

Observer Sports

The Farmington
Observer

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FARMINGTON FARMINGTON HILLS SPORTS SCENE

Healthy pitcher key for Falcons

Cheers for Spartans

Farmington residents might see a familiar face on television Saturday evening while watching the NCAA Final Four basketball game between Michigan State and Wisconsin.

He won't be on the court, however, but off to the side of it. MSU senior Scott Brown, a 1995 graduate of Farmington High School, has been a member of the MSU cheer team for four years and will be in Indianapolis to cheer on the Spartans in the NCAA semifinals.

Even if viewers don't recognize him, they'll know which one is Brown. He'll be the one waving the big green flag with the block S on it.

Brown will graduate in May with a degree in marketing and advertising.

Mercy wins opener

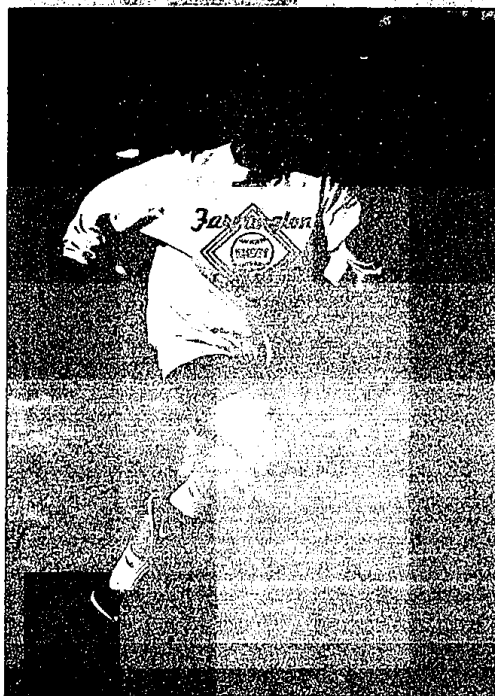
Junior Carrie Denton had one goal and one assist Monday as Farmington Hills Mercy started the soccer season with a 2-1 victory over Woodhaven.

Denton assisted on senior Carrie Kluska's goal and then scored the game-winning goal with an assist from junior Jamie Driscoll.

Senior goalkeeper Kristen Pimlott stopped all but one Woodhaven shot and "definitely kept us in the game," coach Tania Macioce said.

The Marlins played well, considering they were minus two starters, she added. Senior forward Susie Roble was away on family business, and junior stopper Chrissy Argenta missed the game due to an injury.

"There are things we need to work on, but we jelled pretty well for the first game," Macioce said. "Our defense is pretty solid, and Kristen in goal was great. She has really improved and will be a big asset to the team."



Practice makes perfect: Senior Julie Rotenheiser is one of the veteran softball players Farmington will be counting on this year.

With senior Melissa Mytty on the mound to start the 2000 campaign, Farmington High's softball team is hoping to challenge opposing teams and have a successful season. The Falcons get started on Tuesday, April 4.

BY DAN O'MEARA
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Unlike last year, the outlook entering the 2000 softball season is much more positive for Farmington High School.

The reason is senior pitcher Melissa Mytty is healthy this year.

She missed most of last season with a back injury, but she returned to pitch the Falcons to three straight district tournament wins, including a 3-1 upset of state-ranked Plymouth Canton in the championship game.

Mytty is coming off a strong performance in volleyball, and coach Jerry Osborne hopes she can pick up where she left off in softball.

"We're looking for her to have an outstanding year," he said. "She's a tough kid on the mound. She has all kinds of ability."

Mytty, who had a strikeout-to-walk ratio of 7-to-1 in the district, has a full repertoire of pitches, and the Falcons have a veteran catcher in senior Meghan O'Rear on the receiving end. Like Mytty, O'Rear is a four-year varsity player.

Last year, with Melissa down, she was the girl everyone looked to as the team leader," Osborne said, adding O'Rear hit the ball hard but had little to show for it.

"I'm looking for her to have a good season. Defensively, she's always been solid, and I think she'll have a nice year offensively."

Two other seniors who will play prominent roles are Tricia Krause and Julie Rotenheiser. Both are four-year varsity players who will flip-flop between shortstop and right field.

"If Tricia comes anywhere close to

having the season she did last year, we're going to do real well," Osborne said, adding Krause batted .507 and led the team in doubles, RBI and triples.

"Both have real live arms. Julie and Tricia are the type of players who can play anywhere and will get the job done for you."

Junior Danielle Lewis returns at first base, the position she played last year after starting at second the previous year.

"Actually, Danielle hit the ball better as a freshman, and we're hoping she gets that nice swing back," Osborne said, adding Lewis should try for base hits instead of home runs. "She doesn't get robbed on her swings. She goes in there swinging with everything she has."

Senior Jessica Brown, who replaced Mytty on the mound last year, has first shot at the starting job at second base. Junior Sarah Goetzke, who was on the JV, is looking for playing time there, too.

"Jessica did a nice job when Melissa was hurt and deserves a lot of credit for hanging in there during tough times," Osborne said.

Senior Becky DePottor shared time at third base with sophomore Amy Paquette, and the regular player will be determined by early-season performance.

"Whoever is hitting the ball and playing defense is the person we'll go with," Osborne said, adding he likes to give seniors the first opportunity.

"I'm hoping (DePottor) starts fast and goes from there," he said. "I know either one will get the job done, no matter who is playing there."

Please see FALCONS, C2

Farmington boys have talent, but team must develop depth

BY DAN O'MEARA
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As far as frontline talent, Farmington High School fares well in comparison with any boys track-and-field team in the area.

The issue facing the Falcons — and the one that will determine how successful they are this year — is one of depth.

"We certainly hope to have a good season," coach Chip Bridges said. "We hope to compete in every dual meet and score points in every invitational."

"In some places, we just don't have the depth we hoped to have. Unless that develops, it's going to be really hard to say (what Farmington will do)."

The team's strength is in the sprinters based on the return of seniors Todd Anthony, Dustin Gress and Mark Ostach and juniors Jawoin Spinks and Jeremy Mazes.

TRACK & FIELD

The Falcons had the best 800-meter relay team in Observer-land last year with the three seniors and Andrew Buck, another senior who is not running track.

Farmington was second in the regional in the 400 and 800 relays and qualified for the state meet in both.

Anthony was third in the 200 dash in the Western Lakes Activities Association meet and fourth in the regional; Ostach was seventh and fifth, respectively. Gress was sixth in the 100 in the WLA.

"They're our big three; everything revolves around those three," Bridges said. "They have a lot of experience, and they came into their own last year."

"Dustin has done a marvelous job in practice. He has some goals and has set the tone for the

whole team."

Spinks, who ran with those three at the state meet, is fighting through some injuries, according to Bridges, who expects Spinks to be "back on his game" in a couple weeks.

The Falcons had eight sprinters they could use interchangeably last year, but they lack depth here, too.

"Our relays were always fresh," Bridges said. "We didn't have to overwork anybody. Right now we don't have that."

"The potential is there for the relays to be real strong. That's a team strength, but we don't have depth. After the first five, we don't know what we have."

Farmington relied on C.J. Whitfield, another senior who didn't return, and Buck in the 400 last year, leaving a void in that event and putting a greater demand on its limited supply of proven sprinters.

Please see FARMINGTON, C3

St. Mary's completes mission to win Class B championship

BY CHRIS MAYER
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It was evident from the start Orchard Lake St. Mary's would have an exceptional basketball team this season.

St. Mary's returned the core group of players from a team which a year ago won 21 games and reached the Class B quarterfinals. But what the Eagles accomplished over the last few months surpassed even the highest of expectations.

OLSM put the finishing touch on an undefeated season last Saturday night before an enthusiastic crowd of 7,601 at Michigan State University's Breslin Center. The final 67 seconds of the Class B championship game saw senior Maurice Searight come up with a defensive gem

BASKETBALL

and senior Jonie Jones score six points, helping the Eagles extinguish a furious fourth-quarter rally by Flint Beecher and post a thrilling 62-59 victory.

St. Mary's, which played the entire 1999-2000 season sporting the No. 1 ranking in Class B, emerged from a 28-game season without a loss and secured the school's fourth state basketball championship. OLSM captured previous titles in 1933 (Class C-Lower Peninsula), 1978 (Class D) and 1982 (Class C).

"It was just unbelievable the way the kids handled the situation this season," OLSM head coach George Porritt said, "and each game it was a different player. When the team needed

it, someone stepped up and made a play. These wins were what I liked to call great team wins."

The Eagles stepped up and made big plays throughout their memorable run. The highlights included a 77-65 triumph over eventual Class A champion Lansing Waverly in late December and a two-point home victory over Flint Northwestern, 69-67, in February.

According to Jones, the win over Northwestern served as a catalyst for future success. The Eagles erased an 11-point, fourth-quarter deficit that night as Jones scored the game-winning layup with 27.2 seconds left.

"I think if there was a big game that sparked our team and

Please see ST. MARY'S, C3



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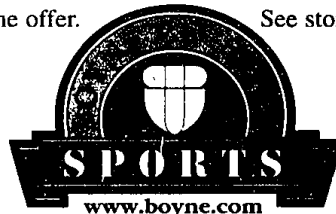


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