

Spartans dominate Hawks in 5th game

Playing a Lakes Division volleyball team after a week without any competition during winter break spelled trouble for Farmington Hills Harrison Monday.

The Hawks, according to coach Ron Shortt, showed signs of being rusty following the layoff and played only two good games during a five-game loss to Livonia Stevenson (1-15, 6-15, 15-8, 18-16, 0-15).

Harrison is the Western Division champion but 6-4 in the Western Lakes Activities Association with all four losses to Lakes teams. The Hawks are 25-7-7 overall.

Senior setter Amanda Ault had 10 kills and 24 assists out of 68 sets, and sophomore middle hitter Erika Greene was the top attacker with eight kills out of 12 attempts.

Corey Perkins had three solo blocks and two assists, Krista Snow four block assists, Ault three assists and Greene two solo blocks.

NORTH FARMINGTON
The Raiders made a match of it Monday but lost to visiting Plymouth Canton in five games. North won the first game 16-14 and the fourth 15-6, but the Chiefs won the others 4-15, 7-15 and 4-15.

"We played so well that's why it was so disappointing in the last game," North coach Sandy Lubieniecki said.

"In the final game, they had eight or nine line hits, and it seemed everything we had was an

inch out. It was just one of those games. To the team's credit, we kept working at it." Kegan Koefoer had 11 kills and four blocks for the Raiders, Cooker Perkins 10 kills and four blocks. All Lord recorded eight kills, three aces and eight digs, Carrie Reje five aces and 13 digs, Emily Opfermann five kills.

But the "player of the night" for the Raiders was sophomore Amy Finkel, who had nine kills and three aces while playing every minute of every game, as a setter in the back row and hitter in the front.

"It was her first big opportunity to be a front-line starter," Lubieniecki said. "It's just great to see a young girl develop into such a good player."

The Raiders are 2-8 in the league and 6-17-6 overall.

FARMINGTON

Walled Lake Central bombarded the visiting Falcons with a barrage of serves that carried the Vikings to a four-game victory Monday (6-15, 2-15, 15-11, 5-15).

Natalie Koczara served eight straight points in the third game and was 10-of-11 overall with three aces. Kriesy Mahon was 13-of-13 serving with nine points and three aces.

Maggie Frump was 4-of-5 attacking and Mahon 3-of-4, but neither had any kills. Mahon and Frump also had two digs apiece.

"They served like crazy," Farmington coach Julie Ingalls said.



SHARON LAMM/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Effort lauded: Amy Finkel of North Farmington played the entire match and drew the praise of coach Sandy Lubieniecki.

"They have a strong serving team, so we spent the night trying to fight off their strong serves. That's why there wasn't many kills. In the third game, they had

trouble with Natalie's serves."

The Falcons are 0-4 in the Lakes Division and 2-8 in the WLAA, which has its tournament Saturday at Livonia Churchill.

Alpena downs S'craft cagers

Any unhappiness Schoolcraft College men's basketball coach Dave Bogataj harbored after Saturday's 76-72 defeat at Alpena CC had little to do with his team's performance.

"The kids were playing well — very well," he insisted. "It came down to them shooting free throws and us shooting none. I don't think it was a well-officiated game, but the kids played tough."

Certainly, free throws decided the game. SC was 10-of-16 (65 percent) from the line; Alpena was 21-of-31 (69 percent).

In the second half, the Lumberjacks were 16-of-24 to SC's 3-of-6.

The Ocelots' inside game, centered around Todd McNeill, wasn't as effective. McNeill, who leads the Eastern Conference in scoring, managed just 15 points and eight rebounds.

"We missed a lot of shots from the 7-to-10 foot range," said Bogataj.

Three-point shooting helped offset the inside misses: SC converted eight (a season-high) in 13 attempts. Mike Ekan led the Ocelots with 17 points. Dan Nunnery had nine and Dan Perttula eight.

Alpena got 18 points from Travis Smith, 14 from Omar Nicholson, 12 from both Andrew McCollan and Richard Jenkins, and 11 from Mono McDonald.

SC finishes its season at 8-18 overall, 2-14 in the conference. Alpena ends up at 7-19 overall, 3-13 in the conference.

ACQUAS 102, MADONNA (MEX) 76: The final game of a tri-city first women's basketball tournament for Fighting Crusaders (2-25 overall) is Saturday at Spiking Asher. Last Saturday, host Aquinas' field goal percentage wasn't outstanding (38-of-62, 61.3 percent), but the Saints got to the line enough (23-of-30, 76.7 percent) to earn a victory.

Area's top athletes vie for WLAA titles

By C.J. RISAK
SPRINGFIELD

Call it a preview to the big event.

In truth, last Saturday's Michigan Swimming Coaches Association Invitational at Eastern Michigan University attracted tougher competition than what will appear over the next three days at Plymouth Salem in the Western Lakes Activities Association championship meet.

And that's not meant to belittle the WLAA — particularly considering this season's meet, which promises to produce one of the best and most talented fields in the league's 12-year history. But when the swimmers with the 40 best times in the state are invited to a meet, and quite a few attend, well . . .

What do you expect?

"There was some outstanding performances turned in, none better than Jeff Clark's. The Plymouth Canton senior won two events: the 50-yard (21.58) and the 100-yard (47.95) freestyle. He has the fastest 50 time in the state this year, and his time in the 100 is among the top three.

Not to be overlooked was Plymouth Salem's Fred Locke, who was second to Clark in both the 50 (22.02) and 100 (48.87). Both swimmers bettered the MHSAA state qualifying standards in each event — which was the object for those competing.

Livonia Stevenson's Jeff Buckler showed that the WLAA will have solid representation in the 50 at the Class A state meet — the big event previously referred to by finishing fourth with a state-qualifying 22.62.

Other state cuts were turned in by Canton's Mike Orris in the 200 (sixth in 1:46.98) and 500 (12th in 4:56.52) free; Livonia Franklin's Randy Cobb in the 100 breaststroke (third, 1:01.75); Stevenson's Falk Rooding in the 100 breast (seventh, 1:02.48); and Livonia Churchill's Jon Carlson in the 200 free (seventh, 1:48.59).

Salem's 200 medley relay team of John McLenghan, Andy Detting, Aaron Berlin and Locke (eleventh, 1:43.01) and its 400 free team of Joe Ervin, Eric Seidelman, Dave Bracht and Locke (second, 3:20.67) also qualified.

So did Canton's foursome of Clark, Jason Stirling, Jason McDonald and Orris in both the 200 free relay (third, 1:31.66) and the 400 free relay (sixth, 3:22.56). In diving, Farmington Harrison's Mark Strohmaier (third,

SWIMMING

388.35 points) and John Hovey (seventh, 367.45) performed ably; so, too, did Canton's Jason Fowler (ninth, 355.10) and Daryl Ballios (11th, 355.55).

So now several of the WLAA's top swimmers can concentrate on the task at hand — the league meet, Salem, the defending champ — indeed, the Rocks have won seven of 11 titles — is favored to repeat.

The reason is the same that carried them to the championship last season: depth. "It's tough for teams to take advantage of us anywhere," said Salem coach Chuck Olson, who guided the Rocks to their first unbeaten WLAA dual-meet season since 1987. "We're just tough all the way through."

Those expected to challenge are North Farmington and Farmington. North is led by Jon Kershaw in the sprint free, Karl Kozicki in just about anything, and Drew Sopha in the butterfly, breast and individual medley. Farmington has Dan Boyer in the sprint free, Jon Reed in the distance free, fly and IM, Dan Belanger in the breast and IM, and Scott Brown in the backstroke.

Throw in standouts like Canton's Clark, Orris, Fowler and Ballios; Franklin's Cobb; Stevenson's Rooding and Buckler; Harrison's Strohmaier and Hovey; and Churchill's Carlson; and it's easy to understand Olson's prediction: "I think our league will have someone in the top six at state meet in every event."

With swimmers like Locke, Detting, Ervin, Seidelman, Bracht, Berlin, McLenghan, Rooding, Sopha and a half-dozen others, and a diver like Woodie Thomas, it will be difficult to upset Salem.

But as Olson said: "We can't afford any mistakes; that's for sure. We don't have any glaring holes in our lineup."

"It should be fun, but it won't be easy."

The swimming preliminaries start at 1 p.m. today. Diving prelims begin at 2:30 p.m. Friday. The finals will be at 2 p.m. Saturday.

Gable from page 1B

tures changed the course conditions in the afternoon.

"The coaches made a technical error in waxing," Gable said. "The results were really devastating. I feel really terrible because the girls skied hard and technically no different than they had all year."

The Martins used Swix F4 wax and were unable to ski as fast after the temperature went from the low 20s to 40-plus and melted the snow. Okemos was successful using a new type of wax called Cora and qualified for state.

"It was just a wax race," Gable

said. "Whoever had the best bottoms won. We chose the wrong wax."

"Nicole pulled first flight, first person down. She had to bust the line out. When she took off, she just walked down the slopes. The course was so flat the kids just stopped."

"The better skiers and their technical advantage is taken away from them. Then it becomes what kind of wax bottoms you have so you can get down the fastest."

Gable ended up 32nd in the GS — she won the slalom — but her father has no doubt she would have won that also under the right conditions.

"Most of the other coaches indicated how disappointed they thought she must be, because they thought she was the best GS skier in the area," he said.

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