

MONDAY, MARCH 25, 1996

FARMINGTON
FARMINGTON HILLS
SPORTS
SCENE

Knights win hockey title

•The Livonia Knights, a Pee Wee AA hockey team, beat the Fraser Falcons, 5-1, to win the Michigan Amateur Hockey Association state championship March 10 at the Wayne Ice Arena. It was the second consecutive state crown for the Knights (54-12-3 overall), who won the Pee Wee A crown a year ago, made their third straight trip to the finals. They were runners-up in the Squirt division two years ago.

The Knights, coached by Dan Lerg, Bill Smith and Ron Griffin, will now play in the national tournament, beginning April 11 in Mentor, Ohio. It is the first team from the Livonia Hockey Association in 28 years to play in the national tournament. They have outscored their opponents this year by an average of 5.5 goals-for to 1.5 goals against.

Kevin Krogel scored twice in the championship game for the Knights, including the game-winning 41 seconds in to the final period. In the semifinals, Bryan Marshall scored the first two goals of the game and Jim Spiewak added a second period goal as the Knights routed Traverse City, 7-1.

The Knights opened tournament play with an 9-1 win over Jackson, as Pat Lerg scored four times. Derek Martin's power-play goal opened the scoring, while Shaun McDonnell finished the game with one goal and three assists.

In an 11-4 win over Trenton, Trenton opened the scoring before the Knights exploded for seven unanswered goals. Joe Hillebrand recorded a goal and two assists before suffering a tournament-ending injury in the second period.

Nathan Jakubowski had two goals and three assists, while Sean Szostak and Ryan Eust added three points.

In Game No. 3, the Knights downed Fraser, 7-3. Michael Walsh, Erik Reitz and Sean Smith each scored goals.

For the tournament, the Knights outscored their opponents, 38-5, as goaltenders Bobby Pruchnick and Kevin Marlowe each stood firm between the pipes.

Team sponsors for the Knights include Chrysler Industries, American Representatives, Johnson Stamping, Major Magic Pizza and the LHA, the team manager is Angie Krogel.

•The Kings, Squirt B LHA champs and Joseph P. Morrison Hockey Day champs (beating the Capitals), finished second in the Kentwood Squirt invitational tournament Feb. 23-25 in Grand Rapids.

Members of coach Don Strauch's team include Livonians Brandon Albrecht, Kurt Albrecht, Mark Albulov, Brian Bishop, Jonathan Breneman, Matt Easley, Chris Coluccelli, Brian Guido, Chris Guido, Matt Hartzel, Andrew Hinkle, Adam Johnson, Mike Tokarsky and goaltender Joseph Bique. Other members include Nick Strauch (Northville) and Matt Perino (Canton).

Cager contributes

•Ryan Salata was also a member of the St. Edith junior varsity B team which recently captured the St. Valentine All-Metro basketball tourney with a 26-23 win over Holy Family in the championship final. The Eagles, who finished 13-0 in the Catholic League Organization, also included Andrew Cullinan, Gabriel DeFavis, Andrius Giedraitis, Mike Hamilton, Jason Horton, Ryan Horton, Mark Mercer, Mark Ralco, Alan Spohn and Andy Varlane. The team is coached by Doug Spohn and Pat Cannon.

Collegiate notes

•Dawn Warner (Livonia Franklin), who recently became Western Kentucky University's 18th 1,000th-point scorer in women's basketball, tallied a team-high 18 points in Thursday's 80-72 loss to Arizona in the Women's National Invitational Tournament in Amarillo, Tex. The loss dropped the Lady Hilltoppers' record to 18-12 overall.

•Bryan Besco (Westland John Glenn), a sophomore first baseman on the University of Michigan baseball squad, leads the Wolverines with two home runs. The bad news, however, is that UM is reeling at 1-13 and Besco is struggling at the plate, hitting .200.

•Derek Besco, a sophomore pitcher, is also struggling. He has pitched 7.7 innings in four appearances and has a whopping 14.09 ERA. On a brighter note, Besco has five hits in 10 at-bats for a .500 average with one home run.

•Mark Temple (North Farmington) is still in the running to earn a starting spot on UM's rotation when the Big 10 season begins. The senior right hander is also struggling, with an 0-3 record and 9.49 ERA.

Crusaders drop game

On Friday, host Point Loma Nazarene (Calif.) improved to 17-10 overall, clinching its own Bombs at the Beach Baseball Tournament with a 10-6 triumph over Madonna University in Game No. 8.

Jeff Gutz had a two-run homer and a single for the Fighting Crusaders, who fall to 7-14 overall. Mark Serra (1-1), who worked into the fifth inning, suffered the loss.

Earlier in the day, Pacific Lutheran (8-5) downed the Fighting Crusaders, 8-6, with a 14-hit attack. Gutz had two hits, including a double along with teammate Delano Voletti. Pitcher Tim Holland (1-2) suffered the loss.



Play at second: Junior Michelle Sklar tries to make a putout as former Mercy player Piper Metz. Sklar is a returning starter at shortstop and one of many veteran players on the North softball team.

Raiders believe '96 will be better



DAN O'MEARA
STAFF WRITER

Couch Dave Brubaker doesn't expect great things from his North Farmington, just a little improvement this year.

The Raiders return nine players and some definite talent following a 10-15 season, but North remains a fairly young ballclub with only three seniors among its 14 members.

"We were very young last year," said Brubaker, who begins his ninth year. "I'd like to see if we flip-flop the record."

"If we go 15-10, I'll be extremely happy. If we go 10-15, I'll think we didn't go out with the frame of mind

we should have."

North had some big moments last year, defeating Western Lakes Activities Association champ Walled Lake Central, Plymouth Canton and Westland John Glenn.

But the Raiders also lost some games they should have won, according to Brubaker, when the defense faltered or the run support was lacking.

"We're still a year or two away from being the powerhouse I think we can be," he said, "but we're not going to hide from anybody."

"Walled Lake Central is going to be tough again, but I see our team competing. We're still young but we

can surprise people. I think we can be in the running for the division title."

North has its pitchers back in sophomore Mickey Spiz and junior Kathie Collins. Both had five wins and split the losses at seven and eight.

"They got their feet wet as far as varsity experience," Brubaker said. "We'll be able to hang in there with their pitching. If they can keep us in games, I think we have the defense to go with it. Hitting is the only question mark."

Sophomore Katie Devereux was the most valuable player and returns at catcher. She batted .370 while leading the team with 29 hits. She also had 28 RBI, four home runs and three triples.

"We're solid but not deep," Brubaker said. "This year I feel we have a backup everywhere but catcher."

"Katie is pretty durable. She played every inning of every game last year. If she gets hurt, I start taking volunteers."

Like Devereux, junior third baseman Kelly Brannack and sophomore infielder Lynn Livernois were All-Lakes Division players.

Brannack batted .320 in the league and is dependable in the field as well as with the bat.

"She hits the ball hard and has a real strong arm," Brubaker said. "She did a fantastic job as a sophomore; she's back and looking better than ever. You can see she's gotten stronger and is more agile."

Livernois started at second base and junior Michelle Sklar at shortstop, but they could flip-flop positions or rotate with sophomore Dianna Gustkey.

"All three are capable of playing either position," Brubaker said. "It's

See RAIDERS, 3C

Marlins eye repeat as division champs

DAN O'MEARA
STAFF WRITER

If his second season as Farmington Hills Mercy softball coach is like the first, Jack Falvo will gladly take it, with some alterations.

Falvo was named Observerland Coach of the Year after guiding Mercy to a 20-13 record and the Central Division championship.

But the Marlins were eliminated in the first round of the Catholic League playoffs by Birmingham

first-round loss last year after winning the division. Our seniors remember that disappointment and are focused on getting through the first round."

Mercy will build its team around seven returning players: seniors Heidi Wahl, Lindsey Moeller, Carrie Fling, Rachel Geiger and Jennifer Lia, junior Dana Dziekan and sophomore Kelly Moug.

"Heidi Wahl has developed into a great leader and definitely will anchor the infield on the left side," Falvo said.

Wahl, who started at third base but also can play shortstop, has a 3.97 grade point and will likely attend Alma College on an academic scholarship to play softball.

Moeller returns as the starting catcher and "is looking really strong in the batting cage," according to Falvo, after working out all winter.

Geiger was an all-division center fielder, "a quiet player who always got the job done" and also is hitting

See MARLINS, 3C



Making her pitch: Junior Dana Dziekan gives the Marlins a veteran pitcher with plenty of varsity experience.

SOFTBALL

Marion, a team it had beaten four times previously. Mercy got to the district tournament final but lost to powerful Farmington Harrison.

"We have the potential to be a good team, but the players have to demonstrate they can do it on the field," Falvo said. "I think we'll be able to give anybody (in the league) a game."

"I think we learned from that

S-Lathrup stops Wayne in 'A' semifinals

By BRAD EMMES
STAFF WRITER

If only Wayne Memorial could take back the final six minutes of Friday's state Class A boys basketball semifinal.

The Zebras turned in a sterling performance for nearly 3/4 quarters before Southfield-Lathrup nearly back for a 77-67 victory before 8,496 fans at the Breslin Center in East Lansing.

The Chargers (23-3) showed why their victory over No. 1 Detroit Pershing in the regional final was no fluke by coming up with the big plays and big stops down the stretch.

In the end, it was the combined play of Lathrup's towering front line - 6-foot-9 Eagle Butler (19 points and 13 rebounds), 6-8 Duke signs (19 points and 13 rebounds) and 6-6 Harold Allison (13 points, nine rebounds and five blocks), that made the difference.

Junior sharpshooter Greg Grays, who was lukewarm for almost three quarters, also heated up

BASKETBALL

down the stretch. He scored 12 of his team-high 23 points to spark a 26-12 Lathrup fourth-quarter run.

"Our scouting report said he (Grays) would take a lot of shots, but he was also one of their better shooters, the streaky kind," Wayne coach Chuck Henry said. "He was two for nine in the first half and I wished he had stayed that way. But he's a competitor, and he wanted the ball. He did a nice job when they needed it."

Ironically, Wayne, whose tallest starter is 6-4, was able to hang w/2 the Chargers despite the lopsided size disadvantage.

Six straight points by Wayne's Richard Johnson, including a two-hand jam off a nifty inside feed from Laveille Guess with five seconds left in the third quarter momentarily gave Wayne a 65-48 advantage.

But the tide quickly changed as Grays nailed a 28-foot three-pointer just before the buzzer sounded to pull the Chargers to within four, 65-61.

"That might have been the turning point, Lathrup coach Bob Herm said. "Instead of being down seven, we were down four and it gave us a fighting chance. It couldn't have come at a better time. It's the first time he's done that on the varsity, but I remember him making about four of those when he was on the JV."

Henry also agreed with his coaching counterpart on "the shot."

"That had a big impact on the game when he (Grays) hit the long 'three,'" he said. "It helped their surging crowd and maybe it made their half-court trap a little tougher. They got the momentum and we couldn't turn them back. They're big and quick and we were not doing a

See HOOPS, 3C