

# Sports

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(F18)

## North faces big tests early

Raiders have challenging '91 schedule

By Dan O'Meara  
staff writer

The first half of the 1991 football season will be a challenge to say the least for North Farmington.

Not only do the Raiders begin the season with four road games, but their first five are against Pontiac Northern, Plymouth Canton, Plymouth Salem, Walled Lake Central and Westland John Glenn.

"Those games are critical," North coach Jim O'Leary said. "If we can stay healthy through the first five games, we'll be in good shape."

"If we have success early on, I think the kids will respond to it. If not, we'll have to see how they react to it."

The Raiders finished below preseason expectations with a 5-4 record last year and have taken steps to correct certain things and make their system more efficient.

"WE'RE DOING fewer things better instead of a lot of things half decent," O'Leary said. "We simplified the offense. . . We cut down the number of plays, got more conservative and used fewer formations."

While the team underwent a re-evaluation in the offseason, North does begin a new season with plenty

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Jon Sturtz is an experienced runner in the North Farmington backfield. The senior veter-

an will start at upback and the Raider position on defense.

## All-American wins national modified title

All-American Sports Center of Farmington Hills achieved a milestone in its storied history of men's modified fast-pitch softball competition last weekend.

All-American, which has played under two other names in the past, claimed its first national championship in its first season of All-American sponsorship.

All-American — playing seven games in two days at the 10-man national tournament in Stevens Point, Wis. — overcame an earlier loss to win two straight from unbeaten Elm Street-Bud Light of Norwood, Minn., in the finals.

All-American's Dave Brubaker, the girls softball coach at North Farmington High School, was named the most valuable player of the tournament and the All-American catcher for the second time in his career.

The 36-year-old Brubaker, who played high school baseball for Roger Frayer at Livonia Churchill in the early 1970s, collected 14 hits and batted .643, scored 13 runs and drove in 18 runs.

"I HAD TWO bigger thrills playing ball," he said. "One was playing on the same team with my dad in 1973, and the other was in 1983 when I was the first-team All-American catcher. This has to be the biggest one yet, walking off with the national title."

"I've been doing this for 18 years, and (the national tournament) has been a Labor Day ritual for the last 12. I still have some good years left in me."

Other All-American players on the All-American team were pitcher Jerry Staszal, first baseman Shawn Maloney, second baseman John Longridge, shortstop Doug Kirkpatrick and center fielder Jim Dillon.

Staszal was 7-1 in the tournament, and his teammates supported his pitching with 135 hits and 105 runs.

All-American, which competed with just the minimum 10 players, had a .554 team batting average. Maloney hit .684, Kirkpatrick .680, Longridge .643, Mike Greener .587, Dan Pierce .560, Dillon .481, Bill Rowley .455, Pat Greener .435 and Staszal .364.

The team has competed in the nationals since 1983, first as PGS Radiator (1983-89) and then Boyle Chevrolet (1989-90). The team competed in the nine-man major tournament 1983-89, finishing third and seventh in '83 and '89, respectively, and the 10-man major last year.

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## Falcons minus standout Goba

Farmington's tradition of excellence in boys cross country has usually seen the Falcons with either one of the top teams or top runners in the area.

But there is reason to wonder how Farmington will fare in 1991 as it enters a new season without either Ben Goba or lot of runners on the team.

Goba, now on scholarship at the University of Tennessee, was one of the finest runners in Olivetown for four years and finished third in Class A last year.

"When you're used to getting first place in just about every meet, it's going to be a lot different," Farmington coach Jerry Young said. "We'll miss him, but all the good ones graduate eventually."

At the start of practice, Young had 14 runners, but the Falcons do return junior Dave Clineard, who was consistently the second man behind Goba last year. He finished 15th in the Western Lakes Activities Association and 17th in the regional, qualifying for the state meet.

"He'll be in the top five or 10 at each invitational," Young said, "but we don't have a lot of support for him."

Farmington, which dominated the WLAA title for five years before dropping to fourth place last year and finished 6-3 in duals, returns seniors Scott Frump, Jon Duff, Jeff James, Mark Nordin and Mark Scario and juniors John Lane and Pat O'Dell.

The team will include junior Steve McBurney, sophomores Chris Frump, Jason James and Jason Parnuchowski and freshmen Tripp Adams and Tom May.

Nordin missed all but three meets last year with a broken arm but is expected to be the No. 2 runner behind Clineard. Lane was a consistent JV runner and has improved, and Young expects O'Dell, James and Duff to help. Scario will captain the team.

"We just haven't had a lot of kids; they're not coming out in numbers," Young said. "Hopefully, that will change. If we get another 10 to 15 kids, we'll be alright. But recruiting isn't easy, and it isn't an easy sport."

Farmington begins the season Saturday in the West Bloom-

field Invitational.

FARM. HARRISON

Last year was a season full of near misses for the Farmington Hills Harrison boys cross country team.

The Hawks finished 3-6 in Western Lakes Activities Association dual meets and 5-6 overall. Four of the losses were a by point, and the year ended with Harrison just missing the Class B championships.

"As a Class B school, it's harder to compete against these bigger schools," Hawk coach John Reed said. "I don't know if we'll contend for the WLAA title this year, but our goal is to qualify in Class B."

Reed is hoping that some of the hard-to-swallow losses of a year ago will have sweeter results. Harrison didn't lose any runners, and a promising group of freshmen makes the future look even brighter.

Senior Jason Zyrtaki, who was a Class B state qualifier, returns to lead the Hawks. Senior Mike Deans, who missed qualifying for the state by one place, also returns, giving Harrison a potent one-two punch.

"I believe Jason is one of the top five runners in the area, and Mike is in the top 10," Reed said. "We have two front runners on this team and after that, we have about 11 runners who run about equal."

Some of those runners are senior Par Larsson, juniors Justin Dryer, Tim Bission, Roger Stadler, Aaron Hairo and Steve Swartz and sophomore Doug Bacon.

Reed also has high expectations for freshmen Todd Haney and twins Justin and Chad Kooner.

"Chad wears a chain and Justin doesn't," Reed said. "In his four years as coach, Reed has never won a WLAA title and isn't sure if this team will, but he does believe this team is different from his past squads."

"I've had some good runners — three of whom were state qualifiers — but this is the best team I've had yet," Reed said. "I think we'll be a good team this year, but even better next year."

## Panthers roll over Raiders

Junior guard Wendy Malacki poured in a game-high 16 points Tuesday to pace visiting Itedford Union to a 57-31 non-league girls basketball win over North Farmington.

Malacki also pulled down seven rebounds and dished off five assists. Senior forward Shannon Morris chipped in 11 points for the unbeaten Panthers (3-0).

IU, which converted eight of 10 free throws, led 30-22 at halftime and 38-27 after three quarters. North (0-3) was paced by sophomore center Carey Perkins' eight points.

KIMBALL 68, FARMINGTON 35: Royal Oak Kimball outscored visiting Farmington 31-17 in the opening half Tuesday en route to the non-league win.

Farmington (1-2) was led by junior guard Nicole Bingham's 10 points. Junior forward Tammy Allen contributed 12 rebounds.

Kimball (1-0) converted nine of 17 free throws, while the Falcons made nine of 18.



Allison Stein of North has her progress impeded by RU's Shannon Morris. The Raiders lost the game.

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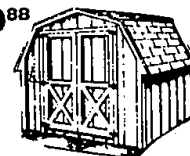
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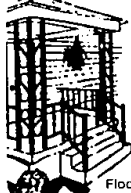
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