

Observer Sports

The Farmington
Observer

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FARMINGTON — FARMINGTON HILLS SPORTS SCENE

Farmington volleyball

Farmington High was a semifinalist in a volleyball tournament at Cadillac High Dec. 29, losing a two-hour match to Allegan, 14-16, 14-16.

Traverse City Central was the eventual winner of the eight-team tournament.

The Falcons finished first in pool play based on total points. They defeated Cheboygan, 15-3, 15-6, and split with Leroy Pine River, 15-8, 10-15, and Cadillac, 16-17, 15-4.

Farmington advanced in the playoffs with a quarterfinal win over Manton, 15-9, 15-9.

"(The loss) was a mild disappointment, but we took first in our pool and lost to a good team in an extremely close match," Farmington coach Alex Perrin said. "We can't be ashamed of the last match. There were no easy points for either team."

"It's hard not to like this team. We don't have a lot of big hitters. Every point we get we earn the hard way. It's fun to coach a team like this."

Senior setter Meghan O'Rear recorded 89 kill assists, as well as 11 digs, 40 service points and nine blocks.

Junior Lyndey Howard led the Falcons with 33 kills and 25 blocks. She also had a 2.6 serve-receive average on a 3.0 scale.

Overcoming the flu to play in the tournament, senior Melissa Mytty contributed 35 points and 18 kills from her outside hitter position.

"Three of our five outside hitters couldn't be there, so we were down to two," Perrin said. "In pool play, we were playing kids out of position, so we could save Mytty for the playoffs."

Sophomore Julie Kimmel had 18 kills and 12 blocks, and senior Tricia Krause had 17 kills. Kimmel rated 2.2 on serve receive and Krause 2.1. Farmington is 6-3-3 in all matches.

CC wrestling tourney

The Redford Catholic Central Wrestling Invitational, featuring some of the state's top teams, starts at 10:30 a.m. Saturday at CC, located at 14200 Breakfast Drive.

Tickets are \$5 per person. The 14-team field includes CC, Livonia Stevenson, Westland John Glenn, Birmingham Brother Rice, Anchor Bay, Clarkston, Davison, Fowlerville, Fruitport, Holt, Howell, Oxford, Romeo and Warren Lincoln.

Defending champion Temperance Bedford is not entered.

Super Bowl 5K race

The Super Bowl 5-kilometer run will be at 11 a.m. Sunday, Jan. 30, at the Running Fit Store, located in the Novi Town Center (Novi Road just south of I-96).

The entry fee (before Jan. 25) is \$16. Race day registration is \$20 per person. Entry forms are available on the website: runmichigan.com.

Runners will receive a T-shirt, refreshments and age-group awards. Proceeds will go to the Michigan Running Foundation's scholarship fund.

For more information, call (248) 478-3590.

Sports Card Show

A sports card, coin and collectible show will be held Jan. 7, 8 and 9 at the Livonia Mall (Seven Mile and Middle Belt roads).

The hours are 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. on Jan. 7-8 and 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Jan. 9.

Former Tigers star Willie Horton will sign two free autographs per person between 6 and 8 p.m. Friday. Hockey hall of fame Andy Bathgate will sign any item for \$5 between 1:30 p.m. and 4 p.m. Saturday.

Former Tigers player Lenny Green, a member of the 1968 World Series champions, will sign one free autograph per person between noon and 2 p.m. Sunday.

Skate with Warriors

Wayne State University's first-year men's hockey program is giving the public a chance to skate with the players after the Warriors' game against SUNY-Brockport, which starts at 7 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 15, at the State Fairgrounds.

All skaters need to bring their own skates. In addition to skating with the players, 1,000 free team photographs will be given to the first 1,000 children (17 and under) attending the game. For ticket information, call: (877) WSU-GOAL.



New team experiences success: Rob Gundlach of the new Farmington/Harrison unified boys swim team contributed to victories in the 200 medley and 400 freestyle relays Tuesday. The team earned its first dual-meet victory over visiting Berkley, 122-62.

Raiders still quality swim team



Team leader: Senior Jim Gabriel is one of three captains on the North Farmington swim team, which anticipates a good season.



BY DAN O'MEARA
STAFF WRITER
domeara@cc.homecom.net

The early line on the 2000 boys swim season is North Farmington should have another solid team despite the loss of one of the state's top swimmers.

Matt Zald, who was all-state in two freestyle events, ended his high school career as did other key performers, but the Raiders return some quality swimmers, too.

Leading this year's team are senior captains Jim Gabriel, Jon Zald and Brandon Digia. Gabriel, who just missed qualifying for state in the backstroke, was fifth in the Western Lakes Activities Association meet in that event and the 200-yard freestyle.

He also was part of North's WLAA championship medley relay team and the 400 freestyle relay team that finished first but was disqualified.

Zald's specialty is the breaststroke, having finished fifth in the league finals, but he'll have to help the

Raiders in some other areas this year, too, coach Pat Dutchie said.

Digia is an outstanding freestyler and a good butterflyer who will play a key role in relays, too. He was second in the WLAA in the 200 and 100 freestyle events.

The senior class also includes Chris Clayson, Jared Goldman, Jon Vincent and John Kern. Dan Bowman plans to move out west at the semester break.

Goldman is a fourth-year diver who was 13th in the WLAA when teammates Joe Lebovic and Justin Goodwin were unable to compete. Vincent is a first-year diver.

Kern specializes in the backstroke in which he placed ninth in the league meet.

Junior Adam Farber is one of the team's top swimmers who went to state in the breaststroke last year.

He was second in that event in the WLAA and fifth in the butterfly. He was on the first-place medley relay team, too.

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Farmington gymnastics team faces rebuilding task in 2000

BY DAN O'MEARA
STAFF WRITER
domeara@cc.homecom.net

Duplicating its level of success last season will be difficult for a Farmington unified gymnastics team in transition.

Farmington, which finished sixth in the state a year ago, has gone from being a veteran, experienced squad to a young, inexperienced one.

Graduation losses included Brook Rubin, Anna Clark and Liz Stoler, and senior Jamie Millette and junior Lauren Ouellette did not return for this season.

Farmington does have sophomores Chelsea Keesling and Kristin Ulewicz back, and they represent the team's only real high school experience.

Keesling was a first-team, All-Observer gymnast, as were Rubin and Clark, and Ulewicz earned second-team honors along with Millette and Ouellette.

"We have a really young team this year, and we need some of that experience (Millette and Ouellette would have provided)," coach Jeff Dwyer said. "Lauren was one of our top bars and vault scorers, and Jamie was sometimes our No. 1 on beam."

Furthermore, due to rules that prohibit club gymnasts from competing in more than two club meets after their first high school competition, Keesling won't be available until the end of January.

Dwyer considers Keesling to be one of the top 15 Division I gymnasts in the state and expects her to score

well at the end of the season again.

In last year's state meet, Keesling tied for ninth place on beam, 10th in floor exercise and 11th on vault. In the Western Lakes Activities Association meet, she was seventh in all-around scoring (35.65).

"She's still working out with both teams," Dwyer said. "She's a very good competitor, so I expect the same thing. Her level of difficulty will be higher."

"Her vault will be stronger. She was just learning a Tsukahara vault at the end of last year. She'll be doing those more consistently."

"That event has picked up the most, but she can do a back flip on beam. Last year she was doing just hand springs."

Ulewicz is another all-arounder who indicated she is going to have a good season based on strong performances in two December dual meets.

Farmington defeated Dearborn Edsel Ford, 128.9 to 107.55, but lost to Grosse Pointe North, 124.3 to 119.7.

"She's back to where she was; she's stronger than last year," said Dwyer of Ulewicz. "She's a nice consistent gymnast to have back. She's doing remarkably well for not working out over the summer."

Farmington also returns senior Jenny Galbraith, who can hit rights on vault, bars and floor, according to Dwyer, senior Caroline Denn and sophomore Annie Lieberman, another all-arounder.

Dwyer has 10 freshmen on the team and will be

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All-star: Sophomore Chelsea Keesling is Farmington's top returning gymnast.