

SPORTS

C

MONDAY, MARCH 4, 1996



BRAD EMMONS

Magical Mystery Tour? No, it's March Madness

John, Paul, George and Ringo.
It's Beatles anthology time once again.
We're talking roundball, however, not the kind they play in Liverpool.
And haircuts?
I actually saw a kid on Livonia Franklin's team this year — who I swear — reminds me of those days in the '60s. Does he wear those pointy Beatle boots around school?
Anyway, let's take a Magical Mystery Tour in that Yellow Submarine.
March Madness starts tonight. It's the boys state basketball tournament once again.
But you don't need Yoko's advice, just try a little of mine.
Now remember moms and dads. This is all in fun. Don't act like those Ladywood basketball parents who can't take a joke.
Handicapping this year's field. (Records through Friday.)

I'VE GOT A FEELING

Wayne Memorial (18-2): Best chance of any team to make a run in Oshkosh. Could be a final four team, but must get through a series of tough opponents (John Glenn, Bellevue, Adrian and either Battle Creek Central or Benton Harbor). I was their chance. They're seasoned and experienced after losing to Kalamazoo Central in the quarter last year. They're not a sleeper anymore, even with coach Chuck Henry and star junior Lorenzo Davis leading the way.

LUCY IN THE SKY

WITH DIAMONDS

Redford Bishop Burgess (15-8): Detroit Benedictine stands in the way at the district and Detroit DePue. Both are the regional, but with the girls like Jerome Ross and Vince Cawley, along with a young and enthusiastic coaching staff led by Steve Barnes, getting to the quarter, and beyond, is a real possibility.

TWIST AND SHOUT

Phymouth Canton (19-1): These guys play basketball the way it's supposed to be played. The fundamentally sound Chieftans should rise the howl district and get a rematch in the Lathrup regional with No. 1-ranked Detroit Pershing. Don't count these people out.
Redford Catholic Central (13-3): The Catholic League champs have enjoyed a nice season, but a tough loss in Detroit Redford, the PSL runner-up, awaits in the district. Can the Spartans' three-point attack get past the disciplined style of Detroit Catholic's DeLeon region?

THE LONG AND WINDING ROAD

Garden City (17-3): The Cougars proved last year they can't be taken lightly after upsetting Westland John Glenn in the district at Bellevue. It will take a super effort to get past Romulus in the opener, and beyond.

CAN'T BUY ME LOVE

Westland John Glenn (13-8): The Rockets have beaten all the teams they're supposed to have beaten this season, but there's one problem — that 30-point loss to Wayne State sticks out like a sore thumb. The rematch is Tuesday at Bellevue.

HARD DAY'S NIGHT

Livonia Stevenson (10-10): Not only do the Spartans get sent to the Catholic Central district, but they must face PSL runner-up Detroit Redford in tonight's opening round. Stevenson coach Jim McIntyre won't need a whole lot of C.D. Dad's Club jacket. It will be more like a straight jacket. No wonder Jim Newman is always by Mike's side.

WITH A LITTLE HELP

FROM MY FRIENDS

Farmington Hills Harbree (9-11): Harrison coach Mike Teachman (with his shaved head) and the Raiders just don't mix. Could it be the softest season Tuesday, or will the Hawks pull a surprise and beat district host and favorite West Bloomfield?

Phymouth Battle (8-12): This may be a down year by Rocks standards, but don't count them out of the howl district. Another rematch with Canton could make the Chieftans a bit quieter. Getting to the finals is not out of the question.

ASK ME WHY

Livonia Churchill (9-11): No doubt the area's most puzzling team. They're capable of great moments, but then again, the Chieftans often lose the momentum. How about some intensity on offense, Mike? Or how about some execution on offense? Will they go through the motions, or get to the howl district?

HERE COMES THE SUN

Redford St. Agatha (12-8): The Class D district at Southfield Franklin Road Christian is for the taking. The Aggies got to the Catholic League C-D Division finals and should be better suited. Whatever happened to Mike Slater?

HELLO, GOODBYE

Redford Therian (7-13): The Eagles have landed in the Class B district at Melvindale. Chad Puzan is a pretty good player for Thurston, but getting around River Rouge and Dearborn is a monumental task.

DAY TRIPPER

Livonia Franklin (6-18): Sophomore guards Nick Horgan and Ben Amos look like leaders. Junior center Matt Sherman is also emerging as one of the area's top big men. The Patriots, however, need some luck in the howl draw.

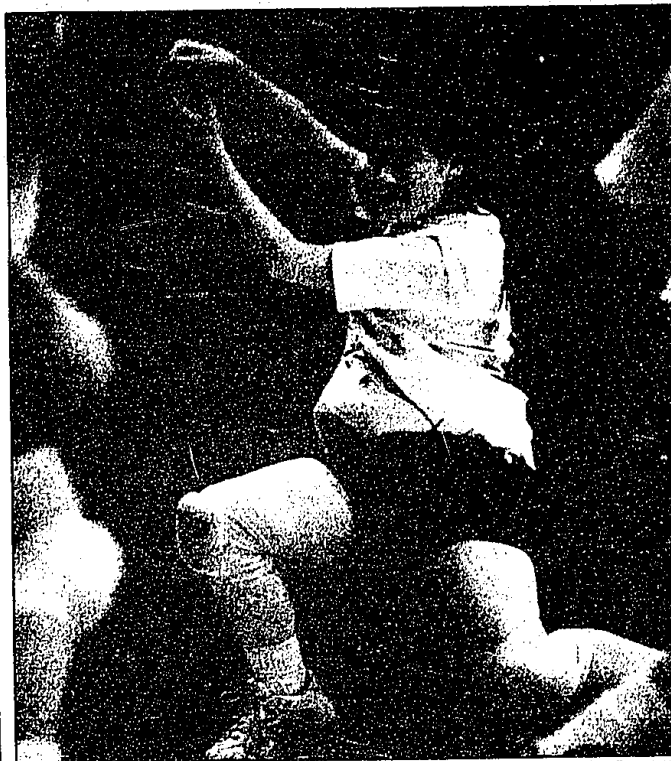
WE CAN WORK IT OUT

Livonia Clearwater (13-9): What do you desire for hosting a district? How about a good thing? The Patriots, two of the Catholic League's better teams, junior forward Jason Merritt, however, is coming on strong and the Trojans could make it into the finals with some inspired play.

GET BACK

North Farmington (6-14): The Raiders go into the West Bloomfield district on a two-game winning streak. How many district teams can say that? Their first-round matchup comes against Livonia (9-9), which lost by only four points to 18-14 Royal Oak Rams.

See EMMONS, 2C



Defensive move: Mercy junior Aune Ward keeps the ball in play with a serve reception. The Marlins win their fifth straight district title.

Marlins win 5th straight

■ Mercy High School's volleyball team extended its streak of consecutive district tournament titles to five Saturday.

BY DAN O'MEARA
STAFF WRITER



Farmington Hills Mercy proved good preparation pays Saturday in the Class A district volleyball tournament at Berkley High.

Knowing the opposition and two weeks of purposeful practice helped the Marlins win their fifth consecutive championship.

Mercy dispatched Southfield-Lathrup 15-4, 15-5 in the semifinals and made quick work of Detroit Holy Trinity Ford in a surprisingly easy final, 15-3, 15-6.

"When we walked in the gym, we were hyped," Mercy senior Jamaica Emerson said. "We were here mentally as well as physically. When we have that, we know we can excel. We played great today."

"This was my last district game and my fourth district at Mercy. It was really important for me. I couldn't see playing my last district and not winning it all."

The Marlins (35-14) hadn't played Ford but had seen it play in two earlier tournaments, which gave coach Peggy Spengler ample opportunity to scout the Trojans (23-4).

Mercy exploited a Ford defensive weakness with its serving and relied

See MARLINS, 2C

Central spikes North in district final

BY DAVID BAUNDERS
STAFF WRITER

Walled Lake Central's volleyball team huddled together after its quick 15-8, 15-6, Class A District championship victory match over North Farmington on Saturday, clasped hands and shouted "team" in unison.

The girls chose the best word to describe the way they played.

Statistics bear that truth. The Vikings distributed the ball around the court masterfully as they won their fifth straight district title.

VOLLEYBALL

Central's starters — seniors Jocelyn Pilikiewicz, Jessica Regentin, Nicole Mulline and Haley Brenner, and juniors Jenny Keeler and Becky Cummings — each had sniveling personal statistics.

Cummings, a junior who should be able to write her own ticket to college for basketball or volleyball, was good on 20 of 23 attacks with 14 kills and eight blocks during the championship match alone.

Regentin finished 13-of-19 on attacks with eight kills and six blocks. Keeler was 14-of-14 serving with two aces, had five kills and 10 assists.

Brenner was 8-of-9 on attacks with four kills, had eight digs and was

good on 8-of-9 serves with three aces. Mulline was 9-of-10 on attacks with five kills and six digs. Pilikiewicz was 7-of-8 serving with one ace, five digs and nine assists.

After winning the first game 15-8, the Vikings went up 7-1 and 14-2 in the second. They relaxed, sensing victory, and the Raiders struck for four points. Finally, with Mulline serving, Regentin got the volley and tapped it over the net for the final point.

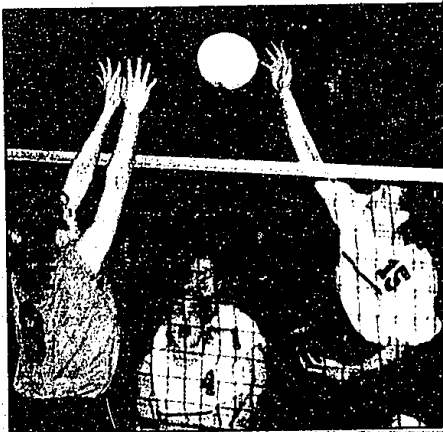
"In the first game, we had a lot of good rallies," North Farmington coach Donna Konjarovich said. "In the second game, we had seven or eight reception errors where we just couldn't get our passes up."

The Raiders finish at 23-18-3. They will lose seven seniors — Heather Cornwell, Emily Opfermann, Natalie Rejc, Cooker Perkins, Amy Finzel, Lee Nelson and Laura Nelson.

Konjarovich said her team had confidence going into the match and believed it could compete with the talented Vikings, because it split two games with the Central in pool play last week.

"We played pretty well this season. With such talented girls we had, I think the girls expected a lot more," Konjarovich said. There is also no shortage of talent in the classroom for

See DISTRICT, 2C



On the attack: North Farmington senior Laura Nelson sends a hard spike over the net Saturday in district play.

Hawks, Raiders win regular-season finales

Oh, what a difference two weeks make.

It was only two weeks ago Farmington Hills Harrison was blown out at Livonia Stevenson, 76-53. On Thursday, the Hawks gained some revenge.

Behind Kevin Bambenek's three-pointer in the second overtime, Harrison squeaked by host Stevenson 64-49 in its final regular-season game.

The win showed how much progress we've made in the past two weeks," Harrison coach Mike Teachman said. "We've made some strides and the team is playing well together. And, most important of all, they're having fun."

The Hawks (9-11) rallied from a 30-19 halftime deficit to take a 36-35 lead behind a 17-5 spur to open the second half.

Justin Spore, who finished with 11 points, nailed a pair of treys in the fourth quarter to send the game into overtime tied 44-44.

Both teams could only muster two points in the first extra session as the game went to two overtimes.

An Erick Giovannini triple put the Spartans

BASKETBALL

ahead 49-48 in the second overtime before Bambenek hit a triple to put Harrison in front for good.

Matt Derocher scored 11 of his team-high 13 points in the fourth quarter to lead Harrison. Bambenek added 11.

The Spartans (10-10) received a game-high 20 points from Giovannini and 15 from Matt Quintier.

■ NORTH 68, FARMINGTON 56: Sophomore Ray Louis got the starting call Thursday and responded with 13 points for host North Farmington.

North coach Brian Swinehart started his four healthy seniors in the regular-season finale and gave them their choice of a fifth starter.

They chose Louisa, who wore injured senior Chris Kamp's No. 33 and "came up big," Swinehart said. "I told them they could pick anyone they wanted and it paid off tonight."

Senior Tim Dolan led the Raiders with 18 points,

and he also had five assists and three steals.

Senior Richard Beal also scored 13 points, and sophomore Jeff Trax pulled down 10 rebounds. The other senior starters were Bill Trax and Eric Jones.

North led 29-24 at halftime and 44-38 after three quarters. Louisa kept the Raiders ahead with three triples in the third period.

Senior Jake Sklosky scored 14 points for the Falcons, junior Adam Weber 11 and seniors Dan McLaughlin and Dave Dilworth 10 apiece.

North sank 23 of 30 free throws, Farmington 14 of 21.

The Raiders finished the regular season 8-14. They have won two straight and three of their last four games — the loss occurring in double overtime to Livonia Churchill — heading into the district tournament this week.

On Wednesday, North plays Bloomfield Hills LaHar and Farmington (4-10) meets the Macomb

See BASKETBALL, 3C