

FARMINGTON —  
FARMINGTON HILLS  
**SPORTS  
SCENE**

**College sports report**

■ Scott Oswald of Farmington Hills earned All-Lake Michigan Conference honors for the third straight year while running cross country for Milwaukee School of Engineering.

Oswald, who competed for Harrison High School as a prep student, finished second overall at the conference meet, leading MSOE to its third consecutive LMC championship.

Oswald is a senior with a double major in architectural engineering and construction management. He is the son of Greg and Linda Oswald of West Bloomfield.

■ Former Mercy High School standout MaryJane Valade led the Kalamazoo College women's basketball team in scoring at the Second Annual Arcade Travel Invitational.

In the first game against Clark College, the junior forward connected for six points and six rebounds. She also had two steals in the 66-44 loss.

In the next game, Valade scored 18 points to lead the Hornets to a 60-57 victory over Lawrence University. She also had three assists and three steals.

Valade was named first runner-up for the entire tournament.

■ Sophomore safety Joe Clinton of Farmington Hills returned a punt 62 yards for a touchdown in Ohio Wesleyan's 36-0 football victory Nov. 13 over Earlham.

Clinton, who played for the University of Detroit-Jesuit High School, had 36 unassisted tackles and 24 assists through 10 games for the Bishops. He also had seven pass breakups and forced one fumble.

The win was Ohio Wesleyan's 600th, making it the 10th NCAA Division III school to reach that plateau. The Bishops were 8-2 overall — their best season since 1982.

**OCC basketball stats**

■ Oakland Community College's Mahogany Fletcher leads the Michigan Community College Athletic Association's Eastern Conference in steals with an average of six per game.

The former of Farmington Harrison player also ranks fourth in scoring (16.6) and third in blocks (1.0) and free-throw percentage (.846). She has four blocks and has made 22 of 26 free throws.

OCC's Sara Weas is tied for fifth in rebounding (7.0); Christine Nordstrom is seventh (6.8), and Fletcher, Nicole Schulte and Breanna Pearson are tied for eighth (6.3). Weas also is seventh in scoring (11.5).

The Lady Raiders are 0-4 overall, 0-0 in the conference.

■ OCC's Laurence Hall is third in MCCA Eastern Conference men's scoring with 18.45 points per game. Darnell Bobo is ninth (11.3) and Ed Wallace 11th (10.7).

OCC's Jovell Leatherwood ranks fourth in rebounding (8.0) and Bobo third in assists (5.3).

Bobo also is tied for third in steals with five players (3.0); OCC teammate Ibrahim Terry is eighth (2.7) and Leatherwood ninth (2.0).

Hall, Bobo and Leatherwood are second (.590), third (.583) and fifth (.563) in field-goal percentage, respectively.

**Holiday hockey clinic**

Suburban Hockey Schools will conduct its four-day Christmas Clinics for ages 6 through 14 during Christmas break in two sessions starting Dec. 20 and 27 at metro Detroit sites.

The cost of the clinics is \$130 per player. Class size is limited and pre-registration is required. Call (248) 475-1600 for more information.

The schedule for Dec. 27-30 clinics at Suburban Training Center in Farmington Hills is: Power skating and puck handling — mixes session 1, 9:10-10 a.m.; mixes session 2, 10:30-11:50 a.m.; sprints, noon to 1:30 p.m.; Checking and scoring — pee wees and bantams, 1:30-2:50 p.m.; Goaltending — all ages, 10 a.m. to noon.

**Prospects Tournament**

Compuware Arena will be the site of the USA Hockey Top Prospects Tournament Nov. 29-Dec. 1.

The round-robin schedule will begin with the USHL stars taking on a combined all-star team at 11 a.m. Nov. 29. The NAHL stars will battle the AWHL stars at 2 p.m. Nov. 29.

For ticket information, call Compuware Arena at (734) 463-8400.



PHOTOS BY JOHN HEERMAN

Multi-talented performer: Ten-year-old D.J. Heebner even sang The National Anthem before a Farmington Rockets football game.

## Heebner 1st girl on Rockets team

By RICHARD L. SHOOK  
STAFF WRITER

Ten-year-old D.J. Heebner sang the national anthem before the Farmington Rockets' football game Oct. 17. Then she went out and played a little left defensive tackle against the Westland Comets.

This season, Heebner was the first female player in the history of the youth program.

And the big deal about it was that it was no big deal.

"It was cool," the St. Fabian elementary student said. "I was treated like any other boy there."

"I can't tell you how proud we are of her," said her mother, Lynn. "We'd do it again in a heartbeat."

"She's not the first (female football player), but she's the first Rocket."

It's still rare to find girls playing football, particularly at the high school level, but now it's just news, not controversy.

Ann Arbor Pioneer, for instance, had a female backup fullback this season,

and she scored a touchdown in a game at Traverse City.

"I can't tell you how much we grew and learned from our daughter," Lynn said. "She always looked forward to it."

"The coaches were great to her. They didn't treat her with any extra care. They didn't go out of their way. They were wonderful."

D.J. had an 'in' to the team. Kevin Maly, the father of one of her best friends, Erin, is director of the three Farmington Rockets' teams.

The freshman squad, which D. J. played on, is for youngsters 10 and under. The junior varsity is for ages 11-12 and the varsity 13-14.

There are weight limits imposed for each of the three teams, and D.J. Heebner inherited genes that put her close enough to the 125-pound limit to assure she wouldn't get broken in two trying to make a tackle. Lynn Heebner is 6-foot-2.

"I guess I was in favor of what she wanted to do," Lynn said, "but deep

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Just one of the players: D.J. Heebner was accepted by her teammates in the Farmington Rockets grid program and enjoyed being part of a football team. She is the first girl to ever play for a Rocket team.

## Flyers start with 3-game winning streak

Things sure are different on the Farmington Unified hockey team ice this season.

The Farmington Flyers are undefeated after three games this season following a pair of wins Saturday and Monday, leaving the team just two wins shy of matching its inaugural season victory total.

Farmington went to Troy Nov. 18 and picked up a 4-3 victory on Brad Heraghty's power-play goal with 1:11 remaining. Ross Patterson assisted on the goal.

"Troy was a very good team," coach Glenn Breuhan said after. "We were evenly matched, and the game could

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have gone either way. We were fortunate to win. It was a total team effort."

Troy broke a 2-2 tie that had existed since the first period when Kyle Vandenburg scored with 3:08 remaining in the second. David Turner and Bob Kinsey assisted on the goal.

But Farmington re-tied the score at three with 1:34 left on a Scott Salomonson goal, with Derek Zelman drawing the assist.

The Flyers opened the scoring with 13:29 left in the opening period on a Chris Hone goal assisted by Matt Lee.

Farmington made it 2-0 with 9:09 left on a power-play goal by Preston Picard, with Heraghty and Ross Patterson assisting.

Troy notched its first goal with 7:24 to play. Chris Thompson scored off assists by Derek Cox and Turner. Troy tied the score on a goal by Ryan Adams with 1:58 left, Turner and Kinsey assisting.

Chris Tobe played goal for the Flyers and "was just outstanding," Breuhan said.

Troy held a 28-22 edge in shots on goal, although Farmington had an 11-5 edge in the final period.

West Bloomfield in a game played at Bloomfield Hills Cranbrook, 5-1.

Jeff Swanson got the Flyers on the scoreboard just 20 seconds into the game, scoring off an assist by Kirk Laird. Then just 2:12 into the game, Patterson, off an assist from Heraghty, gave Farmington a 2-0 lead.

Heraghty increased the lead to 3-0 in the second period with 10:28 showing. Leo drew the long assist.

Mike Frayne scored with 8:44 to play to make it 4-0 in the second period. David Brown and Mike Lautenbach assisted.

Please see **FLYERS, B5**

## Soccer stars

### Horr, Gerwatowski earn post-season honors

Redford Thurston and Plymouth Salem have had very different traditions in boys soccer.

Salem is a perennial state champion contender while Thurston has never made a serious run at a post-season title.

Salem kept its rich tradition intact despite fielding an inexperienced varsity team, while Thurston may have started a winning tradition behind the play of a talented senior class.

Each advanced this season further than some may have expected, thus making their coaches, Jeff Neschich at Thurston and Ed McCarthy at Salem, coaches of the year in Observerland.

The Eagles had their best season in Neschich's three years at the helm, winning a Division II district championship and finishing 16-3-1 overall.

The Eagles' only two losses in the regular season came to Garden City, which won the Mega Conference White Division championship.

"It's been challenging, a lot of work," said Neschich, a former junior varsity coach and varsity assistant at Plymouth Canton. "The key to the season was having eight seniors being three-year starters."

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Salem, meanwhile, finished runner-up in the Division I state tournament despite losing nine starters to graduation from the 1995 team.

Among the returnees were only two seniors but McCarthy insisted he was optimistic at the start of the season, that his team would still win its share of games.

He was right. Despite the player losses, the Rocks went 23-2-2, winning the Western Lakes Activities Association championship and district and regional crowns before finally losing in the finals.

It was their fifth trip to the finals this decade, and the second in McCarthy's four years at the helm. In that span, Salem has posted a 70-10-9 overall record.

Scott Dahl, Sr., Ply. Salem: There were all sorts of qualities Dahl brought to Salem's game — speed, scoring ability, passing skills. But, perhaps the reason he was one of the three finalists for the state's Mr. Soccer award was best summed up by his coach, Ed McCarthy.

"He is the hardest working forward in the state," he said. "He



STAFF PHOTO BY BILL BRIDGES

All-Area player: North Farmington senior Brian Horr celebrates scoring a goal.

Please see **ALL-OBSERVER, B4**