

THURSDAY, APRIL 7, 1994

SPORTS

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FARMINGTON FARMINGTON HILLS SPORTS SCENE

Half-marathon race

The West Bloomfield Half-Marathon is less than two weeks away and time is running out for early registration.

Early registration ends at 5 p.m. Friday. Late entries will be accepted on race day at a slightly higher registration fee.

The 18th running of the West Bloomfield Half-Marathon begins at 12:45 p.m. Sunday, April 17, at West Bloomfield High School. A 5K walk and a 5K run begin at 10:30 a.m. at the south driveway, and the Kids Run starts at 10:30 a.m. on the high school track.

The half-marathon, sponsored by the Henry Ford Medical Center of West Bloomfield and hosted by West Bloomfield Parks and Recreation, attracts over 700 runners annually from across Michigan, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois and Ontario, Canada. The 13.1-mile TAC-certified course takes runners through the hilly, scenic residential streets of West Bloomfield.

For registration forms and more information call West Bloomfield Parks and Recreation at 334-5660.

Tennis tournament

Many of the area's top professional and junior tennis players will display their talents at the Novi Auto Mall \$10,000 Professional Tennis Challenge April 14-17 at the Sports Club of West Bloomfield.

The tour contingent is led by Jimmy Arias, formerly the No. 5-ranked player in the world. He'll be joined by local pros Ed Nagle of West Bloomfield, Steve Herdofa, Scott Smith and Brian Veillette of Bloomfield Hills, Mark Pinchoff of Farmington Hills and Brett Beattie of Beverly Hills.

Junior players Brook Blain (West Bloomfield), Avid Swan (Troy) and Michael Russell (Bloomfield Hills) also will be competing.

There will also be a "fast serve" contest which is open to the public.

The tournament runs from 7-10 p.m. on Thursday and Friday, April 14-15; noon to 8 p.m. Saturday, April 16; and noon to 6 p.m. Sunday, April 17. For more information call the Sports Club of West Bloomfield at 626-9880.

Raiders look like contenders



Veteran hurler: Senior Melonie Cheney is one of two experienced pitchers on the North Farmington team.



North Farmington enters the 1994 softball season with a veteran, senior-dominated team and figures to be a contender for the division and league championships.

BY DAN O'MEARA
STAFF WRITER

After being so close in recent attempts, 1994 could be the year North Farmington finally gets to play for the Western Lakes Activities Association softball championship.

The Raiders, who have tied for the Lakes Division title and finished no lower than third in the last four years, have the talent to make another run at the top and possibly win it all.

North returns all but one starter (first baseman Jenny Holtzman) from a team that finished 12-16 overall and was 6-4 in the division.

"This group came in in the second year of the summer program, and you can definitely tell they've been playing fast-pitch softball," North coach Dave Brubaker said. "Their skills are more advanced than the girls I first had six or seven years ago."

The leading returnee is senior All-WLAA shortstop Allison Stein. She hit .354 and struck out just two times, stole 25 bases, drew 16 walks, scored 30 runs and had an .892 fielding percentage.

"Allison is an outstanding athlete; she's very aggressive and competitive," Brubaker said. "If Allison does what she did last year, we'll be in line shape at the leadoff position and shortstop. She came into her own and really matured last year."

The Raiders have another solid player in senior catcher Kate Mackie, a cleanup hitter who made the all-division team. She batted .356 with 31 hits, five doubles, four triples, three home runs and 91 RBI.

Because of an elbow injury to Mackie last year, North is three deep at catcher. She and senior outfielder

Amy Kelman switched positions when Mackie had difficulty throwing, and junior Renee Dolak also can play catcher.

"This year her arm is healthy, so I think we'll see her behind the plate again and catching," said Brubaker of Mackie. "I expect her to hit the ball like she did last year."

The Raiders are blessed with two experienced pitchers: seniors Melonie Cheney and Becky Thurnam.

Cheney did most of the varsity pitching, and Thurnam showed what she could do in the summer. Both were 8-0 while pitching the Farmington Hills Diamonds to the Incredible Girls Fast-Pitch League title.

Cheney was 11-13 for North with a 3.24 earned-run average in 165 innings. She also fanned 121 but walked 120. Cheney can help North with the bat, too, having posted a .344 average and 15 RBI.

"Every year we've developed at least one, but this is the first year going into play we've had two pretty decent pitchers," Brubaker said. "Becky pitched well in the summer and will see a lot of playing time."

Thurnam will have regular duty at third base again, and the Raiders also return senior Jennifer Cassidy at second. Thurnam hit .228 and had some key hits to go with 13 RBI, and Cassidy batted .250 with three doubles, 16 stolen bases and 18 RBI.

Dolak will play first base since the Raiders are set at catcher and split time with senior Courtney Carlson. Sophomore Amy Finkel is a backup infielder.

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Veteran staff key for Falcons

BY DAN O'MEARA
STAFF WRITER

With the return of 11 varsity players, including most valuable player Ren Salomonson, the Farmington baseball team anticipates improvement this year.

Coach Kevin Kananan hopes an added year of maturity and experience will give a veteran pitching staff the edge needed to help the Falcons better a 9-22 record.

Seniors Dave Schall, Salomonson and Mike Williams, the lone lefty, and sophomore Nick Latra were varsity hurlers last year. Schall pitched the most innings (62), but the work was pretty evenly divided.

It won't be a surprise to Kananan if Latra (2-3), who had a 2.0 to-1 ratio of strikeouts (44) to walks (24) in 36 innings and a team-best 3.63 earned run average, becomes the workhorse this year.

Williams (1-5) pitched well in a 2-1 loss to Class A against the Westland John Glenn in which he struck out 13. Schall had a 4-7 record and Salomonson 2-6.

"The pitching staff is obviously a veteran staff," Kananan said. "Hopefully, we can throw strikes. I think we'll do well as a pitching staff."

BASEBALL

Veteran catcher Aaron Cagnon was a two-year starter but transferred to Wayne Memorial; however, the Falcons have junior Dale Domas to take his place. Domas, who hit .286 with five doubles, played second base but also has experience behind the plate.

"I don't think we'll be hurt at all (by the loss of Cagnon)," Kananan said. "I'm not worried about that position. Dale is one of our best athletes."

Williams (.233) and Salomonson will be regulars at other positions when they're not pitching. Williams will start at first base and Salomonson, who led the team in average (.309), hitting chances (97), hits (30), doubles (five) and RBI (17), shortstop.

Either sophomore Dan McLaughlin, who lettered but spent most of last year on the JV, or Latra will be the backup shortstop, will play second base. Junior Curt Katis (250) is a varsity veteran who is slated to play full time at third.

"I think we're strong (on the infield)," Kananan said. "We have some good players at key positions; we have some talent there."

"We hope to be defensively sound. We have to get the ball over the plate, so the defense can be stronger."

Kananan went with a prep version of the youth movement late last season, finishing the year with three sophomores and four freshmen on the varsity.

That is most evident in the outfield where sophomores Tom Mondoux and Jake Siskosky were starters in left and center, respectively. Senior Jeff Drummond also returns in right, and senior Mike Pringle, the most-improved player in 1993, can play any of the positions.

The other players are juniors Adam Smith (outfield), Scott Brown (catcher), Phil Carson (first base) and John Huhn (second base). All were on the JV. Senior infielder John Kayayan made the varsity for the first time but suffered a season-ending knee injury in early practices.

"I think we're going to have some fun and we're going to do well," Kananan said. "We're a relatively young team, but most everybody has varsity experience. I expect a lot out of these guys."

Farmington begins the season Saturday, playing host to Howell in a 2 p.m. doubleheader.



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CC gets new home diamond

BY BRAD EMONS
STAFF WRITER

Redford Catholic Central's baseball team will enjoy something new this season — a home-field advantage.

The Shamrocks will move out of Capital Park and into the friendly confines directly across the street from the school on Breakfast Drive.

CC's home opener will be Saturday, April 16, against the University of Detroit-Jesuit. The Shamrocks open the season Friday as one of four teams in the Tournament of Champions at Madonna Park.

CC plays Birmingham Brother Rice at 10 a.m. Friday.

"The kids are very excited," CC coach John Salter said.

CC, which finished 27-10 overall and won the Catholic League Central Division and a Class A

district championship, lost five players to the college ranks including first-team All-Area pitcher Brian Paluk (Saginaw Valley State) and second-team pick Jeff Gutt (Madonna).

Also graduated are Brian Hicks (Eastern Michigan), Aaron Babics (Hilldale) and Eric Justice (Stens Heights).

Second-team All-Area catcher Juan Sanchez, who hit .221 a year ago, is a dandy behind the plate. Meanwhile, senior second baseman Mike Bruseau (.213) is one of the area's top on-base percentage threats. He drew 25 walks last year.

The Shamrocks also have a proven product on the mound in lefty Dave Susalla, who was 5-3 with an impressive 1.15 ERA. He is in his third year on the CC varsity.

Right-handers Andy Kummer

(4-2, 2.33) and Justin Stankewicz (transfer from Gabriel Richard) may hold the key, however, to CC's success in 1994.

Andy Stankewicz, a senior, will inherit Justice's shortstop job, while senior J. Rozum will play third base and senior Dave Kapla is penciled in for center field.

Among the new faces are junior third baseman/outfielder Jeff Gajewski and junior designated hitter Ken Marzec.

The Shamrocks play in one of the state's toughest divisions. Last year, Warren DeLaSalle came away with both the Catholic League and state tournament titles.

"Notre Dame (Harper Woods), has two senior pitchers like us," Salter said. "DeLaSalle is young, but you can't count them out."

And (Dearborn) Divine Child looks strong in the other bracket."