided live-in houseparents, tutoring, financial assistance and counseling toward college, a college preparatory high school education (based on Judeo-Christian values) and a stable environment.

STUDENTS COME to Boys Hope because their needs can no longer be met in their own homes. Family situations, which might create a such a need placement at Boys Hope include the death of a parent, illness or disability of a parent, abandonment, abuse or neglect, and serious problems in family relationships.

"Now that I've had a chance to meet some of the people, it's great to be involved personally," Wilson said.

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