

City champions: Harrison boys, North girls

By Dan O'Meara staff writer

The annual city cross country meets produced a changing of the guard among Farmington public school teams Wednesday at Oakland Community College.

Farmington Hills Harrison won its first boys championship since the school opened in 1970 as the Hawks dethroned perennial winner Farmington, the champion in 21 of the past 26 years.

North Farmington captured the girls title, winning it for the first time under sixth-year coach Bill Pinnell Jr. The Raiders also ended domination of the meet by the Farmington girls.

Harrison achieved its historic victory with a team total of 30 points. The Falcons had 36 and North 56.

After a good showing in the West Bloomfield Invitational — the Hawks were fifth in

the Division I race — Harrison coach John Reed figured this could be the year for his team in the city meet.

"WE WENT IN hoping to win, we were planning on it," he said. "I thought we could do it if we ran smart."

The Hawks were led by first-place Jason Zydrski, who finished in 16:47 and was the only runner to break 17 minutes, and they put four runners in the top seven.

Harrison's Mike Deans was third (17:34), Justin Dreyer fifth (18:06) and Todd Hance seventh (18:17). Par Larsson completed the team scoring, finishing 14th (18:36).

Reed said the Hawks could have run even stronger, but Harrison had a hard workout Monday and attempted to do more than it should have. As a result, the boys who usually run fourth and fifth for the Hawks finished sixth and eighth.

"We ran well but we were a little tired,"

'This is definitely the best team we've ever had.'

— Bill Pinnell Jr.
North Farmington coach

he said. "With a little rest, I think we can be even better."

While he and his runners are pleased to win the city title, Reed said it wasn't the main goal for Harrison, which just missed qualifying for the state finals last year.

"IT WAS NOT our goal to win the city as much as it is to make the Class B state championships," he said. "This is one step along the way. If we can beat some of the A schools, I think we can do well against B teams."

Pinnell, likewise, figured the Raiders had a good chance to win the city title after claiming the Division II girls championship

at West Bloomfield.

"From looking at the results of that meet, I was expecting to win, but I didn't know we would dominate as much," he said.

North, with six runners in the top nine, scored an impressive 21 points and ran away with the title. Farmington was second with 35.

"I didn't expect them to run that well after having such a good meet on Saturday," Pinnell said, "because I think our course is a little tougher than the one at Marshbank."

Emilly Shively, the individual winner at West Bloomfield, added city honors with a first-place time of 18:59.

"I've been impressed with what she's done," Pinnell said. "She has times she wants to meet as the year progresses, and she's right on target."

OTHERS: KEGGAN Keelover was third (21:39), Jenny Webb fourth (21:46), Alicia

Crossland sixth (22:00), Lisa Wantuck eighth (22:30), Amy Roberts ninth (22:34) and Carolyn Altio 12th (23:15).

"As a team this was probably our best race," Pinnell said. "It all just came together for us."

"Nine of the 12 girls who ran had personal best times, and the ones who didn't were not far off. This is definitely the best team we've ever had."

Farmington's Allison Davis was second (21:08), Pam Buha fifth and Dana Goba seventh. Harrison had no runners in the top 10.

In the boys races, Farmington's Dave Cunniff was second (17:17), Mario Nordini fourth (17:54) and Tom Kay sixth (18:26). Jason Parmuchowski (18:23), John Duff (18:31), Pat O'Dell (18:31) and John Lane (18:33) finished in the Nos. 10-13 places.

North's top runner was Jeff Howie, sixth overall at 18:59. Jeff Simpson was eighth (18:26).

The Farmington Observer

Sports

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Monday, September 16, 1991 O&E (F)10

Marlins remain tourney champs

By Dan O'Meara staff writer

Nobody will be surprised if Kathleen Berrigan lists the Mercy Hoops Tournament as her most memorable high school event in her yearbook.

The Farmington Hills Mercy senior won named most valuable player for the second year in a row and helped the Marlins repeat as champions Saturday night with a 43-38 win over Plymouth Canton.

As the point guard, Berrigan directed a comeback effort that saw Mercy rally from a 15-point deficit in the first half and outscore the Chiefs 18-4 in the last quarter.

She scored 19 of her 12 points after halftime, which included clutch free throws late in the game, and teammate Laure DeMattia led the Marlins with 18 points from her post position.

"(Mercy coach Larry Baker) has stressed what a classic this is and that it's our tournament," Berrigan said. "I think we were the underdog in this game, and it was good to come out here and show what we had."

Berrigan was joined on the all-tournament team by DeMattia, Canton's Stephanie Gray and Brittina Anderson and Muskegon Mona Shores freshman Stacy Plasecki, who led her team to a 38-33 defeat of Waterford Kettering in the consolation game.

I had trouble with the MVP selection only in that Kathleen and Laure have equal skills and value," Baker said. "It's just apples and oranges."

It looked as if Canton would capture the title it won in 1989 when it raced to a 20-5 lead in the second quarter. Gray, who averaged 19.4 points in two games, scored

girls basketball

13 of her team-high 15 in the first half, including a triple and the first four baskets of the second quarter.

Canton's post defense took away Mercy's best offensive weapon, DeMattia under the basket. The Chiefs combined that with good use of the full court on offense.

"No doubt the tournament highlighted some of our offensive weaknesses," Baker said. Canton's zone "absolutely threw me for a loop. It took the coaching staff 1 1/2 quarters to solve it."

"We weren't being as aggressive as we usually are," Berrigan said. "At halftime I think it hit us that we just weren't getting the job done. We've come from behind to win two other times, so I guess we decided to do it again."

DeMattia's eight points kept Mercy in the game at halftime, though it trailed 22-13. The Chiefs still enjoyed a 32-24 lead after three periods.

DeMattia finished that quarter with a three-point play and Mercy carried the momentum into the finale. The Marlins used a half-court trap to force Canton turnovers and narrow the gap by converting them.

Baker attributed the play of guard Zondre Simmons, in conjunction with Berrigan and Katie Heffernan, for making Mercy's pressure defense successful.

"Zondre was the difference," Baker said. "It was a close call whether Zondre would play on the varsity or not, but she has been a big-time part of our come-from-behind wins."

"We wanted to keep the game at our offensive end and it worked. We stuck to our tenacity theme. That kind of great attitude has carried the day for us now for eight days."

Kelly Holmes gave Canton a 34-24 lead to start the fourth quarter, but the Marlins scored the next 13 points while Canton went scoreless for nearly five minutes.

Mercy capitalized on a series of turnovers and took the lead (35-34) with Heffernan's rebound basket with 3:45 remaining. DeMattia and Berrigan increased it to 39-34 before Anderson ended the Canton drought at 2:05. DeMattia, Berrigan and Dana Wade combined for four free throws and a 45-38 lead with 16 left.

"Mercy is one of those teams that keeps coming at you," Canton coach Bob Blohm said. "In my scouting report, I said the team has a big heart. They never get discouraged."

Anderson and senior Julie Nicastrri being in foul trouble hurt the Chiefs, Blohm said. Nicastrri finished with seven points, Anderson and Holmes six each.

"When it got close, we played way too fast, rubbed our shots and didn't do the things we needed to do," Blohm said.

"We didn't move the ball as well as we did in the first half. The ball was in the open player's hands all the time. In the second half, we were a little tentative and that hurt us."



Mercy center Laure DeMattia, being guarded by Kettering's Laura Rietz, scored a game-high 23 points Thursday. See story on Page 2B.

Farmington posts win over Western

Farmington rebounded from an opening-game defeat to score an impressive football victory Friday over host Walled Lake Western, 13-2.

The Falcons have won three of their last four games, and preseason assessments had Western with one of its best teams in several years. Both are 1-1.

"They are a good team, but people had better not look past us because we're coming to play football," Farmington coach Berthe Call said.

"This should be one of Farmington's best teams in years, too. It's too bad we couldn't get the first one, but sometimes that wakes you up more than anything."

The Falcons, who lost their first game 20-8 at West Bloomfield, spotted the Warriors a 3-0 lead on Travis Ilaqua's 35-yard field goal in the first quarter but proceeded to dominate the game.

"I SAID 'HEY, guys, they'll have to settle for field goals all night. They can't score on us; we've got them,'" Call told his players.

Farmington used up most of the second-quarter clock, driving 80 yards in 13 plays to take a 7-3 halftime lead.

Jay Jensen caught a pair of crucial third-down passes to keep the drive going, and Chris Marling scored the first of two touchdowns on a 4-yard run. Dave Monge booted the extra point.

Nate April made a key interception in the Farmington end zone before halftime to stop a Western drive.

The Falcons controlled the ball in the second half but didn't score again until the final minute when Marling, who rushed 26 times for 167 yards, dashed 35 yards on fourth down. The PAT was blocked.

Farmington's defense held the Warriors to 59 yards rushing and 161 in total offense. The Falcons forced five turnovers and had two quarter-back sacks.



Todd Anderson rushed for 163 yards and two touchdowns Friday as the Raiders ripped Canton 26-15.

Hawks pass another test, 21-12

By Dan O'Meara staff writer

Farmington Hills Harrison is still unbeaten (2-0) and still the top-rated high school football team in Michigan.

But Plymouth Salem brought the Hawks, who rolled over Birmingham Brother Rice in the season opener, down from Cloud Nine in Game 2 Saturday at Harrison.

A second victory wasn't achieved so easily as the underdog Rocks, taking new life from Leon Hister's second-half kickoff return for a touchdown, played an inspired game but succumbed to the Hawks 21-12.

"We've never had two tougher openers in the 21 years I've been here," Harrison coach John Herrington said. "We've had tough openers before, but we've always been able to come back with a little easier team."

Salem, 1-1 overall and ranked No. 5 in Class AA, used a solid defense to hold the Hawks at bay in the first half but sputtered offensively until the second half. The Rocks had 44 of their 182 yards in the first half and trailed 14-0 at halftime.

IN THE FIRST half, I think we were maybe a little intimidated by their size and reputation," Salem coach Tom Mosheimer said. "Once we found out they're players like we are, we came back and played real well in the second half."

The Rocks gained a surge of momentum when Hister ran 90 yards with the kickoff, making the

score 14-6 when the point-after-touchdown kick was wide.

Salem had just two first downs in the first half, but the Rocks moved the ball on their next two possessions before giving it up with a fumble and a punt. Salem stopped the Hawks from getting a first down the first two times they had the ball in the third quarter, however.

"After the kickoff return, I thought they blocked harder and ran harder the next time they had the ball," Herrington said. "We needed to make a few first downs, but we were 1-2-3 and punt. That's not the way to take back the momentum."

Harrison did eventually stem the tide with an 80-yard, 11-play scoring drive to take a 21-6 lead. Andy Fitzpatrick's 24-yard pass to Matt Gordon put the ball on the Salem 1-yard line and set up Roy Granger's TD run in the fourth quarter.

"We had them third-and-long, and it's a credit to our defense that we forced them to go to the air," Mosheimer said. "They were having trouble running the ball on us in the second half. But they're so multi-talented they can do almost anything, and they made some great athletic plays."

THE ROCKS were still in the game when they punched out a 45-yard, four-play drive at 7:28. Hister ran 14 yards for the TD, but Greg Piscopink intercepted the conversion pass to keep Salem nine points down, 21-12.

The Rocks had one more chance when Chip Wadowski's interception gave Salem the ball at

its 31 with 2:57 remaining. The Rocks were forced to punt without getting a first down.

"We didn't have much offense in the first half, but our kids came off the ball in the second half," Mosheimer said. "The two platoons didn't hurt us either, because our kids were fresher than theirs in the second half."

"The defense played well but got tired," Herrington said. "We have too many people going both ways. In the next few weeks, we're going to have to find some substitutes."

Early penalties plus the Salem defense stopped the Hawks until Granger, who rushed 77 yards and caught four passes for 51, took a swing pass from Fitzpatrick and wove his way 39 yards to the end zone for a 7-0 lead.

Harrison went up 14-0 with 1:24 left in the half after Mike Pesci's interception at the Salem 22. Piscopink made a leaping, leaning catch in the end zone for the score.

"I WAS DISAPPOINTED because I thought we had a chance to go in only seven down," Mosheimer said. Hister's kick return would then have tied the score. "That was a key play, even though it happened in the first half, because it turned the game around."

"Plus, Piscopink made a great catch. They have those kind of athletes who can make those kind of plays. That's what makes them so great, and they're well coached."

Raiders rebound with 26-15 win

By Dan O'Meara staff writer

North Farmington lost its first football game to Pontiac Northern a year ago, and some people wondered if the Raiders ever recovered from the defeat.

While North suffered another gut-wrenching loss to the Huskies this year, it was obvious Friday night the Raiders had overcome it and were determined not to let it affect this season.

North resembled nothing like a devastated team, instead inflicting the devastation on host Plymouth Canton, soundly defeating a quality program that reached the second round of the Class AA playoffs last year, 26-15.

"I confirm what we thought last week," North coach Jim O'Leary said, referring to the 21-14 loss in which the Raiders led until the last minute. "We're a very good football team and could have won that game. This is a great step in the right direction."

Junior running back Todd Anderson was the workhorse in North's run-oriented offense, which dominated the game and had the Chiefs reeling much of the game.

ANDERSON RUSHED for 163 yards on 29 attempts and scored a pair of touchdowns. Mike Corridore and Jack Wilks combined for an additional 54 yards as the Raiders outgained Canton 219-79 on the ground.

"Todd Anderson is a good running back, and you give the ball to your best running back," O'Leary said. "He ran well last week and this week he ran even better."

North controlled the first-quarter clock but settled for a 6-0 lead following a pair of field goals by Adam Chalmers from 40 and 31 yards.

Despite being pushed around, the Chiefs responded with Steve Hohl's 1-yard scoring run and a 7-6 lead after Jeff Nale kicked the extra point early in the second quarter.

The Raiders capitalized on field position and a pair of Canton mistakes to gain an 18-7 lead at halftime, however.

"THEY CONTROLLED the line of scrimmage on both sides of the ball," Canton coach Bob Knoeche said. "They really did a number on us."

We were fortunate in the first half to even be ahead at one point. They had some penalties that stopped some of their drives and made them kick the field goals. But you can only hold the water off so long."

After the first Chalmers field goal, the Raiders recovered an onside kick at the Canton 42-yard line. Anderson had a 7-yard TD run nullified by holding, and Chalmers was eventually called on again.

"We just gotta get points," O'Leary said. "We've got a lot of confidence in our kicker and defense. The worst thing is to come away with nothing."

A face-mask penalty — the Raiders overcame 80 yards in penalties — and a 37-yard pass from Mark Kozio, who started in place of injured Kevin Shankle (bruised leg), to Eric Cunningham set up Hohl's TD.

The Chiefs, punting on their next possession, noticed a wideout was not covered and called for a pass at their 42. But the wideout didn't hear the signal, and the pass from punter Mark Meszaros fell incomplete.

NORTH NEEDED 10 plays to score and take a 12-7 lead on Anderson's 1-yard drive. With the Chiefs starting again at their 15, North's Jason Horwitz returned an interception to the 25. That led to Mark Temple's 5-yard TD pass to Brian Lee with only 39 seconds left in the half.

"The interception was a big break before halftime," O'Leary said. "You go down two TDs instead of six points and it takes a lot out of you."

"There were a couple of bad things near the end of the second quarter that helped them get two TDs, but they never should have happened," Knoeche said. "The interception was a terrible call on my part."

North virtually decided the issue when it drove 64 yards in four plays with the second-half kickoff and extended its lead to 26-7. Anderson scored on a 17-yard run at 10:13, and Temple passed to Lee for the conversion.