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North, FHS wrestlers best in district



North Farmington wrestlers produced the biggest surprise in the Division 2 district tournament at Birmingham Groves, winning three individual titles. Farmington High, a team district champion, had one winner.

By DAN O'MEARA
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Following a season of few team triumphs, four wrestlers from Farmington high schools seized the opportunity to shine as individuals Saturday.

North Farmington's Dan Canvasser, Bamin Bajrami and Harry Leipnitz and Farmington's Mike Murland won district championships in the Division 2 tournament at Birmingham Groves.

That the Raiders, whose only dual-meet victories were over winless Farmington Harrison, would produce three winners was undoubtedly a surprise to many people.

Coaches Jim Stuef of North and Al Beyar of Farmington are not among them, however.

Bajrami and Leipnitz, both of whom

are juniors, were seeded fifth in their weight classes and Canvasser, a senior, third.

"We knew they were better than that," Beyar said. "We tried to tell (the other coaches) they needed to be seeded a little higher, but nobody would listen."

In their defense, coaches must follow the criteria established by the Michigan High School Athletic Association at the seed meeting, he added.

That's where the rugged competition the Farmingtons faced in the Western Lakes Activities Association benefited them.

While their records might not have been as good as others, they were still better wrestlers.

"In the district, they wrestled kids they haven't seen all year, and maybe

their leagues are not as strong as yours," Stuef said. "We wrestled almost all Division 1 teams throughout the year."

"When you go to Division 2, it doesn't mean there will be weaker competition but sometimes that's the case. That puts you in a good position for meeting up with the Division 2 schools."

Stuef's Raiders might have been relatively unknowns, but the competition was not unknown to them.

"The kids had been searching on the internet and said, 'Coach, I have a real good chance based on who will be there.' They had scouted ahead and were confident," Stuef said.

"I said, 'Don't be overconfident, but go out there and wrestle like you can.' The difference between the way they wrestled Saturday and in the past was their confidence level, believing they could do it."

Farmington's Murland, who was seeded second at 180 pounds, also had a confident attitude and knocked off the No. 1 seed, Spencer Dockery of Ferndale, in the finals, 7-4.

"I think he was determined to win," Beyar said. "In the first period, the score could have been 6-0 for the other guy, but it was just 2-0 and not in Mike's favor, either."

"I think the kid threw everything he could at (Murland), and all he got was two points. I think that demoralized him to a large extent."

"Mike basically took over the match from the second period on. He got stronger as the match went on, and the other kid got a little disheartened."

Murland came from behind to take a 7-4 lead after two periods and let his momentum carry him through the third.

"Mike was on top the last period and, at that point, all he wanted to do was control, and that's what he did," Beyar said.

Murland boosted his season record to 27-7. He pinned his first two district opponents to give him a total of 22 pins.

"He's never out of a match," Beyar said. "The score could be 14-0 in favor

Please see WRESTLING, D5

FARMINGTON — FARMINGTON HILLS SPORTS SCENE

College sports news

Former North Farmington distance runner Charlie Stambouljan competed at the Eastern Michigan University Classic indoor track meet last weekend.

Stambouljan, a freshman at Wayne State University, ran the 1,200-meter, opening leg in the distance medley relay for Wayne in a split time of 3:16.6 on Friday.

He ran a personal best 9:04.30 in the 3,000-meter run and finished in 11th place Saturday.

Farmington's Kate Adams, a junior defenseman, helped the Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute women's hockey team finish the season with a 12-10-2 record.

Adams played in all 24 games and led the team with 14 assists. She also scored nine goals and ended the season with 19 points.

Rensselaer just missed a spot in the East Coast Athletic Conference play-offs, finishing with a 9-7-2 league record.

Area gymnasts excel

Three Farmington Hills gymnasts represented the Sports Club of Novi at the Cereol City Classic gymnastics competition in Battle Creek last weekend.

The three-day event hosted by Branch Gymnastics included over 1,400 male and female gymnasts from the United States and Canada.

Marisa Karcz, a Warner Middle School seventh grader, took first place in level six competition with an all-around score of 35.25.

Her individual awards included first place on uneven bars and floor exercise with scores of 9.0 and 9.175, respectively. She finished second on balance beam with a score of 8.775 and eighth on vault with a score of 8.3.

Her teammate, Jessica Oddi, a Dunckel seventh-grade student, took second place in her first level seven competition with a score of 36.15.

She placed first on bars with a score of 9.0, third on beam with a score of 9.05 and fourth on vault with a score of 9.25, helping her team to a first-place finish.

Chelsea Connors, a fifth grader at Gill Elementary, posted high scores in level five competition.

Her individual event scores included 8.5 on vault, 8.85 on uneven bars, 8.825 on balance beam and 8.9 on floor exercise. The level five team finished in fourth place.

Doyle Coaches School

The Garden City Youth Athletic Association will hold the nationally-recognized Doyle Coaches School from 1-4 p.m. on Sunday, March 18, at the Garden City Junior High School gym.

Coaches from all levels of T-ball, baseball and softball are welcome to attend the school, but youth coaches are especially encouraged.

The clinic teaches coaches how to instruct their players in hitting, throwing and fielding and cover topics such as organizing practices, making practices fun and player motivation.

Also covered are safety and liability issues which will allow each coach to receive \$2 million of personal liability coverage for attending the program.

The fee for the school is \$25.

For more information, call Ken Kibit at (734) 618-8603.

All-Catholic basketball

Redford St. Agatha and Catholic Central were each honored with two players on the All-Catholic basketball team while Redford Bishop Borgess placed George Totes on the AA Division squad.

Aggies honored were juniors Dan Boulter and Chris Meyers in the C-D West while Central Division honorees included Ryan Coleskey and Mark Willoughby.

Named to the All-League teams were Mike Law of St. Agatha in the C-D West, freshman Isaac Knight of Bishop Borgess in the AA Division and Anthony Coratti of Catholic Central in the Central Division.

Riek Coratti of Catholic Central was selected the Central Division's Coach of the Year.

Cheer, pom coaches

Farmington Public Schools has need for two cheerleading coaches and one pompon coach. Interested persons should contact Bernice Call at Farmington High School at (248) 489-3455.

Raiders' recovery runs out of steam



By DAN O'MEARA
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Coach Deb Calanchi needed one sentence to assess the state of her North Farmington volleyball team earlier this week.

"My team is pretty predictable," she said, following a 2-15, 15-13, 13-15 loss to host Northville in the final Western Lakes Activities Association dual match Monday.

Once again, the Raiders had a slow start and lost the first game decisively. However, they regrouped and won the second but weren't quite good enough to win the match.

"Serving killed us in that first game," Calanchi said, adding the Raiders were 8-of-11. "We worked hard for sideouts and someone would step up and miss a serve's things we shouldn't be doing at this point in the season."

"It's like November and we're run-

VOLLEYBALL

ning a tryout, and we're trying to get back into the swing of the season. I don't know if it's the devastation we need to get it in gear, if we need a game to warm up, because it is so extreme.

"Still, I give them credit for coming back. But (the first game) could be the game we win, and if we win the next one the match is over. We put all the pressure on ourselves to win the next two instead of one of the next two."

The Raiders looked like an entirely different team in the second game, according to Calanchi. North played much better behind the powerful attacking of Elnia Pilitis and scrappy play from everybody.

"In the second game, we came out

Please see VOLLEYBALL, D3



Good defense:

Amy Berke digs a spike to keep the ball in play for North Farmington during its final WLAA match Monday night at Northville. The Raiders recovered from a poor start only to lose in three games, the last two of which were decided by two points each.

Double block: North Farmington's Lisa Scher and Nicole LeClere team up to stop a Northville attack during a match Monday.

Mustangs show Falcons the exit door

By DAN O'MEARA
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Northville quickly dashed any hopes Farmington High had of winning the Western Lakes Activities Association boys basketball tournament.

The visiting Mustangs took a commanding, first-quarter lead Tuesday and coasted to a 71-56 victory over the No. 2-seeded Falcons.

Northville, which finished seventh in the regular-season standings, seems to be putting it all together at the right time and evened its record at 9-9.

"We were lucky tonight," Mustangs coach Scott Baldwin said. "We hit our peak for the season."

"This is the way we were expected to play this year, and we had a whole bunch of obstacles along the way. About the last 10 days, we've hit our peak."

"If we continue to get that kind of play the rest of

the way, we'll be tough to beat in the league and the district."

Aaron Redden sparked Northville to a 21-9 lead after one quarter, scoring 13 of his team-high 18 points.

He made four three-point baskets in the first half as the Mustangs extended their lead to 37-21 at half-time.

Northville's 6-foot-6 David Gregor scored 10 of his 16 points in the second half to help his team put the game out of reach.

"We've always had the double punch of Redden and Gregor," Baldwin said. "One has a good first half, and the other has a good second half."

BOYS BASKETBALL

"Tonight it was Redden (first). He hit everything he threw up in the first half, and it was Gregor taking the ball to the basket and making free throws in the second half."

Northville's Tim Ferng came off the bench to score all 10 of his points in the first half. Tim Kelleher also had 10, Brandon Langston eight and 7-foot Tom Knapp six.

"Tim Ferng was eager to play Farmington," Baldwin said. "He had his coming-of-age game here last year when held (Farmington's Matt) Mikel to 11 points."

"He played superbly; he gave us another option they had to defend. We've had difficulty finding a third scorer. Any time you get someone to step up and do that it gives us a third option."

Please see BASKETBALL, D3