

SPORTS

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MONDAY, DECEMBER 18, 1995

FARMINGTON HILLS SPORTS SCENE

Fire still hot

The Farmington Hills Fire Mite AA hockey team of 8- and 9-year-olds improved to 10-3 with a 3-0 victory Dec. 13 over the host Plymouth Stingrays.

Charlie Hourigan, the Fire's leading scorer, had two goals and Blake Brattling added the third while Chase Van Tien notched his fourth shutout of the season.

"This was unquestionably our most solid team effort of the season," assistant coach Paul Lubanski said. "When everyone contributes, we are a very competitive team."

The Fire next plays at 7 p.m. Dec. 19 against the Michigan Stars at the Trenton Ice Box.

Winter baseball camp

Madonna University will hold a winter baseball camp Thursday through Saturday, Dec. 21-23, at the college's Activities Center.

Youths (ages 8-13) will meet from 2:30-5:30 p.m., while youths (14-18) will meet from 6-9 p.m. The registration fee is \$65 per person.

For more information, call Madonna baseball coach Mike George at (313) 432-5609.

Jones plays squash

Kelly Jones has made this season's Vassar College women's squash team.

The sophomore product of North Farmington high helped Vassar begin its season with a victory over Bard College before it lost to Penn. The team plays eight dual matches and five tournaments.

The Brewers returned just three starters from last year's 7-11 team that was ranked 11th nationally.

Hockey clinics

The Suburban Hockey Schools will conduct a series of holiday clinics, Tuesday through Friday, Dec. 26-29 at Livonia's Devon-Aire Arena.

Power-skating and puck-handling clinics for mites (ages 6-9) will be from 9:10-30 a.m. and 10:30-noon and squirts (ages 9-10) from 12:30-1:30 p.m.

A defense and scoring clinic for pee wees and bantams (ages 11-14) will be from 1:30-3 p.m. The cost for each clinic is \$125.

University of Michigan-Dearborn will also stage clinics, including a goaltenders session for all ages (cost \$160) Tuesday through Friday, Jan. 2-5.

For more information, call (313) 730-1330.

Hawks Volleyball

Novi defeated Farmington Hills Harrison, 15-10, 9-15, 15-12, Dec. 13 in a girls volleyball match. The Hawks are now 1-2-3.

Erika Greene notched 12 kills in 26 attempts, half the Hawks' kill total. Sara Reuch recorded three aces among her 20 serves while Sara Kloosterman had six digs.

"We played a real good game against a real good hitting team," coach Ron Shortt said. "They were much more aggressive at the net than we were."

"We're still working on our defense. It's something we're going to have to do all season. Our kids played hard, they were just outgunned."

All-American

Five area runners — four from Plymouth Salem and a fifth from Farmington — traveled to the USA Track and Field National Junior Olympics Cross Country Meet Saturday in Baton Rouge, La., to turn in a strong performance.

The local team was ninth out of 28 teams (and several individuals) competing, scoring 238 points. A team from Idaho finished first with 74 points.

Freshman Wes Barrett of Farmington contributed with a 126th-place finish in 14:55.

The team, coached by Salem's Geoff Baker, qualified for the national meet by first winning the state meet Nov. 12 in Dexter, then placing first at the regional Nov. 18 in Charleston, W. Va.

CC wins swim meet

Rosford Catholic Central's boys swimming team defeated East Lansing, 71.5 to 85.5.

Tuesday in a non-league dual meet hosted by East Lansing.

The Shamrocks had seven winning times, including two each from Nick Sosnowski and Brian Green.

Sosnowski won the 100 yard butterfly in 58.73 seconds and the 100 backstroke in 57.80. Green took first in the 200 freestyle (1:51.06) and 100 freestyle (51.08). Other individual winners included J.P. Merchant, 500 freestyle (51.08) and Paul Connolly, 800 breaststroke (1:07.30). The 500 medley relay team of Kevin Poline, Connolly, Sosnowski and Matt Baran also scored first place (1:45.31).

Porter 2nd team: Farmington's Amanda Porter and North Farmington's Carrie May were All-Observer second-team basketball choices. The rest of the All-Observer team is highlighted on Page 2C.



All-Area Cagers

On the water

Raider, Falcon swimmers ready to make waves



North Farmington and Farmington boys swim teams are traditionally strong, but recent seasons have seen them chasing down someone else. Again this year the WLAA favorite is Plymouth Salem.

BY RICHARD L. SHOOK
STAFF WRITER

How good is good? That's something Pat Duthie and his North Farmington boys swim team will find out over the course of the next couple of months as they try to chase down favored Plymouth Salem in the Western Lakes Activities Association.

Duthie, a former Raiders swim coach, recently returned to North Farmington from a sojourn at Birmingham Seaoholm. He added the boys swim team to his duties as coach of the girls squad.

"We definitely have some good swimmers in the program," Duthie said. "What it's going to come down to is do we have enough?"

"That will dictate what we do. We usually swim well at the end of the year. Hopefully our good kids will come through for us at the end of the year. Whether we win or not will depend on how good the competition is going to be."

Keep in mind that Duthie, like many good coaches, knows you can't do better than your best. And if your best means you finish second, fourth, ninth or 24th, well, that's a good year.

The key is performing up to capabilities.

Last year, North Farmington went 8-1 in dual meets, losing only to Salem. The Raiders were second in the conference, second the Western Lakes

Relays and seventh in the Oakland County Championships.

Duthie has 19 swimmers and two divers, "kind of a small team. We may be a little bigger than last year, but a little smaller than we'd like to be."

"North Farmington is a team that has been competitive, so everybody likes to swim well against us. That's good, I suppose."

"We did lose some key seniors. And over the past couple of years we've lost some talented kids. But everybody goes through that."

Senior tri-captains Brian Rajdl, Paul Ryan and Phil Zald will lead the Raiders.

Ryan is a good all-around swimmer who excels in the backstroke and last year also had success in the Individual Medley. Ryan is an excellent breaststroke who doubles as a quality freestyler while Zald "is probably one of the exceptional kids coming back," Duthie said. "He set a varsity record last year in the breaststroke and was conference champion at 100 yards."

The Raiders have seven seniors leading their team, prompting Duthie to "hope somebody moves in or something" for next year.

Duthie will count on plenty of points from Jason Speer, an outstanding sprint freestyler and backstroke swimmer. Jay Randa is expected to lead the Raiders' distance swimmers while Scott Samper will

help in the freestyle events.

Junior Patrick Duthie (yes, son of the coach), is good in the freestyle and butterfly while Matt Swartz is a good all-around swimmer who does a good job in the breaststroke.

Duthie's sophomores are led by versatile Dan Gabriel, a very good backstroke; Chris Randa, a freestyle and butterfly swimmer; and froshyler Chris Smith. First-year sophomore Justin Hawkins will get broken in primarily in freestyle but with some breaststroke work also.

North Farmington should get points in diving, where senior Marc Plotkin is backed up by "a freshman, and he's a pretty good one too, Joe Lebovic," Duthie said. "He's got some diving background, a few years of experience. It's unusual for North Farmington to have anybody come in with a diving background."

Other freshmen who will contribute are Tim Muir (freestyle and butterfly); Aaron Rycroft, "a nice-looking all-around swimmer who will help us in a variety of places" and Matt Zald (freestyle and breaststroke). Freshmen who could also contribute are Andy Karl, Tony Munaco, Oa Pearlman and Mark Weckberg, all mostly in the freestyle.

"Right now they look pretty committed to working hard," Duthie said. "That's a positive. Our other kids are enthused about being part of the high school swimming program."

Farmington swimming

Farmington has a fairly young boys swim team this year. This means either the kids will get old quick, or coach Ross Bandy will.

Bandy's Falcons return WLAA champion Danny Bellanger, who spe-

cializes in the Individual Medley but can and has swum any event. He's a very good breaststroke, a good freestyler "we're a little weak in the sprint freestyle so he'll be switching on and off," Bandy said.

Farmington finished third in the WLAA with a 9-3 record after finishing second the year before. If Bandy's kid swimmers come on, the Falcons could be a lot stronger at the end of the season than at the beginning.

"It's going to be an exciting year for them," he said. "It will be very difficult because we have one of the toughest leagues in the state to get them going in the first year of competition."

Another key returnee for Farmington is sophomore Todd Benabaginia, one of the WLAA's top 500 swimmers who also shortens up well to the 200 freestyle.

Bellanger is one of Bandy's three captains, seniors Ken Kopf and Matt Crawford being the others. Both are freestylers. Crawford converting from distances to sprints to help Kopf.

Benabaginia and junior John Hawkins will go the distance and middle distances in freestyle while Matt Bauckelaers will appear in some breaststroke and at middle distance freestyle.

"We have a lot of other swimmers, too," Bandy said, "but we're not as solid as we have been the last two years. We've got quite a few holes."

"We have a lot of young swimmers. And a lot of first-year kids who haven't even swam before. They came out for the team and we're happy to have them but it's going to be a long process to bring them up to competitive speed."

Crusaders fall to Pioneers

Stepping up the ladder is a learning experience.

That's what Madonna University's women's basketball team had to remember after seeing its winning streak interrupted (the Lady Crusaders had won four of their previous five games) at Oakland University Wednesday, losing 82-61 to the perennial NCAA Division II power.

The Lady Pioneers, who improved to 9-1, did a solid job blanketing Madonna's offensive threats. Dawn Fels, Stacy Lampers and Katie Cushman combined to make 10-of-42 floor shots (23.8 percent), including 3-of-16 from three-point range (18.7 percent).

Lampers, a senior forward who transferred from Oakland, had a decent game against her former team, leading Madonna with 15 points (4-of-12 from the field). She had just four rebounds, but collected two assists and blocked five shots.

The Crusaders' (7-6) only other double-figure scorer was Angie Negri, who didn't miss a shot, making 8-of-9 from the field and going 4-for-4 from the line. She also led Madonna with eight rebounds.

Oakland, whose nine-point halftime lead (39-30) was never less than eight in the second half, got 16 points and 13 rebounds from Kristen Francis, 21 points and 11 boards from Heather Bateman, 15 points from Tamika Baker and 12 points from Jamie Penick.

The Lady Pioneers, who were 31-of-68 from the floor (45.6 percent), outscored Madonna 51-41.

SCHOOLCRAFT VS. N200 VALLEY 56: The final score might be a bit deceptive.

Schoolcraft College's women's team had no problem disposing of visiting Kalamazoo Valley CC Wednesday, despite missing 22 layups.

But that was one of the only negatives. The Lady Osleuts (7-4) led 35-27 at the half and kept pulling away, thanks to an effective full-court pressure defense.

Yes, combined with some strong rebounding, triggered the Osleuts' fast break, something that had been in hibernation.

Julie Schmidt's 18 points and eight rebounds topped KC. Christine Edwards had 17 points and Becky Billicki had 16. Shelia Coulter had eight points and eight boards, and Amy Pietila finished with six points and five assists.

Chris Hultine's 18 points paced KVCC. Amy Gray added 10.

Spikers open



SHAWN LAMKIN/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Kill shot: Harrison's Erika Greene records one of her 12 kills in a loss to Novi (see story, left, in Sports Scene). Greene was also a third-team All-Observer girls basketball team selection (2C).