

## FARMINGTON — FARMINGTON HILLS SPORTS SCENE

### Raiders win opener

North Farmington took an easy 67-39 road victory over Lapeer West Friday night to open its basketball season. The Raiders led 12-3 after the first quarter and were never challenged.

"We jumped on them early and didn't look back," coach Brian Swinchart said. "Defensively we were strong and showed a lot of intensity."

Kirk Mounroe led the Raiders with 12 points. Joe Szirtes added 10 points and Phil Watha had eight.

"All night long we did a good job of playing our system and playing as a team," said Swinchart.

### Adult men's basketball

The City of Farmington Hills is accepting new team registration for men's basketball. Registration is based on a first-come, first-serve basis. Leagues will play one night per week, Sundays and Mondays. The cost is \$326 per team.

League play will begin the first week in January, 1998 at the Costick Activities Center, Eleven Mile Road and Middlebelt area. For further information, call the Farmington Hills Recreation Division at (810) 473-9570.

### Volleyball

The Farmington Hills Recreation Division is offering men's and co-ed's open volleyball leagues in the gymnasium at the Costick Activities Center, located on Eleven Mile Road between Middlebelt and Inkster roads. Games will be on Tuesday evenings and will start Jan. 6, 1998.

### Fracassa a finalist

Longtime Birmingham Brother Rice football coach Al Fracassa was recently announced a finalist in the Third Annual "NFL Coach of the Year" competition. The award honors local high school coaches who are nominated by a professional player.

Pete Mitchell, a 1990 Rice graduate and current tight end for the NFL's Jacksonville Jaguars, nominated Fracassa. Fracassa has been head coach at Rice for 24 years and owns an impressive 225-51-2 record.

Each of the 30 NFL teams honors 10 coaches during the high school football season based on contributions on and off the field. These coaches honored received a \$500 grant from NFL Charities for his school, as well as an invitation to a practice session of his local NFL team.

The commitment and leadership exhibited by the coaches joins with the win-loss record as components in the evaluation process. All local winners also received a certificate signed by NFL Commissioner Paul Tagliabue and the head coach of the local NFL team.

### St. Mary's signings

St. Mary's College has signed brothers Nathan Kuruumi and Nolan Kuruumi to national letters of intent, according to men's soccer coach Tony Williams. Both players attended Madison Heights Bishop Foley and played on the Ventures' 1997 Division III state championship team.

Nathan is an outside midfielder; Nolan plays the sweeper position.

"I'm very excited about getting these two players," Williams said. "They come from a tremendous (high school) program."

### Bike Trekkers meet

Serious bikers can get on the right track Sunday mornings by joining members of Bike Trekkers for a ride through West Bloomfield. Bike Trekkers meets at 8 a.m. each Sunday morning at the West Bloomfield Recreation Center and ride 10-15 miles on various routes through the subdivisions of West Bloomfield.

Routes include both paved and dirt roads as well as the West Bloomfield Trail Network. Bike trucks may also take riders outside West Bloomfield.

The program is free and there are no residency requirements. Cyclists must be at least 16 years of age, have a bike with sturdy tires that can endure gravel roads, and must wear a helmet.

For more information call Doug McEwen at (248) 728-2500.

# Hawks rally past Lapeer 43-38

## 9-0 run in final minutes gives Harrison 2-0 start

SCOTT DANIEL STAFF WRITER

It wouldn't be unfair to say Farmington Hills Harrison stole a 43-38 victory from Lapeer East Friday night.

The Hawks (2-0) trailed most of the fourth quarter and were down by as much as six points. But Harrison closed the game with a 9-0 run to beat the winless Eagles before a large and loud home crowd.

"These guys have been doing this to me for three years," coach Mike Teachman said. "It's called, 'refuse to lose.'"

Farmington Hills trailed 38-32 with 3:25 to go in the game. Ricky "The Truth" Bryant began the Hawks' rally with a basket and was followed by a low post hook from Andy Burt.

After a Lapeer East turnover, Matt Derocher nailed a three-pointer to give the Hawks a 39-38 lead with 41 seconds left. Dave Pesci and Kareem Smartt each made a pair of free throws in the final seconds to give Harrison its five-point victory.

Teachman pointed to the play of Brian Lewis for sparking the comeback. His hustle in recovering several loose balls "got everyone else started." Jared Johnson led Harrison with nine points while Jared Hopkins and Derocher each had eight. Glenn Pakulak had 12 points for Lapeer East.

Friday's win wasn't a classic for Farmington Hills. Neither team, in fact, played particularly well.

Teachman said the Hawks simply need practice and playing time to get familiar with each other.

"We're still not in condition," he added.

That limited his rotation to about eight players.

Teachman said he would like to have a rotation of about 11 players eventually.

The coach also wasn't happy with the Hawks' passing. But he added that Lapeer's defense had something to do with the number of turnovers his team made.

"We were trying to make passes an average defensive team would give us," said Teachman. "But they weren't average."

After an 11-11 first quarter, Farmington Hills offensive woes surfaced in the second. Sloppy ball handling and a few errant passes put the Hawks into 24-19 halftime hole.

"We played right into their hands by taking jump shots and watching," Teachman said.

The coach said he told his team to attack inside in the second half. Harrison did just that and opened the third quarter with a 7-0 run.

Smartt connected on a drive to the basket and Hopkins swished a jump shot to make it 24-23 at the 6:18 mark. A three-pointer from Johnson gave Farmington Hills a two-point lead.

It didn't last, however, as Lapeer rallied to take a 29-28 lead by the end of the period.

A Johnson basket gave the Hawks a 30-29 lead to start the fourth quarter. But the Eagles put together a 7-0 run to take seemingly take control.

With hustle and determination, the Hawks were able to comeback and take the game. Teachman was proud of the effort his team gave.

"It was amazing," he said. "Refuse to lose."



PHOTO BY KEVY KILGORE

Lighting the fire: Farmington Hills Harrison's Brian Lewis provided the spark to beat Lapeer East Friday night, coach Mike Teachman said.

# Let the Games Begin

## Farmington schools open prep volleyball season



STAFF FILE PHOTO BY KAREN LEWIS

She's back: Farmington Hills Mercy's Ashley Schumacher returns for her senior season with the Marlins. She is one of the team's top hitters, according to coach Ed Moeller.

SCOTT DANIEL STAFF WRITER

If you're looking for a darkhorse contender in the Catholic League volleyball race this winter, look no further than Farmington Hills Mercy.

The Marlins have the experience, talent and desire to challenge in one of the state's premier conferences. First-year coach Ed Moeller said his team has shown great dedication in preparing for the upcoming season by playing and practicing almost daily since last May.

All of that hard work will be needed to make noise in the Catholic League, he added.

"Win or lose," he said, "we want to take Ladywood and Marian to the wall."

Moeller, who was the Marlins junior varsity mentor for the last four years, replaced Peggy Spangler. The two are actually flip-flopping positions with Spangler, who guided the varsity for seven seasons, assuming the JV duties. "I've worked with all of these kids before," Moeller said.

The coach has instituted a few changes. The Marlins will play more of an "up-tempo" offense and will give teams many different looks to "keep them off-balance," said Moeller. Thus far, players have adapted well to the changes. Mercy more than held its own in a scrimmage Thursday against Bloomfield Hills Lahser, Holly and Lake Orion.

Nevertheless, Moeller said it will take time for this team to work out all of the bugs. He hopes everything will

be running smoothly by mid January. "It's a matter of being patient," Moeller said.

It takes good players to execute any kind of system. Mercy has plenty of those.

The Marlins are carrying 12 players on the varsity this year. A total of nine are returning from last year's squad, which finished around the .500 mark.

Five seniors headline Farmington Hills' roster.

Erin Fitzgerald will captain the squad. Moeller said she'll be on the court a lot and is a powerful hitter and strong passer.

Liz Dillon played mostly as a back row specialist last year. But the senior has improved and should see time in the front row.

A hallmark of this year's team, Moeller said, is its versatility and depth.

"We only have three specialists," he commented. "The other nine can go any way we like. We've got a lot of balance, a lot of interchangeable parts."

Krista Kolley is another Mercy senior. At 6-1, she has the height and ability to be a top-notch middle blocker/hitter.

"She has worked harder than any player in our program the last two years," Moeller said.

Kolley will be able to dominate matches at times. The question, Moeller said, is if she can sustain it. "Consistency is the key factor," he said, "and she knows it."

Shyla O'Mara will work at setter.

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