

SPORTS

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MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 2, 1996

FARMINGTON — FARMINGTON HILLS SPORTS SCENE

Baseball tryouts

North Farmington-West Bloomfield Cobras 12-year-old travel baseball team will have tryouts for the 1997 season at 2 p.m. Sunday, Sept. 8, and 2 p.m. Saturday, Sept. 14, at Dunkle Middle School.

Players should arrive early for registration. The school is located on 12 Mile Road in Farmington Hills. Players whose birth dates range between Aug. 1, 1984, and July 31, 1985, are eligible.

For information call Julia Clark at (810) 553-3908.

Concealed Security will have tryouts for its 10-year-old baseball team at 5 p.m. Sunday, Sept. 8, at Founders Park in Farmington Hills.

The park is located on Eight Mile Road, east of Newburg/Halsted Road. Players with birth dates on or before Aug. 1, 1986, are eligible.

For information call Lou Pirronello at (313) 532-4066 during the day or (313) 462-1408 in the evening.

The Michigan Bulls 14-and-under baseball team is looking for players for the 1997 season. Tryouts are under way now. For information call Chris Hansen at (313) 584-7077.

Punt, Pass & Kick

The NFL-Gatorade Punt, Pass & Kick competition makes its way into Michigan once again as boys and girls between the ages of 8 and 15 will have the opportunity to showcase their gridiron talents at some 140 sites throughout the state of Michigan.

The 10th Annual Michigan program kicks off this month with local competitions being held through Sept. 29. The winner from each local competition in each age group then advances to one of 11 sectional competitions the weekend of Oct. 12-13. The top five sectional winners with the top five scores then advance to the team (state) championship Nov. 17 as part of the Detroit Lions-Seattle Seahawks football game at the Silverdome.

Detroit Lions team champions will then have their scores compared to other team champions from all 20 NFL markets with the top four scorers in each age group advancing to the National Finals at an AFC playoff game in January.

Local host sites include Auburn Hills, Farmington Hills, Orion Township, Rochester Hills, Southfield and Troy.

Competition in Auburn Hills will be held Sept. 27 at 4 p.m. at Will Rogers Elementary School. Heritage Park in Farmington Hills will be the site Sept. 21 at 10 a.m., while Lake Orion High School will play host Sept. 10 at 5:30 p.m. and Borden Park in Rochester Hills will host on Sept. 21 at 11 a.m. The Southfield Civic Center will be the center of attraction Sept. 22 at 10 a.m. and Broun Park in Troy will do the same Sept. 29 at 1 p.m.

The Michigan program is coordinated through the Michigan Recreation and Park Association and is free to all youngsters. Contact your local parks and recreation or community education department for further information or call (810) 524-3464.

Clarenceville tankers star

Three Clarenceville Swim Club long-distance competitors earned national places this summer, including Stephanie Cummings, who was third in the 1,000 freestyle (13:07.5), Brendan Cummings, fourth, 1,000 freestyle (12:47.7), and Jon Burmeister, seventh, 2,000 freestyle (30:49.43).

Participating in the Central Zone Championships, Stephanie Cummings took fifth in the one-mile open water event (23:53.04), while Ted Burmeister returned for consolation finals in the 100 and 200 breaststroke.

In the Long Course State meet, Clarenceville's Michael Porth, 14, took fourth in the 100 freestyle (58.49), fifth, 200 freestyle (2:08.72) and 400 freestyle (4:34.23); seventh, 100 breaststroke (1:17.75) and 200 breaststroke (2:45.85).

Other Clarenceville finishers included: Stephanie Cummings, 11, seventh, 50 backstroke (35:37) and 100 backstroke (1:16.31); Becky Noebel, 16, sixth, 400 freestyle (5:32.81); eighth, 100 breaststroke (1:23.79); Kelly Carlisle, 17, eighth, 100 butterfly (1:10.44) and 200 butterfly (2:37.89); Edward Lesnau, 12, seventh, 50 breaststroke (40.46); Nick Sosnowski, 18, fifth, 100 backstroke (1:03.86) and 200 backstroke (2:17.43); Keith Falk, 15, seventh, 200 butterfly (2:18.86), eighth, 400 IM (5:01.01).

In the 15-and-over 400 medley relay, the foursome of Sosnowski, Burmeister, Falk and Eric Seideman took fifth in (4:24.92).

Tommy Titan 5K

The University of Detroit Mercy will host its Seventh Annual Tommy Titan five-kilometer cross country race 10 a.m. Saturday, Sept. 7, at Cass Benton Park in Northville.

The race is open to all entrants at a cost of \$5. Winners in each age group will receive two UDM men's basketball tickets. Participants can register in advance or at the race.

Following the open race, there will be men's and women's intercollegiate races featuring UDM, Eastern Michigan, Wayne State and St. Francis (Pa.). For information, call (313) 993-1724.

Readers can fax information to (313) 591-7279.

Raiders expect better year

North Farmington's football team hit the weights in the off season and now is ready to hit the opposition.

BY DAN O'MEARA
STAFF WRITER

Coches Jim O'Leary is certain his North Farmington football team is improved, and his hope is the record will reflect it.

The Raiders, who were 2-7 with victories over West Bloomfield and Livonia Churchill, took steps to make themselves better between seasons, according to O'Leary.

"We have more athletes; we're not huge, but we're bigger," he said. "I know we're a lot better than we were on offense."

Possibly the biggest area of improvement is the offensive line, which had trouble protecting quarterback Brad Rivers and blocking for the running game.

Junior center Matt St. Charles (5-10, 190) is the best offensive lineman and lone returning starter who comes back 15 pounds heavier.

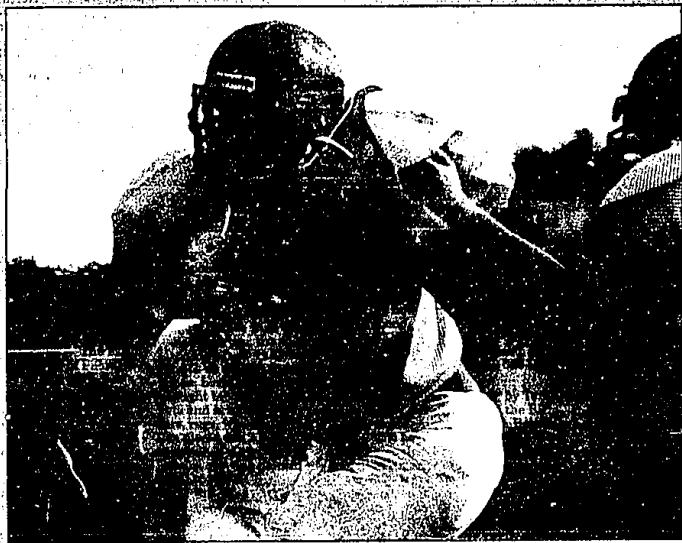
The decision to play senior tackle Harry Banks (6-2, 230) on offense, too, will make a big difference, O'Leary said.

The senior tri-captain, who started at linebacker as a sophomore and defensive tackle as a junior, worked hard in the weight room and added 50 pounds.

O'Leary credits first-year varsity assistant coach Zaim Cummlie, a former North standout and college player at East Carolina, with pushing Banks to "his potential."

The other linemen are senior guard Corey Lewis (6-5, 280), junior guard Sean Clark (6-0, 200), senior tackle Zac Altshoff (6-1, 215) and junior tight end Carter Campbell (6-2, 205).

"We're much better on the line," O'Leary said. "We've done a great job."



Senior standout: The Raiders are counting on senior two-way tackle Harry Banks to be a team leader as a captain and player. Banks is a three-year starter on defense.

O'Leary said. "The best part is these kids worked real hard on the weights, and that's how they got bigger. We're quicker and more physical."

Rivers (6-4, 190) returns at quarterback for his senior year. He completed 88 of 181 passes for 1,087 yards and four touchdowns, but when he threw, it was often in obvious situations and under pressure.

"He has all the tools," O'Leary said. "He throws the ball well; he's extremely smart, and he doesn't make mistakes."

"Our biggest hope is to be able to run the ball and throw off that, as opposed to last year when we had to throw the ball because we couldn't run."

North had a good running back

in John Lesewny, who managed to rush for almost 800 yards, but opponents stopped the Raiders if they could stop Lesewny.

The Raiders have two tailbacks in seniors Mark Kasse (5-10, 185) and Chad Feldman (5-8, 170). When one is on offense, the other will play defense.

Kasse, who sat out last season

See RAIDERS, 3C

Many new players fill Falcons' lineup

BY DAN O'MEARA
STAFF WRITER

The last thing coach Lauri Niskanen needed was to lose another experienced player from his Farmington High School football team.

It was enough the Falcons lost 24 to graduation, including 15 who were major contributors a year ago.

But they suffered another setback during the preseason when their best player, Adam Weber, was sidelined with a concussion.

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Association runner-up, as well as seniors who had backup roles last year.

"We're at a disadvantage," Niskanen, who began his fourth year, said. "But our system needs to be the continuity of the coaches and has to help us."

It's not like we started over again and had to teach everything. The players are experienced. I think they can be successful.

We're preparing to win the state championship. We're going to win the state championship. We're going to win the state championship.

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Senior standout: Besides starting at quarterback and on defense, junior Joel Lewis will do the punting, too.

Marlins topple Vikings in opener

The start of the 1996 girls basketball season couldn't have been any better for Farmington Hills Mercy.

The Marlins produced a major victory in their debut Thursday when they went on the road to Wallied Lake Central and upset the Vikings, 60-44.

"It was a real nice way for us to start the season," Mercy coach Larry Baker said. "It helps to put the 5-15 blues behind us."

Central is the defending Western Lakes Activities Association champion, and the Vikings were runners-up in the Class A tournament last year while finishing 26-1.

Furthermore, the Marlins managed to win despite their best player, senior Mary Jane Valade, playing only a third of the game due to foul trouble.

GIRLS BASKETBALL

Valade picked up three fouls in the first quarter, her fourth in the third and fouled out with 1:50 remaining in the game. She finished with six points.

Sophomore forward Jessie Brennan had 15 points to lead Mercy, senior center Keisha Brooks 13 and senior guard Jena Kluska nine. Brooks also had 10 rebounds despite the Marlins being "seriously outmanned," Brennan had five assists.

Becky Cummings, a 6-foot-2 senior and all-star who committed early to Michigan State, scored 25 points for the Vikings, who were playing their first game, too. Michelle Boutz, a 6-2 junior, added nine.

"We kept juggling presses and kept them off

balance," Baker said. "We forced Cummings to handle the ball, and we kept them out of rhythm."

"We're going to face this disadvantage against other teams, and it's good for the kids to know we can play a team with that size, still execute our game plan and pull out a game like that."

"We won't face a better center than Cummings."

Mercy trailed 25-20 at halftime but outscored the Vikings 16-9 in the third quarter and 30-19 overall in the second half.

Taking advantage of Central's aggressive press defense and fouls, the Marlins made eight of 10 free throws in the third quarter and 16 of 24 in the second half. They were 19-of-31 overall.

See MARLINS, 3C