

SPORTS

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THURSDAY, DECEMBER 31, 1992

FARMINGTON HILLS SPORTS SCENE

Fastest Spartan

Ron Orris, a junior co-captain on Michigan State's swim team from Canton (Salem HS), has been leading the Spartans in several events thus far this season. At the Purdue Invitational Dec. 4-6, Orris won both the 100-yard butterfly (1:00.02) and the 200 individual medley (1:52.08) in season-best times.

Orris also has MSU's best times in the 200 freestyle (1:40.12) and the 400 IM (4:05.07). However, he has yet to reach NCAA qualifying times in any of his events. The Spartans are involved in their winter training and do not return to action until Jan. 16, when they host Big Ten opponent Illinois.

College standouts

Freshman Mike Brooks of Livonia (Churchill) earned the outstanding defensive player award at the Ferris State football banquet. A redshirt outside linebacker, Brooks made 75 tackles last season, including 2 1/2 sacks and six for losses, with one fumble recovery. The Bulldogs finished 10-3, losing in the second round of the NCAA II playoffs.

Whyne State's men's basketball team is off to a 5-3 start and has been picked to win the Great Lakes Intercollegiate Athletic Conference title. A big contributor: Randy Calcaterra, a 6-foot-8 sophomore from Livonia (Churchill). Calcaterra is third on the team in scoring, averaging 11.4 points (82 percent field goal shooting) and 4.4 rebounds in just 14.4 minutes a game.

Matt Gold, a sophomore midfielder on Western Michigan University's soccer team, was named most improved player for last season. A Plymouth Salem grad, Gold started 12 games for the Broncos, collecting two goals and an assist. WMU finished with a 6-7-2 record.

Shawn Resper continues to be the offensive catalyst for Michigan State University's men's basketball team. The sophomore guard from Redford Bishop Borgess was averaging a team-best 20.8 points, 3.8 rebounds and 3.5 assists per game, while converting 53 percent of his floor shots, 55 percent of his three-pointers and 88.5 percent of his free throws. MSU was 5-1 entering Tuesday's Old Spartan Classic tournament.

1992: Year of the Shamrocks

The domination of Catholic Central, the retirement of two of the area's most successful coaches, the death of Aaron Bailey and a ton of turnarounds highlight the year in sports: 1992.

By C.J. RISAK and CHRIS MCCOSKY
STAFF WRITERS

There were triumphs and tragedies, state champions and an Olympian, several string state title runs, but only one championship team. Eras ended and new eras (and a new league) began.

As 1992 bows out, we take a look at its legacy — the year's top 10 local sports stories:

1. The Catholic Central Juggernaut Faith can go a long way in high school sports. Redford Catholic Central is proof of it.

The small school on Breakfast Drive, a former junior high school, has been an incredible athletic machine. CC's third state championship in football, collected Nov. 23 when the Shamrocks' Freddie Taylor completed a 37-yard halfback option pass to Brady Pankow for the go-ahead touchdown, has to rate as the top Observerland sports story of the year.

CC and Saginaw Arthur Hill both entered the title game unbeaten. The Shamrocks' last loss had been in the 1991 championship game, a 13-12 defeat to Arthur Hill. This time, it was CC winning by a single point: 21-20.

Redemption? Sure. But doubt is a rare element on CC teams, particularly those coached by Tom Mach. "I've been in a lot of big games, but this is one of the greatest because it went back and forth," Mach said of this championship.

See '92 IN REVIEW, 2B



CC rules: (Above) Shamrocks Chris Barbara (10) and Jon Wolfe (35) hoist the hardware after CC won the state Class AA football title last November. The year also marked the end for coaches Armand Vigna (left) of Franklin and Fred Crissey (right) of Canton.



GLI conquered; Neaton takes aim at NCAA title

By STEVE KOWALSKI
STAFF WRITER

The jersey had a new look but there was that same old feeling over the weekend for University of Michigan hockey player Patrick Neaton.

The Wolverines, wearing maize instead of white as the primary color on their home jerseys, won a fifth-straight Great Lakes Invitational with Sunday's 8-3 victory over Northern Michigan before 13,783 fans at Joe Louis Arena.

That makes four straight GLI championships for Neaton, a senior defenseman from Redford (Catholic Central) who will graduate in May with a degree in sports psychology.

"Every year we get excited to play in it (the GLI), we come ready to play," said Neaton, one of six U-M seniors. "This is the fifth year in a row and it's great, especially for the seniors. Every year, the seniors are counted on to step up and provide leadership and we do that by what we say, what we do on the ice with steady, solid play."

About all that's left for him to win is an NCAA crown — and with the Wolverines currently ranked No. 2 nationally, the chance is there.

U-M last year reached the national semifinals before being eliminated by the University of Wisconsin, 4-2. Neaton has 28



Four-for-four: Michigan's Patrick Neaton (Redford) will never taste defeat in a Great Lakes Invitational hockey tournament. He has helped Michigan win the last four.

See NEATON, 2B

Ankle break trips MSU's Smith

By STEVE KOWALSKI
STAFF WRITER

Chris Smith received a break he didn't need as a freshman hockey player at Michigan State University.

Smith, a 5-foot-10, 185-pound defenseman, has missed the last 14 games after suffering a broken ankle Nov. 13 in a game against Western Michigan University. Smith, who grew up in Canton, had his walking cast removed Tuesday and said there was a chance to line up in the Spartans' lineup in the next month. Prior to the injury, Smith was

receiving a regular shift and scored one goal with one assist in five games. He had to watch from the stands as the Spartans took home the consolation trophy last weekend in the Great Lakes Invitational at Joe Louis Arena. MSU's 4-3 overtime win Sunday over Michigan Tech gave the Spartans an 11-7 overall record. "It's pretty hard, sometimes, especially when the team is losing," Smith said. "Everything was going real well. I was getting my fair share of ice time. I've never really broken anything."

Smith stayed home when the Spartans traveled to Anchorage, Alaska, for the Nissan/Jeeep Classic the third period of the win over WMU as he was trying to keep the puck in the Broncos' end. No other players were involved. "I was going to keep the puck in at the blue line, lost my balance trying to stop, then went feet first into the boards," Smith said. "I skated off the ice, went to the trainer's room, sat down on the table, took off my skates and I couldn't walk or anything."

See SMITH, 2B

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