

FARMINGTON — FARMINGTON HILLS SPORTS SCENE

Baseball/Softball camps

•Madonna University baseball coach Greg Haeger will conduct a Winter Hitting Camp for baseball at Madonna today and Monday, Dec. 20. Class times are 1-4 p.m. for 18-18 year-olds and 5-9 p.m. for 8-13 year-olds. Cost to register at the gate is \$100 per person.

For further information, call Haeger at (734) 432-6609.

•A four-session camp for softball fundamentals — bunting, fielding, throwing, sliding and defense, plus hitting off live pitching and a pitching machine — will be conducted in January at Madonna University.

Saturday sessions run from 10 a.m.-12:30 p.m. on Jan. 8, 22 and 29, and from 3:30-6 p.m. Jan. 15. Sunday sessions run from 2-4:30 p.m. Jan. 9, 16, 23 and 30.

Cost is \$50 for all four sessions. Checks should be made payable to Madonna University softball. Class size is limited.

For more information, call Madonna softball coach Al White at (734) 432-5783.

•Mercy High School will hold a softball camp from 9 a.m. to noon each Saturday in January and February.

Each session costs \$5 and is for players in grades 5-12. For more information, call Jack Falvo at (248) 471-1748 or (734) 981-5455.

•The Sports Academy in Novi will hold a specialized elite camp from 1-4 p.m., Dec. 28-30, for softball players covering hitting, pitching, fielding and more.

Professionals and All-America players will serve as instructors. Live infield and batting practices will be held and player skills evaluated. Individual drills will be available.

Increasing arm strength and bat speed, plus other conditioning drills, are included. Registration cost is \$75.

Register by phone by calling (248) 380-0800, ext. 112, or send a check to the Sports Academy, 22515 Heslip, Novi, 48375.

•A specialized, elite baseball camp featuring hitting, pitching, fielding and more is scheduled for 9 a.m.-noon, Dec. 28-30, at the Sports Academy in Novi.

Registration is \$85. Professional players, scouts and All-American players will serve as instructors. Live infield and batting practice will be given.

A Tampa Bay Devil Rays scout will evaluate players' skills, with increasing arm strength and bat speed, as well as other conditioning drills, serving as priorities.

Register by phone by calling (248) 380-0800, ext. 112, or mail a check to Sports Academy, 22515 Heslip, Novi, 48375.

•Professional and collegiate players will give individuals private instruction in either basketball, baseball or softball. Drills and programs will be given to each athlete.

Lessons are by appointment. Cost is \$35 per half-hour, or five lessons for \$150. Call Aaron Knieper at the Sports Academy to register (248-380-0800, ext. 112).

Ten Star hoop camp

Applications are being evaluated for the Ten Star All-Star Basketball camps for boys and girls (ages 7-19).

Nearby camp locations include Fort Wayne, Ind., Canton, Ohio and Georgetown, Ky. For an evaluation form, call (704) 372-8610.

VilleMonte helped Chlps

Freshman Emilio VilleMonte (Farmington Hills/Farmington High), helped the Central Michigan University's women's soccer team to a 14-8-1 overall and 8-3 Mid-American Conference mark this season.

The second-year team earned a spot in the MAC playoffs with VilleMonte seeing action in all 21 games, starting 19.

She led the team with 11 goals, 24 points and four game-winning goals. She also had two assists.

Adult men's basketball

The City of Farmington Hills is accepting adult men's basketball registrations. Games are played either Sunday or Monday at the Costick Activities Center.

The fee is \$325 per team. For more information, call (248) 473-9570 between the hours of 8:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday.

Raider volleyballers hopeful

BY RICHARD L. SHOOK
STAFF WRITER

VOLLEYBALL

North Farmington wants to take its girls volleyball team in a different direction this year. Up.

After two seasons in which you can count the combined number of victories on one hand, the Raiders are poised to experience the other side of the sport. The winning side.

"It's been like that the last two years," Coach Christine Diebold said. "I don't want to remember it."

She's got some experience coming back this season, and is hopeful things will turn around once the whole squad can get some solid practice in together.

"We've got six seniors and six juniors on our team," Diebold said. "As soon as everybody's healthy and practicing on a regular basis, opportunities await."

"Now that we have an auxiliary gym, that makes it easier to get practice time."

North Farmington opened its season last Monday, losing at Milford.

The Raiders dropped the first two games but were leading in the third, 13-7, before giving up eight straight points and the match.

"They were good games," she said. "We just hurt ourselves more than anything."

"We didn't serve well. We didn't hit well, either, and then we became tentative. Our passing was great, though."

Diebold is getting things in place

with the Raiders. She and assistants Debbie Calanchi and Julie Ingalls have been together three seasons now.

Calanchi is the junior varsity coach while Ingalls works the freshmen. The three help one another at their respective practices.

"Every year I continue to see improvement with us three working together," Diebold said. "And most of the players I've coached in one capacity or another since they were in seventh grade."

The seniors are setting the tone for North Farmington. They got the bulk of the playing time, although everybody sees plenty of action.

The seniors include co-captains Ali Edwards and Emily Whitten plus Meredith Reilly, Jenny Timmer, Kelly Downey and Jamie Harris.

Edwards is the team's setter but she's also an outside hitter, Diebold said, "which is kind of new to her. She is a great vertical (leaper) and wants to hit and we're going to make use of that."

Whitten "is an all-around player," her coach said. "She continues to improve and get stronger every year."

Reilly works the front row and serves "but can play all the way around," Diebold said. "She has a great work ethic. She's a hard worker."

"She's always trying to fine-tune this or that. I'll say she did a good job on something and she'll say, 'Are you sure?' She always wants to do a little better."

Timmer "has a heart of gold. She's quick, she's very quick. She's an all-around player. She's a great kid to have on the team."

"Downey is a middle hitter and blocker. She reads the ball well. She continues to improve and we're working on that killer instinct."

"Harris plays back row for the most part," her coach said. "She wants to play all the way around, works really hard and has the potential to do anything."

"All of my seniors are just neat. I really enjoy them."

The juniors are Kelly Hogan, Christina Colomodo, Christine Grasinaki, Chrissy King, Carmen Bettendorf and Alyssa Stanbridge.

Hogan is a setter who swaps with Edwards when the latter is hitting.

"She's learning the ropes from everybody," Diebold said. "She needs to show improvement, but she's got an incredible thirst to get better. That's nice to have."

Colomodo was a mainstay on the basketball team and brings that to the volleyball court. She, also, plays everywhere.

"She's another one of those true athletes," her coach said. "She's smart on

the court. She always hustles, you can count on it."

"Grasinaki pretty much is back row, but she has the potential to play anywhere. When she's in the back row she's kind of my quarterback. I count on her voice. She's also one of my exceptional servers."

King also is making the transition from layups to spikes. "She can play all the way around," Diebold said. "She's smart on the court. And she's definitely a strong hitter."

"Bettendorf is a solid back row player, a good server. She's court-smart, she has real good sense on the court. She's someone I'll rely on to go in whenever I need."

Stanbridge works the back row and Diebold said she can "count on her to go in whenever necessary or to serve. She's learning the ropes and has potential."

"The important thing, the thing that makes this team who they are, is their chemistry. They just really get along. The bond is there. And that makes (up) a big part of the mental game."

One place Diebold said her girls won't be beaten is in the classroom.

"They're all smart girls. They have great GPAs. We've always been academically strong."

The Raiders don't swing back into action until Dec. 28, when they participate in a tournament at West Bloomfield.



Digs and spikes: The girls high school volleyball season is slowly getting underway by Farmington schools. Pictured are three of Farmington Harrison's team members in a match Wednesday against Novi, results of which were not available at press time. Gayle Ternes is shown (left) about to knock one down. Emily Jackson (bottom right) is getting a dig while Kelly Taylor (r, upper right) covers Marina deMeyer (l, upper right) as she makes a return.

Falcons flying perfectly into holidays

It's been a perfectly good boys basketball season for Farmington High School so far.

Farmington has played three games thus far this season and won all of them, the latest Friday night by a 71-66 score over West Bloomfield.

"It was a good win for us," Coach Dennis Mikel said. "The first two games we played were against teams that weren't real strong."

"We knew we were going to be in for a much better game this time. Teams need to work through those situations to find out how they're going to handle it. It was good experience for us."

Eight players scored for the Falcons led by guard Matt Mikel's 16 points. C.

BASKETBALL

J. Whitfield and Justin Milus contributed 13 apiece while Brian Davies had 10. Mark Green scored seven, while Chad Seaborn, Garland Gilchrist and Jeremy Mazzei notched four apiece.

West Bloomfield (1-3) had the game's high scorer in junior John Merritt, who had 24 points. Charles Downey scored 11 and Denarry Rice 10.

"We got off to a great start," Mikel said. "We played a good three quarters. Then in the fourth quarter we just kind of hung on."

"To their credit, they really came

after us and got the momentum swinging their way. Then we started playing to protect our lead. I think it was down to four at one time."

Farmington swooshed out to a 17-11 start and was ahead, 35-28, at half-time. The Falcons posted a 23-14 third quarter before tapering off.

Both teams ran and played man-to-man defense in the first half, but to change the tempo and slow the Lakers down, the Falcons came out in the third quarter "in a little bit of a zone," Mikel said. "We used a box press with a 2-3 zone to slow them down a little bit."

"Then we started milking the lead and they upped the tempo with a man-

to-man trap."

Rice jump-started West Bloomfield with a pair of three-pointers.

"We knew what to do," Mikel said, "but we didn't handle it real well. We started making turnovers and pretty soon our 10-12 point lead was down to 6-7 and we were hanging on at the end."

Mikel helped bail his team out by making 4-of-5 free throws in the fourth quarter and 8-of-9 in the second half.

The Falcons overall, however, made only half their 24 foul shots. The Lakers sank just 19-of-31, though.

Davies and Milus each had seven

See PREP HOOPS, B4