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Harrison, the 1997 Observerland champ, brings a stronger punch to the starting gate than a year ago, according to coach John Reed.

Chris Roberson, and it's no wonder Harrison leads the area in both the 400 relay (43.7) and 800 relay (1:31.0).

"This could be one of the closest Observerland meets. Farmington (High) has sprints as good as ours and North Farmington is really good, and so is (Redford) Catholic Central."

Harrison also has the area's top hurdler in Nick Hall, the heir apparent to Churchill's graduated Ryan Kearney (now at Western Michigan). The Hawks also have the top-ranked pole vaulter in the area in Derek Sankowski, who has gone 14-2. They also have a formidable discus thrower in Brad Person.

Catholic Central, third a year ago and the 1992 and '93 champion, always brings strong shot and discus relay teams to the meet, along with a top-flight distance brigade.

Central Michigan University football-bound Mike Morris, who has thrown 51-6 in the shot put and 160-7 in the discus, both area bests, leads the CC cast.

"We don't have the really fast people, but we hope to sneak in some places," CC coach Tony Magni said. "According to the times (listing) in the paper, Harrison is really quick and Canton

looks pretty good. "If we can't win it, then we're going to try to win a trophy (either second or third place)." He Churchill, setting his first Observerland title since 1989, finished second last year. Coach Rick Austin has a strong discus and shot put thrower in senior Mike Gaura. The Chargers will also be strong in the long jump with junior Eric Scott. The distance crew is led by senior Jason Richmond and Ryan Gall.

"The name of the game is to score points in every event," Austin says. "We have three long jumpers who have gone over 19 feet. Our sprinters are going to have to step up. We're doing in the distance events; that's the strength of our team."

So who is Austin handicapping as the favorites? "I'm impressed with Harrison, and Canton has a great team," he said. "Salerno are some good people in key areas. They'll be up there as well. It looks like a wide-open race."

Austin, a business instructor at Churchill, missed practice Monday and Tuesday to attend a nationwide student marketing conference.

Ironically, this year's conference site was Louisville, home of the Kentucky Derby.

"We got to tour the Churchill Downs Museum and it's quite a place," Austin said. "The town is really hopping this week."

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Soccer from page C1

injuries. We pretty much have everyone back now.

The Raiders led 2-0 at halftime on goals by Nicole Adena and Lauren Hogan.

On the first goal, Kelly Hogan bounced a free kick off the crossbar, and "Nicole was there to finish it off," Russell said.

Lauren Hogan took a feed from Megan Callahan on the left side and fired a shot to the far post for the second goal.

"In the first half, we played pretty well but not as well as we thought should," Russell said.

adding the Raiders were flat to begin the second half. "We started to play a defensive game instead of playing the full field."

The Patriots twice cut the lead to one goal, 2-1 and 3-2, but the Raiders answered each time to maintain a two-goal advantage.

Lauren Hogan's cross from the left wing was deflected into the net by Adena for the third goal.

Following a foul on Lauren Hogan, Kelly Hogan buried a penalty kick in the left side of the net to make the score 4-2.

North goalkeeper Anna Muir made five saves. The Raiders, who improved to 7-3 overall, attempted 21 shots.

Adena was a standout player for North along with Joyce Chung, who "did a good job offensively and defensively," according to Russell.

"Nicole was hustling around; that's why she was able to earn her two goals," he said. "They were pulling back their defense into their own end. Nicole is so dedicated to playing defense and offense; I was yelling at her to stay up front to keep them honest."

Mercy's Telford breaks records. Farmington Hills' junior Telford set school records in the shot put Tuesday and the discus Friday. Telford threw the shot 37 feet, 11 inches Friday during a 4th District indoor host Dearborn Divine Child. She broke Christy Sanders' 1988 record of 37.7.

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