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Harrison boys capture regional crown

By Dan O'Meara
staff writer

The Farmington Hills Harrison boys cross country team fulfilled a season-long ambition Saturday by qualifying for the Class B championships.

The Hawks didn't get just a passing grade in the regional meet at Riverview Highlands Golf Course, either.

They made an impressive showing, defeating No. 5-ranked Dearborn Divine Child to win the team title. Harrison had 47 points, the Falcons 52 and Monroe St. Mary-Catholic Central 72.

"We were hoping to get third and ended up winning," Harrison coach John Reed

said. "Everyone ran his best race of the year."

Reed and his runners are puzzled as to why the Hawks, runners-up behind Class A power Walling Lake Western in the Western Lakes Activities Association meet, have been ignored in the statewide Class B coaches poll.

"WE STILL have not received a state ranking, and the only dual meet we lost was to Walling Lake Western," Reed said. "The kids think it's funny, but we're going to try and show people who we are Saturday and get some respect."

"Hopefully, things will change Saturday. I find it kinda ironic that we can win a region-

cross country

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al and place in all the invitationals and not get a state ranking."

There's also an advantage in that for the unranked Hawks, however. Nobody knows who they are and doesn't expect them to do well.

"I'm quite sure we caught Divine Child off guard," Reed said. "They probably didn't ex-

pect us to be as good as we are. But we knew time-wise we were right in there with them."

Reed would like to see Harrison finish ahead of Divine Child and place among the top teams Saturday at Tyrone Hills Golf Course in Linden.

"Somewhere in the top five would be nice," he said. "We accomplished our goal — we got there — so whatever happens will be nice. But hopefully we'll be up there."

(Not being ranked) is kinda nice, though. It should work to our advantage. The kids will go up there with no pressure on them, and when there's no pressure you should be able to perform well."

THE HAWKS certainly did that in the re-

gional. The five who scored place in the top 16, and all seven runners were in the top 30.

Jason Zdzinski led the Hawks with a third-place finish and 16:30 time. Ryan Burt of Divine Child was the individual winner at 16:08.

Harrison's Justin Dreyer was fifth (16:54), Todd Haney 11th (17:08), Mike Deans 12th (17:11), Tim Blason 16th (17:27), Par Larsson 21st (17:30) and Justin Knoose 30th (17:57).

"We have five running together, and they should be in the 20s and 30s," Reed said. "You need a pack and we have that now."

"Everyone got up there and hung in there (at the regional). They ran a tough last mile and looked great. Our confidence is real high right now and if we can stay relaxed we can do alright on Saturday."

WLAA final was gridiron classic

By Dan O'Meara
staff writer

It looked as if it would be just another football game, except of course that it would decide the Western Lakes Activities Association championship.

But the Farmington Harrison-North Farmington game Saturday turned out to be a classic with the Hawks winning 20-14 in overtime.

The teams traded touchdowns and combined for 22 points in the final 3:44 to make an otherwise dull game — Harrison was clinging to a 6-0 lead when the shootout began — an interesting, thrilling event.

"This is good. This is what football should be," Harrison coach John Herrington said. "If you want to use the old cliché, it does build character and heart."

It had been a heated struggle, a real physical contest, from the start. The whirlwind finish left the players emotionally spent as well, not to mention the coaches and spectators.

"It was the toughest game I've ever played," Harrison's Mike Pesci said. "I've never been so physically drained after a game."

"They were a physical team. I was impressed with (North tailback Todd) Anderson. The one thing he did was keep his feet while we were slipping and sliding."

North took a 7-6 lead and tied the score at 14-14 with two Mark Temple touchdowns passes to Mike Jehle and a pair of Adam Chalmers extra-point kicks.

Harrison had taken a 14-7 lead on

football

quarterback Andy Fitzpatrick's TD run and his conversion pass to Pesci. The Hawks nearly won without going to overtime when speedy Roy Granger returned a kickoff to the North 7-yard line with six seconds left.

"The only stupid thing I did was kickoff to Granger," North coach Jim O'Leary said. "Thank goodness he didn't score, or I would have buried myself in a hole. But you don't want to kick it shallow and give them field position either."

• The Raiders weren't given much of a chance against unbeaten Harrison, but they made believers of people who saw the game and remained a top-10 team in Class A with a 6-2 record.

"I told the kids you don't play the game on paper," O'Leary said. "We weren't awestruck by them. We know they have great talent, but we wanted to get them in a close ballgame and see what happened."

• The Hawks (8-0) had only one difficult game prior to playing North, and that was six weeks earlier when they defeated Plymouth Salem 21-12. Harrison rolled over its next five opponents by 31 points or more.

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DANIEL LIPPITT/staff photographer

Mercy's Dana Wade struggles to maintain her dribble and her balance Tuesday against Marian. Guarding her is Kim Rafalski.

Marian turns out lights on Marlins

By Neal Zipser
staff writer

The lights in the Birmingham Marian gym went out with 2:52 remaining in Tuesday's girls basketball game, but it was too late to save Farmington Hills Mercy.

The Marlins couldn't turn off the red-hot shooting of the Mustangs, who shot 57 percent from the field en route to beating its Catholic League rival 59-39 before a packed crowd.

Marian, 6-2 in the Central Division and 12-4 overall, also avenged its 45-43 loss to the Marlins earlier this season. The lopsided victory was not a surprise to Mustangs coach Mary Lillie-Cicerone.

"We were very disappointed with the way we played over there," she said. "Mercy outshined us in that game but not tonight."

"I was embarrassed they outshined us. We should have won like this the last time we played them. We may have been overconfident that game."

JUNIOR GUARD Stephanie Storen, who made eight of 10 of her shots and scored a game-high 19 points, agreed with her coach.

"We didn't play well when we lost to them," said Storen, who also added seven rebounds and eight assists. "We wanted to beat them tonight, period. But we wanted to beat them by 30 points, and we went out there with that mentality."

Mercy didn't have a good start, missing several easy shots, but only trailed 7-6 three minutes into the

girls basketball

game. However, the Marlins, 4-4 and 10-4, went the next 7:15 without scoring a point.

"We missed some shots we needed to make early in the game," Mercy coach Larry Baker said. "I'm concerned because it's the second game we have come out shooting poorly. It's frustrating for me, but more frustrating for the players. We just haven't scored from the spots on the floor that the other team is giving us."

Marian converted 26 of 46 field goal attempts. The Marlins shot only 31 percent (16-51) and were outrebounded 29-16.

While Mercy struggled offensively, the Mustangs and Storen were unstoppable. Marian went on a 15-0 run to take a commanding 22-6 lead. Storen had 10 of the points.

"STEPHANIE HAD an All-American type of game," Lillie-Cicerone said. "She did everything on both sides of the floor. And she does it every night for us."

"We've attempted to key on her both games," Baker said. "This game she did a good job taking the smaller players to the basket. I don't think I did a great job adapting the defense to that."

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Mercy swimmers coast to victory

The state-ranked Farmington Hills Mercy swim team gave its six senior members a successful send-off Tuesday as the Marlins defeated Livonia Ladywood 53-30 in their final home meet.

The Marlins are 3-0 in the Catholic League and 4-2-1 overall.

Co-captains Amy Dombrowski and Renee LaForrest, Katie Knipper, Colleen Kelley, Mandy Speer and Amy Machacek competed in their last dual meet at Mercy.

"Our seniors have shown great dedication and leadership this year," Mercy coach Terri Eudy-Tecot said, "and our success is due in large part to each of them."

Eight different swimmers earned a first place in the individual swims for the Marlins.

Freshman Beth Minnick, Katie Scallen and Katy Runyan won the 100-yard butterfly (1:11), 500 freestyle (6:32) and breaststroke (1:17), respectively.

Sophomores Michele Welch, Allison Strand and Lynn

Leslie also were winners, finishing first in the individual medley (2:27), 200 freestyle (2:19) and backstroke (1:15), respectively.

Rounding out the winners were junior April Kula with a 22.3 time in the 50 freestyle and Kelley in the 100 freestyle with a 1:01 time. The all-senior medley relay of Speer, Knipper, Kelley and Machacek took first in 1:58.

The meet also produced another state cut as Speer went 55.7 in an exhibition 100 freestyle. The Marlins have state-qualifying times in all the relays and eight individual events.

Mercy has one dual meet remaining against Harper Woods Regina on Wednesday, Nov. 6, followed by the league championships on Sunday, Nov. 17, at Oakland University. The Class A finals will take place Nov. 22-23 at Eastern Michigan University.



SHARON LEMUEX/staff photographer

Amy Machacek swims the individual medley Tuesday for the Marlins in their dual meet with

Ladywood. Mercy cruised to another Catholic League win.

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