

FARMINGTON — FARMINGTON HILLS SPORTS SCENE

Curtin still champion

Defenseman Scott Curtin (Redford Catholic Central), Michigan's Mr. Hockey last year and a member of the 1997 state Class A championship team, helped Middlebury (Vt.) College to its fourth straight NCAA Division III national championship last weekend with a 2-1 win over Wisconsin-Stevens Point.

Fox broadcasts hoops

Fox Sports in Detroit will televise three games live and one on tape delay Saturday in the 73rd Annual Michigan High School Athletic Association Boys Basketball Tournament at the Breslin Center in East Lansing.

Live action starts at 10 a.m. with the Class D final with Fred McLeod doing the play-by-play and Tim McCormick handling the color.

McLeod and Greg Kelsner will team up for the Class A final beginning at 4 p.m.

Matt Shepard and Kelsner will do the Class B final, beginning at 7:30 p.m.

The Class C game will be shown tape delayed at 12:30 a.m.

Also working Fox Sports Detroit coverage will be host John Keating, along with Marshall Thomas, head basketball coach at Saginaw High School.

Soccer players needed

The Farmington Soccer Club is looking for girls in the under-14 and older age groups to play soccer in the spring season.

High school girls interested in improving their skills and not currently on a team are encouraged to contact the club at (248) 471-3417.

Spring hoop tourneys

The Great Lakes Spring Classic, a boys basketball tournament for 12-and-under and 13-and-under teams, will be April 17-19 at Garden City Junior High and High School.

The championship team from each age group will advance to the National Invitational Tournament.

The cost is \$245 per team (includes U.S.S.A. registration and insurance). Trophies and individual awards will go to the first- and second-place teams for each age group. An all-tournament team and MVP for each age group will be chosen. Age eligibility is based on Sept. 1, 1998. All rosters must include birth certificates.

For more information, call Kevin Wilkinson at (313) 981-3000 (work) or (313) 274-5405 (home); or Jeff Bradley at (313) 595-6086.

The Eighth Annual North American Youth Basketball Tournament will be Friday through Sunday, May 22-24, at the University of Michigan-Dearborn.

There will be 10 different age brackets for boys and girls including grades 5-6, seventh grade, eighth grade, grades 9-10 and 11-12.

The entry fee is \$90 (includes two-game guarantee). For more information, call Mike Trudeau, Detroit NAYB area director at (810) 469-4242 or the NAYB toll-free tourney hotline at 1-888-629-2275.

Volleyball at Madonna

Madonna University will hold a series of summer volleyball camps for elite and general players (July 5-8), setters and youth (July 12-15); hitters I and II (mornings and afternoons July 12-15) and defensive specialists (July 19-22). For more information, call Jerry Abraham at (313) 432-5612 or (248) 476-1107.

Murray kicking camp

Former Detroit Lion and current Minnesota Viking Eddie Murray will have an instructional kicking and punting camp for boys ages 8-20 June 24-26 at Adrian College. For information, call 1-800-656-0801.

3-on-3 hoop tourney

The NBA and Hoop-It-Up, the league's and NBC Sports' official three-on-three street basketball tour, will be making its 10th anniversary tour Saturday and Sunday, June 13-14, at the Palace of Auburn Hills.

For registration information, call the Hoop-It-Up Detroit hotline at (248) 877-8727.

Marlins start season with victory

■ Farmington Hills Mercy began a new season in girls soccer Monday with a 4-2 victory over Woodhaven. The Marlins have a young team but expect to do well again in 1998.



BY DAN O'MEARA
STAFF WRITER

Using the first game as an indication of what to expect from a young Farmington Hills Mercy soccer team, the Marlins

should do well this year.

Mercy, which opened Monday with a 4-2 victory over Woodhaven, lost a number of key players from its last team but still has a strong, if less experienced, talent base.

The Marlins, who were 12-5 last year, lost 10 seniors to graduation, including all-area forward Jena Kuska, Laurin Hendrickson, Lynn Dreniak, Gail Agacinski, Lynn Digirolamo and Betsy Gignac.

Kuska, who averaged 17 1/2 goals the last two years, plays for Indiana University and Hendrickson, a four-year starter on defense, for the University of Indianapolis.

"For the first time, I have mixed feelings," coach Deepak Shivraman said. "I miss the comfort level you have with veteran players. Going into games last year, the players were so confident and focused."

"But, when I look at the new faces, I also see a lot of hunger. They want to establish some things in their own right. The work ethic has been incredible, and the level of play has been good."

The lone senior on this year's team is forward Colleen Soisson, whom Shivraman considers an underrated player because she was overshadowed by Kuska and Gignac.

"She has a lot of experience; she's very confident on the ball," Shivraman said. "She hasn't gotten the recognition, but Colleen has always been a solid and consistent forward."

"I'm hoping her last year will be a special tour. She didn't have many goals, but she made a lot of passes that led to goals being scored."

The other starting forward is sophomore Carrie Kuska, a returning varsity player, and freshman Sumbal Ahmad will rotate into the lineup.

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Field general: Junior Mary Gignac (right) will orchestrate much of Mercy's offense as a returning regular in the midfield. She battles Livonia Ladywood's Meryl Denton in a game last year (above). STAFF PHOTO BY SHAWN LEMMON

Raiders will field more balanced lineup

BY DAN O'MEARA
STAFF WRITER

Coach Tim Russell is hopeful 1998 will be a step forward for the North Farmington varsity girls soccer team.

With better depth and more club experience among players coming into the program, he believes the outlook is improved for the Raiders.

"We're much better balanced than we were last year," Russell said. "We have more talent spread around the field; whereas, before we were trying to hide a couple positions."

"This year we have strong soccer

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players at every position, at least with the starting 11, and we're probably a few deep past that."

The Raiders, who had a losing record last year, are scheduled to start the new season Saturday in a 12:30 p.m. home game with Southfield-Lathrup.

North was supposed to open against Farmington High on Wednesday, but that game has been postponed until Friday, April 3.

The Raiders lost only four players to graduation, and two (Kelly Wachaberg

and Meike Ziegler) missed the entire season due to knee injuries. Erika Dyke and Jenny Geiger left vacant starting positions.

The four freshmen on the team will have an immediate impact, starting at forward with Joyce Chung and Kelly Hogan bringing experience to the team.

Sophomore forward Whitney Hawkins returns, and three forwards move up from the JV — sophomore Shannon Horney and juniors Lauren Lankes and Molly Notarianni.

"Offensively, I'd say we're much better than we were," Russell said. "The freshmen we have at various positions

are very good finishers, and we were missing finishers last year."

The Raiders are experienced in the midfield with seniors Sara Biederman and Jodi Kahrnoff and junior Cathy Rizzo as returning starters.

Hogan could be the fourth starter in the middle if not junior Lamin Atasi or sophomore Lindsey Berbiglia. The latter two were on the JV last year.

"Once again, we're stronger than we were," Russell said. "Erika was a strong player for us, a dominant player in a lot of ways, but now we have

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Area's best swimmers, divers



All-Area repeater: Nick Sosnowski of Farmington and Detroit Catholic Central made the All-Observer boys swimming and diving team again as the first-team selection in the individual medley. See Page C5 for the complete 1998 All-Area team. STAFF PHOTO BY JOE JAZWIEL

Potential players show strong interest in team

BY DAN O'MEARA
STAFF WRITER

Sixty-five high school students indicated their interest in being part of a Farmington Public Schools unified hockey team Monday night.

More than 100 people attended an informational meeting in the North Farmington High School cafeteria to determine the amount of interest.

Athletic Director Ron Holland was pleased by the turnout and number of prospective players who filled out information sheets regarding their experience in the sport.

"That's what we thought we'd get," he said. "We'll review the level of play they're playing at. We'll drop some (information sheets) off at the schools, and we'll probably have another 10 to 15."

Twenty-seven of the students who signed up attend Farmington High School; 25 are from North Farmington and 13 from Harrison.

Any student, boy or girl, who will be in grades nine through 12 next school

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year will be eligible to try out for the team in November.

"I heard a lot of younger kids didn't come, because they thought we'd be choosing just juniors and seniors," said assistant coach Bernie Buller. "But that's not necessarily true."

The plan is to have one varsity team chosen from among players at the three high schools.

There will be no freshman or JV teams for the simple reason, aside from the added cost, no other schools do and there would be nobody to play.

The Farmington school board has approved one team for next season, but the Michigan High School Athletic Association still must give its approval to Farmington's proposed unified team.

There is a slight possibility Farmington could have two teams for the 1998-99 season, but it's unlikely due to factors such as planning, scheduling and

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