

**FARMINGTON —
FARMINGTON HILLS
SPORTS
SCENE**
Gymnastics winners

Two Farmington Hills gymnasts took top awards at the Ohio Capital Classic gymnastics meet on the campus of Ohio State University in mid December.

Jessica Oddi, a seventh-grade student at Dunckel Middle School, took first-place all-around in the 13-and-older age category with a score of 37.10.

Her individual event honors included first-place on vault and balance beam with scores of 9.425 and 9.45, respectively.

Oddi finished third on the uneven parallel bars with a 9.175 and third on floor exercise with a score of 9.1.

Her teammate, Maria Kater, a seventh grader at Warner Middle School, finished second in the 12-year-old age division with an all-around score of 35.95.

Kater's individual event scores included a first-place finish on balance beam with a 9.225 score, second on floor exercise with a 9.05, third on vault with a 9.275 and seventh on bars with a 9.35.

Both girls were representing the Sports Club of Novi Gymnastics Team in USA Gymnastics level six competition. They are coached by Jennifer Quinlan and Brian Lewis.

Patriots blank Flyers

Livonia Franklin won't be the best Division II hockey team nobody knows about much longer if it keeps playing the way it has lately.

Franklin got another out-of-control job from Chris Garbutt on Friday night in shutting down host Farmington, 2-0, in a Western Lakes Activities Association game.

"It was Chris' fourth shutout in his last five games and his sixth of the year," Franklin coach Terry Jobbitt said. "He's just been playing absolutely awesome."

The game was scoreless until 5:19 remained in the first period, when Anders Wendel converted a feed from John Nichol to give the Patriots a 1-0 lead.

Franklin (7-1-5, 5-1-4) got its other goal with 1:31 left in the second period, when Paul Statham stole the puck, walked in on Dan Zelde and scored.

The Flyers (6-5-2, 4-4-2) outshot the Patriots, 33-26, but that's a trait of Franklin's defensive style. Franklin is unranked in Division II, which could be because the voters aren't aware the Patriots are not in Division I.

"The boys were a little slow in the first period," Jobbitt said. "They outshot us, 10-4. Garbutt held us in for the first period, but he's held us in for a lot lately."

"I hope we can keep it together. It's a long road, and it's all uphill."

NAHL names all-stars

The North American Hockey League has announced its all-stars for the upcoming game, which will be at 7:30 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 3, at the U.S. Ice Sports Complex in St. Louis.

The Soo Kewadin Casino Indians led the East Division with eight selections; the Compuware Ambassadors and the USA National Team were second with four picks each.

Chosen to the starting lineup from Compuware (based in Plymouth) was defenseman Andy Greene.

Other Ambassadors chosen as reserves to the team were forwards Ryan Lessnau and Mike Walsh and defenseman Steve Burgess.

Other local names chosen to the West Division team were Chris Jenner, a forward for Chicago from Westland, and forward Keith Rowe, a forward for Danville from Livonia.

Danville's John Mervis will coach the West Division stars, Joe Shawhan of Soo Kewadin will coach the East.

The Ambassadors improved to 20-11-2 last weekend with 4-1 victories over the St. Louis Sting and the USA National Team. Compuware is second in the East Division with 42 points, behind Soo Kewadin (60 points).

Raiders play well, but Falcons win



The rematch went three games, too, and the winner again was the Farmington volleyball team. North Farmington presented a tougher challenge despite a lopsided third-game score Wednesday. Farmington won, 15-7, 9-15, 15-4.

BY DAN O'MEARA
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The scores were similar and the outcome was the same when Farmington and North Farmington met again on the volleyball court Wednesday.

But it was a different, more competitive match this time.

The host Falcons still won in three games, 15-7, 9-15, 15-4; however, both coaches agreed the Raiders offered a tougher challenge.

Despite the lopsided score in the third game, North competed well and forced Farmington to work hard for the victory.

"We won the first pretty easily, and they won the second," Farmington coach Alex Perrin said. "The third was a close game, and the score doesn't indicate it."

"Every point was hard fought. In the first two, it was serve and rally point; there wasn't much going on. In the third, there was a lot more."

"Everything was really battled for. I said to (assistant coach) Carla (Gray) 'That's one of the closest 15-4 matches I've seen.'"

The Raiders, who lost to the Falcons in a recent tournament contest, 15-2, 4-15, 15-3, started slow and took too long to warm up and get into the match, according to coach Deb Calanchi.

"Unfortunately, we dug ourselves too deep a hole early," she said. "That (first) game just came and went. We were not very effective at all."

"We found some motivation for the second game. We stepped it up serving and hitting, and we were able to come back from a 7-2 deficit and pull out the win."

North had momentum on its side going into the third game and had all

sorts of chances, Calanchi added, but it failed to score off its serves.

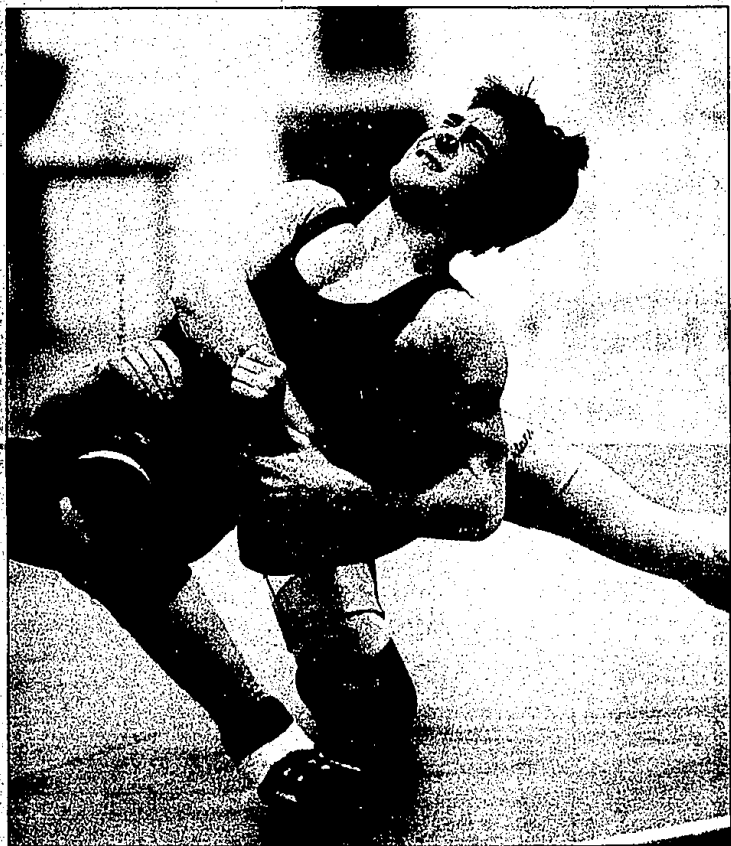
"We played sidout volleyball when we had the serve," she said. "We held each Farmington server to one or two points and nothing more."

"When we're holding them to that and not scoring on ours, they're going to rotate around, and one or two points eventually added up."

The 4-15 loss in the last game didn't come close to describing the kind of match it was, according to Calanchi.

"We played better than we had in any win all season," she said. "If we had just been able to capitalize on serves, I think we would've won. We started to put all aspects of the game together except for the important serve."

Please see VOLLEYBALL, B6

Falcons battle with Spartans on wrestling mats


Wrestling action: Farmington's John Schwartz has the upper hand in his 119-pound bout Thursday with Livonia Stevenson's Brian Hoffman. Schwartz eventually won by pin, but the Falcons didn't fare as well as a team, losing to the Spartans, 60-20. See results on Page B4.

Gymnasts beginning to realize potential

BY DAN O'MEARA
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The Farmington unified gymnastics team's performance finally began to match its potential last week.

In a Western Lakes Activities Association victory over host Plymouth Salem on Jan. 15, it achieved a team-record score of 142.1 points.

That was an indication to coach Joe Dwyer the pieces to the puzzle are beginning to fall into place for Farmington.

UNIFIED TEAM

Sophomore Clara Seymour was back in the lineup after attending an out-of-state club competition, and freshman Sarah Houchins, who moved from Texas back to Michigan, was eligible for the first time.

Those two combined with junior Chelsea Keesling comprised a formidable trio, but the team still wasn't at full strength.

Farmington was minus junior Kristin Ulewicz, who was ill and will make Dwyer's squad even stronger when she returns.

"It was just good to see some of the potential," Dwyer said. "I knew we could reach the 140s. It's just kinda exciting to see it coming to fruition."

"Any time you're in the 140s, you have a chance of doing real well in your region or at state."

"If we stay away from injuries and illness, I think we should be consistently in the 140s."

Dwyer was encouraged by the win over Salem, a team with quality gymnasts, too, and which has been scoring consistently in the 140s.

Farmington, which lost its previous meet to Walled Lake, 133-129, improved its dual-meet record to 4-2.

Please see GYMNASTICS, B6

Tillman leads Farmington to another win

Senior Curtis Tillman had another big scoring game Friday to lead Farmington to a 54-42 victory over host Livonia Stevenson in boys basketball.

Tillman, who scored 32 points in a recent overtime win at West Bloomfield, tossed in a game-high 30, making 11 field goals and all eight free throws. He had 18 in the second half.

"A lot of his points were on steals or turnovers off the press, and he made some nice offensive moves when we got into our half-court offense," Farmington coach Denny Mikel said. "He had the hot hand, and we were going with him."

Seniors Matt Mikel and Mike Griffe added seven points apiece for the Falcons, who are 3-0 in the Western Lakes Activities Association and 7-2 overall.

BOYS BASKETBALL

Farmington led 16-10 after one quarter, but Stevenson trimmed the difference to 24-19 at halftime.

The Falcons doubled the Spartans in the third period for a 42-25 margin. Stevenson picked up two in the fourth, 14-12.

"We had a very nice third quarter, and I think that was the deciding quarter," Mikel said.

"We started off playing a man-to-man, straight-up defense, and they were doing a very good job of being patient, moving the ball and getting a lot of easy bas-

kets on us."

"We changed defenses at halftime. We went to a zone press and dropped back into a zone defense, and I think that little change disrupted them for a little bit."

"We got some baskets off turnovers and kinda broke the game open in the third quarter. They had a good fourth, so they hung in there with us."

Brandon Chitwood and Matt Barnick scored nine points apiece for the Spartans, 1-2 in the WLA and 3-5 overall. Livonia Iveski added eight points.

Farmington made 11 of 16 free throws, Stevenson four of nine.

Please see BASKETBALL, B5

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