

Crusaders spike Northwood

By C.J. Bleak
staff writer

Talk about traveling through unfamiliar waters... There are a couple of volleyball teams in the NIAA's District 33 doing just that. It's been five years since Northwood Institute has been anywhere but at the district's summit.

Until last Thursday, that is. Now the Northwestern find themselves a step short of the top spot — courtesy of Madonna University.

The Lady Crusaders know what it's like to be close, but not quite good enough — a position they have now relegated to Northwood. Meanwhile, they must adjust to being top dog.

Madonna gained that position in convincing style, sending Northwood down to defeat — its first district loss in five years — in three-straight games, 15-13, 14-15, 15-6 at Madonna.

"I thought we played exceptionally well," said Crusader coach Jerry Abraham. "We played great defense. We kept everything up off the floor and just didn't let them get into their game."

"We never had any breakdowns."

THERE WERE opportunities, however. The first game took 45 minutes to play as the two teams traded points for every ball and scratched for every point. The Lady Crusaders tied at 13-13, then four side-outs by the Crusaders won the match.

Crusaders got it on an Evette Slader dink that hit the top of the net and spun over for a point. An Elena Oparik dinked the ball into the net for the Crusaders' favor.

The second game was much the same. Madonna's biggest lead was three points, but Northwood battled back and before the Crusaders tied it at 10. It was tied at 11 when a Toni Smith service ace and two kills won the match.

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by Dana Hicks-Finley put Madonna up 14-11.

Northwood rallied, though, tying it at 14 and putting the Crusaders in jeopardy of folding under the pressure. But it didn't happen; the Crusaders scored twice, blocking a pair of Northwood kill attempts to post the 16-14 win.

"They had that hunger," was how Northwood coach Kevin Fagan explained the match. "Tonight, they were hungrier than we were."

IT SHOWED in the third game, certainly. The two teams traded points 5-0 in district play, coming into the match, and their evenness was evident in the first two games of the match — the biggest lead for either side had been four points.

Not so in game No. 3. The score was tied at 2; after that, Madonna outplayed the Northwestern 10-1 to take a commanding 12-3 advantage. Kristy McPadden closed out the match with a kill in a 15-4 final-game victory.

It was Hicks-Finley, though, who spurred the Crusaders. She finished with 25 kills and 11 digs, and the admiration of the opposing team's coach.

"She was the difference tonight," said Fagan. "She was awesome. Every time there was a situation where we needed a play, we couldn't make it. But she came through for them."

It wasn't all Hicks-Finley. Oparika had 20 kills, Smith contributed 12 kills and 11 digs and McPadden finished with nine kills. Jenny Sladewski led the defense with 18 digs; Maureen Paulin added 13. And Penny Baker was near-perfect in her setting.

This isn't the end, though. Madonna hasn't won anything yet. The Crusaders, 14-10 overall, still must beat Aquinas College Tuesday, then have to capture the district tournament to reach the NIAA Tournament.

But they're certainly staked solid claims to both.

Kranz, Worthen guide North to swim victory

North Farmington, led by double individual winners Karrie Kranz and Carrie Worthen, defeated cross-town rival Farmington 102-84 in girls swimming Thursday.

The host Raiders are 3-4 in dual meets. Kranz won the 200-yard freestyle (2:01.9) and 100 freestyle (56.75). Worthen the individual medley (2:23.14) and breast stroke (1:14.03).

Both were on two winning relay teams, also. Worthen, Sherri Richardson, Becky Labbura and Kranz won the 200-free-style relay (1:51.35), and Shannon O'Brien, Worthen, Richardson and Kranz comprised the winning 400-free-style relay team (3:58.29).

North diver Mandy Terrell won that event and set varsity and pool records with 251.10 points.

The Raiders also took first place in the 500 freestyle with Richardson swimming 5:35.42 and the backstroke with Erica Vincent finishing in 1:11.38. Jill Hawkins and Becky Weary had one individual win each for Farmington and assisted a winning effort in the 200-mixed relay.

Weary won the butterfly (1:05.53) and Hawkins the 50 freestyle (27.22), and they combined with Maureen Gerwatowski and Jill Benivenga to win the relay in 2:07.48.

Mercy gets league win

Farmington Hills Mercy raised its Catholic League swim record to 2-0 with a victory over visiting Madison Heights Bishop Foley Wednesday, 55-30.

"We gave many of our newer and upcoming swimmers an opportunity to earn placing points tonight," Mercy coach Terry Eudy-Teeters said. "We saw some nice time drops and in a few cases, some lifetime best swims."

The Marlins were led by junior April Kula, who won the 200-yard freestyle (2:17) and the 100 freestyle (1:03). Sophomore Allison Strand placed behind Kula in the same event. Senior Colleen Kelley won the individual medley (2:36.2).

The all-freshman trio of Beth Minnick, Katy Runyan and Allison Machacek swept the 500 freestyle with times of 6:03, 6:20 and 6:39. Accord-

ing to Eudy-Teeters, Minnick "had a lot left" at the end of her race, enough to break the six-minute barrier.

Sophomore Lynn Leelle captured the butterfly with a lifetime best (1:12). The 50 freestyle was won by Heather Yagala (1:24) while Amy Watrobe and Machacek placed second (1:29.9 and 1:30.4).

Two standout swims occurred in the breaststroke as Lori Kelley and Sue McClellan went 1-2 with lifetime bests of 1:19.9 and 1:20. The Marlins rounded out their scoring with Nancy Harvey (1:10) and Michelle Welch (1:13.7) finishing first and second in the backstroke.

Mercy will be host to Livonia Lakeside at 4 p.m. Tuesday in the final home meet for the Marlins and their six seniors.

Chiefs edge Hawks

Plymouth Canton overcame a sound performance by Farmington Hills Hawks to win 52-47 in girls basketball Thursday night.

The Chiefs, who had won 10 consecutive games heading into a Saturday showdown with Plymouth Salem, trailed 30-32 after three quarters but outscored Harrison 20-11 in the final period.

Sophomore guard Britta Anderson scored nine of her 15 points and junior center Stephanie Gray six of 15 in the fourth quarter.

Freshman guard Erin LaCasse made a three-point basket with seven seconds remaining to get the Hawks within three, 50-47. Anderson closed the win for Canton with a pair of free throws.

"We're competing game in and game out," Harrison coach Pete Mantyla said. "This was our best overall team effort in terms of how well we executed and how hard we played. All the girls played with a lot of heart."

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at the line, it could have been a different game.

The Hawks made 15 of 30 free throws, Canton eight of 13.

"In the middle quarters, I didn't think we played very well," Blohm said. "We got some rebounds in the fourth quarter and finished off nicely. Rebounding the ball is a big concern for us right now."

REGINA 52, MERCY 31: The host Marlins lost another one-sided game to Harper Woods Regalia in the Central Division of the Catholic League Thursday. The Saddleticks defeated Mercy 71-42 in an earlier game.

The Marlins are 4-3 in the division and 10-3 overall, Regina 6-1 and 12-3.

"The story was in the first half again," Mercy coach Larry Baker said, referring to Regina leads of 18-4 and 27-13 at the end of the first and second quarters.

"They scored 30 points in the first quarter last time. It was more reasonable this time, but we didn't get anything going offensively."

Regina's 6-foot-2 center Paula Sanders neutralized Mercy's Laure DeMatteis as an offensive threat for the Marlins.

"They took us out of our inside game, and that accounted for our low point production early," Baker said. "We never got into an offensive rhythm."

"If we play them again in the league playoffs, we will have to solve the inside puzzle."

Mary Bliniewicz led the Marlins with nine points. Katie Heffernan had seven and Kathleen Berrigan four.

Greetschen Super had 15 points and Kristin Francis 14 for the Saddleticks, who outscored Mercy 14-11 in the third quarter and 25-18 in the second half.

Raiders defeat Falcons

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Senior Amani Plater and junior Tammy Allen scored nine and eight points, respectively, for the Falcons.

ON TUESDAY, North led a lead all away in its 57-54 overtime loss to Walpole Lake Western, but Tuesday's lead was never in jeopardy.

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ALLISON DAVIS OF FARMINGTON placed 10th in the WLAAs meet.

WLAAs BOYS/OIRLS CROSS COUNTRY MEETS

(Wednesday at Case Benton)

GIRLS TEAM STANDINGS

1. North Farmington, 45; 2. Livonia Stevenson, 54; 3. Walpole Lake Western, 62; 4. Plymouth Salem, 119; 5. Plymouth Canton, 123; 6. Farmington, 149; 7. Livonia Church, 149; 8. Walpole Lake Central, 149; 9. Livonia Franklin, 237; 10. Northville, 278; 11. Farmington Hills Harrison, 337; 12. Westland John Glenn, no score.

GIRLS INDIVIDUAL RESULTS

1. Emily Shively (NF), 19:43; 2. A.J. Kozak (LS), 20:10; 3. Bridget Byrne (WLV), 20:12; 4. Tashira Belcher (WLV), 20:37; 5. Lena Boudreau (NF), 20:38; 6. Megan Keelover (NF), 20:37; 7. Udder MacKinnon (NF), 20:45; 8. Stacy Mack (PS), 20:46; 9. Jacie Crossland (NF), 21:03; 10. Alison Davis (F), 21:07; 11. Stacy Prais (LS), 21:07; 12. Jerry Wolf (NF), 21:08; 13. Emily Franklin (NF), 21:13; 14. Kelly Prais (LS), 21:14; 15. Amy Jo Paszek (LC), 21:15; 16. Colleen O'Brien (WLV), 21:16; 17. Lisa Warrick (NF), 21:17; 18. Wendy Prais (WLV), 21:18; 19. Anne Doble (PC), 21:25; 20. Gail Grewe (LS), 21:26; 21. Dana Goble (F), 21:29; 22. Stacy Duff (WLV), 21:43; 23. Laura Wain (WLV), 21:45; 24. Tammy Allen (WLV), 21:51; 25. Julie Cutting (F), 21:59.

BOYS TEAM STANDINGS

1. Walpole Lake Western, 22; 2. Farmington Hills Harrison, 71; 3. Plymouth Canton, 85; 4. Plymouth Canton, 85; 5. Livonia Church, 102; 6. Farmington, 162; 7. Livonia Stevenson, 162; 8. Westland John Glenn, 207; 9. Livonia Franklin, 223; 10. Northville, 233; 11. North Farmington, 299; 12. Walpole Lake Central, 328.

BOYS INDIVIDUAL RESULTS

1. BA Crosby (WLV), 15:55; 2. Jim Sweetman (WLV), 16:30; 3. Jason Zupski (F), 16:42; 4. Matt Wright (WLV), 16:55; 5. Dave O'Brien (F), 17:00; 6. Art Schneider (WLV), 17:02; 7. Derek Cude (PS), 17:10; 8. Casey Moothart (PC), 17:15; 9. Chris Crosby (WLV), 17:20; 10. Matt Ross (LS), 17:21; 11. Jeff Lamm (JC), 17:26; 12. Justin Dreyer (F), 17:31; 13. Mike Deane (F), 17:33; 14. Jayson McDonald (PS), 17:36; 15. Chris Burns (PC), 17:39; 16. Jeff Martus (LC), 17:39; 17. Jon McInnes (PS), 17:39; 18. Brandon Kneary (WLV), 17:39; 19. Steve Boudreau (PS), 17:44; 20. David Vack (PC), 17:45; 21. Todd Harty (F), 17:50; 22. Scott Cronin (LS), 17:52; 23. Jeff Howe (NF), 18:00; 24. Shawn McLanahan (PC), 18:05; 25. Lee Owens (LF), 18:09.

FREE KITCHEN COUNTERTOP OR FRIGIDAIRE