

Farmington sends 4 to state

Farmington gymnasts fell short of their team goal Saturday but managed to qualify four individuals for the state meet this weekend.

The top three teams in each regional advance to the state competition, but Farmington was fourth and less than a point out of third place.

Regional host Hartland was first (143.45), Freeland second (141.95), Brighton third (138.7) and Farmington a close fourth (137.8).

"It was a meet that could have gone either way," Farmington coach Jeff Dwyer said, adding Farmington had its highest team score of the season. "When you're that close, you think about the little things. If we'd done this or that one, we could have made it."

"We went down fighting; I'll say that much. But it's disappointing, knowing we were that close to going to state. That was our goal all season, and we almost did it."

"It's hard because all the teams above us have at least two or three Division Ones on their teams. We don't have any, and that definitely makes it a lot harder."

Farmington will send junior Brook Rubin, senior Marie Law, senior Kelly Baraniec and sophomore Jamie Millettello to the state

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meet at Rockford High School.

The team event takes place Friday and the individual competition Saturday. The Division I gymnasts start at noon Saturday, the Division II at 3:30 p.m.

After failing to qualify last year, Rubin will compete as an all-arounder and will be eligible for a medal in each individual event.

A state qualifier as a freshman, she was sixth in all-around scoring with a 34.90 total.

Rubin would have qualified as an individual in two events, placing third on bars (8.95) and fifth on beam (9.0). She also scored 8.75 on floor and 8.2 on vault.

"Last year was kinda disappointing for her," Dwyer said. "She had a hard time on balance beam, which is her favorite event, and she let that affect her whole meet."

"We talked about that. I told her it's just a sport; it's not life and death. She's grown up in that way. She didn't hit all of her vaults (Saturday), but she hung in there, whereas, last year she might have given up."

"That's a sign of her maturity and it paid off, because she ended up going as an all-arounder. And that's a huge credit to her."

Law, who went to state on bars and beam last year, will compete this year on floor, finishing in a sixth-place tie with a 9.1 regional score.

"She's been our most consistent scorer, especially in the big meets," Dwyer said. "I'm glad to see her have one more chance to go to state as a senior."

"I think she was surprised, because she had been medaling on beam and bars in the invitational."

Law also has the highest all-around average on the team, according to Dwyer.

"Both of us were heart-broken at her not making all-around, but we're happy she's going to state regardless; so we're looking at it in a positive way."

Baraniec and Millettello will make their first trips to the state meet. Baraniec was fourth on vault (9.0) and Millettello eighth on balance beam (8.75).

"Kelly has been very consistent over the full season," Dwyer said. "We definitely would not have gone as far as we did as a team without her."

"Jamie was very steady on beam and threw a dynamite routine. I thought her score might have been a little higher even. I saw only one minor flaw throughout the whole routine."

severe ankle sprain two days before the meet. Canton coach John Cunningham knew his team's goals would have to be altered.

"I was thinking (Driaboli) could maybe be state champion in the Division II vault, or maybe the floor exercise," he said. "She was getting better and better. Now we'll have to wait until next year."

The same could be said for any slight aspirations the Chiefs may have entertained regarding a regional title run.

"I had no hopes — none," said Cunningham. "Once Amy went down, I just said to the girls 'Let's make it to states.'"

That they did, and with relative ease. Yes, Northville-Novii finished first, scoring 140.10, but Canton rolled to a second with a 136.25. The third team qualifier is Hillsdale (134.95), which edged Saline (134.55). Plymouth Salem placed 10th (122.60) in the 15-team field.

"We didn't have a good meet," said Cunningham. "We had an exceptional meet. Performance-wise, we weren't perfect, but we were certainly exceptional."

Canton's season-long leaders, Liz Fitzgerald and Marie Emrick, led the Chiefs in the regional. Fitzgerald was second in Division I all-around (35.85) and Emrick fifth (34.95). Both qualified for all events at the state meet.

Fitzgerald's best finish came in the uneven parallel bars in which she was second (9.15). But she was steady throughout, placing third on beam (9.0), fourth on vault (8.55) and fifth on floor (9.15).

Emrick's best showing came in the vault in which she was second (8.85). She was also fourth on beam (8.9), ninth on bars (8.55) and 10th on floor (8.65).

In Division II, Canton had one state qualifier: Holly Graham, who was sixth on beam (8.55). She also tied for 12th on floor exercise (8.6). Canton's Nicole Vangenes was 15th in the all-around (32.35).



State qualifier: Senior Kelly Baraniec, performing on the vault beam in an earlier meet, will compete for individual state-meet honors on the vault Saturday.

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All bids must be paid in cash "only" and all items are to be removed from the sale on the day of the sale, (unless otherwise agreed upon).

Notice March 12 & 19, 1998

CHIEFS QUALIFY AS TEAM: Going into the regional Saturday at Plymouth Canton, the host Chiefs knew it would require some sort of miracle for them to catch Northville-Novii, the Western Lakes Activities Association champion and a favorite to win the state title.

When Amy Driscoll went down with a

Vikings turn back Warriors in final

BY JOE KYRIAKOZAS
STAFF WRITER

If you believe in moral victories, score one for the Walled Lake Western volleyball team.

Western competed well against a superior Walled Lake Central team in the Class A district final at Farmington Hills, but finished second Saturday, losing 15-4 and 15-6.

Despite the setback, the vastly-improved Warriors still had their pride intact afterward.

"I don't think I'm disappointed," Western coach Fritz Tallian said. "We proved we could play with them. I think we really had a hope of beating Central. We figured we could compete."

Central (42-7-3) earned its seventh consecutive district crown, eliminating the Warriors for the second straight year.

The Vikings will face Grand Blanc at 10 a.m. Saturday in the regional at Lapeer East. Birmingham Marian and Clarkston meet in the other semifinal.

Central coach Mike Lindstrom commended Western for its

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effort.

"Western is real athletic," Lindstrom said. "They scare you; they've improved a lot. They have kids who can really swing at the ball."

The Vikings remained in their powerhouse form despite losing the services of 6-foot starting junior middle hitter Leah Douglas, who was injured in the league tournament.

"She's been our starting middle hitter all season," Lindstrom said. "We've got lots of kids to play, but we don't have kids to take her place. I think she's going to be back."

In the meantime, the Vikings are using 5-10 sophomore Christina Tudor in her spot.

To meet in the final round, Central defeated host Farmington Harrison (16-4, 16-1) and Western topped Farmington (16-8, 16-1), which defeated North Farmington in the first match of the day.

In the first game between the

Walled Lakes, Western took a 3-0 lead behind plenty of hustle. But the Vikings didn't wait to act on the deficit, pounding the Warriors for 14 unanswered points.

The second contest was nip-and-tuck early on, with both teams struggling to score after a 5-5 tie.

Central eventually went on the attack and buried seven straight points. Junior setter Becca Saldana softly topped the winning point over the net for the 16-6 final.

"It went back to our old nemesis, where we get into a habit of missing serves," Tallian said. "I was envious of their defense. They dug up everything we hit."

Central's defense was led by Saldana, who connected on 103 of 106 sets during the tournament, and also tallied 40 assists, six blocks, eight kills, 11 digs and was a perfect 19-of-19 serving with three aces.

Junior outside hitter Amanda Mandenhall was good on 33 of 36 hits with 21 kills, had 10 digs and also was perfect at the ser-

vise line (13-of-13). Senior middle blocker Kristen Brady was good on 22 of 24 attacks with 15 kills and five blocks. Senior outside hitter Sabrina Nordstrom was 25-of-28 hitting with 10 kills and 19 digs.

Western's leaders for the tournament were Kristina Kerrigan with 13 kills, Cindy Howder with 15 kills and 16 digs, Danielle Williams with 13 kills and 11 service points and Sheryl Wrobel with 19 assists and 13 digs.

After posting a 12-92 record over the last three seasons, Western finished this season with a 25-17 record.

"The improvement of the program and our record has been great," Tallian said. "This is the first time we've won 20 or more games since 1987, and it's our first winning season in the '90s."

Central remains the class of the area in volleyball, however.

"This is one of the higher achieving teams I've ever coached," Lindstrom said. "These girls work hard, play hard defense together and they play smart."

Mustangs pass early test en route to title

BY MARTY BUDNER
STAFF WRITER

The wake-up call for Birmingham Marian's volleyball team came early in the Class A district tournament Saturday at Bloomfield Hills Lahser.

In the opening match, Marian needed three games to get past Birmingham Seaholm in what many considered the tournament's championship match.

In a thrilling contest that lasted more than 1 1/2 hours, the Mustangs defeated the Maples, 16-8, 12-15, 15-11.

Marian stopped Lahser in the semifinals (16-4, 15-7) and topped Groves in the title match (16-11, 16-6) to claim its sixth consecutive district crown.

"I don't want to take anything away from Groves or Lahser, but we knew the championship game was going to be early on," Marian coach Patty Kopmeyer said.

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"Seaholm has some good athletes. They're strong players and we never felt comfortable playing against them. I liked the way we played overall, but I loved the way Seaholm played, too."

The Mustangs took a 39-11-3 record into the regional tournament Saturday at Lapeer East.

Marian controlled play in the first game, but the Maples rebounded to win the second. The Mustangs shot to a 9-2 lead in the third game, but Seaholm rallied to tie the score at 10-all. Marian won by earning five of the next six points.

The match included 15 consecutive side-outs in the second game and nine in the third.

"It was a slugfest; it was amazing," Kopmeyer said.

"I love the way my team comes out and plays hard in the first games. But all season long we haven't played as well as we're capable the second game."

Marian was in little trouble through the rest of the tournament.

In the opener against Groves, the Mustangs took a 14-6 lead. However, Falcon senior Jennie Wind registered five straight points to make it a 14-11 match.

Groves (21-11-6) survived three match points before Kristy Kreher's kill won it for Marian.

The Mustangs dominated the second game as Katrina Lehman started it with six consecutive service points. The closest Groves came was 11-6.

"Marian plays with a confidence that a lot of other teams don't have, particularly my team," Groves coach Julie Bardoni said. "Volleyball is such a

mental game, and I think that's one reason why (the Mustangs) do so well. They have all that tradition and winning attitude going for them."

LADY TROJANS OUSTED: Livonia Clarenceville, a state Class C quarterfinalist last year, fell in the first round of the district Saturday against host Pontiac Metro Dome Prep, 15-0, 15-33.

"The first game we did not play well at all," Clarenceville coach Athena Love said. "We just couldn't pass if our life depended on it."

Senior Michelle Berry, a first-team all-area pick last season and second-team All-Metro choice this year, collected six kills and three aces.

Senior Jackie Kibiko, a first-team All-Metro selection, came up with 24 digs in the second game.

Other standouts for Clarenceville (38-11-4) were junior Kristina Skerela, five kills and two aces; senior Melissa Berry, three solo blocks and two kills; and senior Agnieszka Patrz (thirteenth All-Metro).

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The Trojans defeated Southfield in the first round (16-14, 15-9) and Southfield-Lahser in the semifinals (16-3, 14-16, 15-7), but fatigue wasn't a reason for the loss to Mercy, according to Ford coach James Walls.

"At some point, we got emotionally down, and it's hard to come off a back," he said of the first-game loss to Mercy. "At this time of year, the team that can handle pressure moves on."

"That wasn't a major factor, and we did a good job of getting

back in the game. We were right there, and it could have gone either way."

Mercy took leads of 6-2 and 8-3 in the last game, but Henry Ford stayed close, cutting the difference to 8-6 and later 10-8.

The Marlinas scored their next three points on senior Lis Dillon's serve. Senior Erin Fitzgerald made it 13-8 with a kill.

After six sideouts, senior Shayla O'Mara served up the final two points for Mercy. Senior Krista Kelley killed the ball for

the 14th point, and Ford's final return went out of bounds.

"Krista Kelley was absolutely dominating as a middle hitter and blocker," Moeller said. "I believe I could pick the whole starting lineup (as standouts). I thought every single kid we put out there played well and played with a lot of emotion."

"It was a slugfest; it was close first game, finishing off Ford in the second was a demonstration of Mercy's more-confident attitude, according to Moeller.

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