

# Marlins win another league title, prepare for state meet

Farmington Hills Mercy won its 11th consecutive Catholic League girls swimming and diving championship Saturday at Royal Oak Dondoro High School.

## SWIMMING

It was the 36th overall for the Marlins, who started their streak of success in the 1980s with only one interruption along the way.

The only year Mercy didn't win the league title was 1990, Birmingham Marian won that year, and the Marian coach was Jim Downs, who is now the Mercy coach.

The Marlins won this year's championship and seven-school meet by 116 points over the Mustangs, 507-391.

"The thing I'm impressed with is the one thing I was concerned about at the beginning of the year, and that was depth," Downs said.

"I was worried about where we were going to get the points we had last year. We started to work on that from Day One, and now we've got kids coming out of the woodwork."

Mercy won both freestyle relays and was second in the medley. The Marlins had four individual winners - Katie Benedict in the 200 freestyle, Katie Benedict, butterfly; Caitlin Kelly, 100 freestyle; and Kristin Loris, 500 freestyle.

But it was the other girls who have made great strides and don't always get the accolades about whom Downs wanted to talk.

Carrie Roble, Emily Gariepy, Jackie Smith, Sarah Schuchardt, Fran Murphy, Becca Hallin and Rochelle Hughes are much improved since last year and over the course of this season.

"That whole group was questionable at the beginning of the year," Downs said. "They really filled up the events and began to show what they could do as early as the county meet."

"The kids worked really hard and accomplished a lot to make us a well-rounded team."

Mercy would like to repeat last year's fourth-place finish in the Class A championship meet Saturday at Oakland University. The Marlins won the state title

in 1998 and were second in 1999. The top four teams receive trophies.

"We're trying to score in the top four," Downs said. "I see (Ann Arbor) Pioneer walking in and Grand Haven is a solid second. Grosse Pointe North will probably be third. Then it's up for grabs between two or three teams for fourth place."

Mercy is entered in all three relays and will swim the same teams as it did at the league meet with the exception of 400 freestyle in which Kelly will team with Loris, Naglick and Benedict.

"We're hoping to make top-six in all the relays, because that's where the money is," Downs said.

Loris qualified in the most events (five) and will swim the 200 and 500 freestyle. Five others also are in two events - Benedict, 200 and 100 free; Naglick, fly and back; Elizabeth Garlow, IM and breast; Annette Merchant, IM and 500 free; and Page, fly and back. Elena Milewski will swim the breaststroke, Gariepy and Jackie Smith the fly and Kelly the 100 freestyle (as well as three relays).

"We didn't put our speed suits on for (the league meet)," Downs said. "We weren't tapered for that. We had a whole week to go. We have double suits. It was just like a dual meet for them."

The Marlins should do well but are a longshot to have any individual winners, according to Downs.

"They know what's out there," he said. "But they also know you don't know what's going to happen until you see the program. There are so many good swimmers who have multiple options."

North Farmington senior Linda McEneaney should do well after a disappointing junior year. A broken arm caused her to miss most of last season and prevented her from swimming her

best events at state - the IM and backstroke. She was fifth in those events two years ago. McEneaney swam the 100 free and breaststroke last year but didn't score. She qualified in six events this year but is expected to swim the IM and back again.

The Raiders also are sending their medley and 400 free relays teams to state, as well as Sarah Paske in the 200 free, Valencina Smith in the fly and Emily Howard in the 100 free.

**CATHOLIC LEAGUE SWIM MEET**  
Nov. 10 at Royal Oak Dondoro  
Team standings: 1. Farmington Hills Mercy, 507; 2. Birmingham Marian, 391; 3. Pontiac Notre Dame Prep, 146; 4. Harper Woods Regina, 101; 5. Livonia Ladywood, 79; 6. Royal Oak Shiras, 76; 7. Madison Heights Bishop Foley, 47.

**MERCY RESULTS BY EVENT**  
200 medley relay: 1. Mercy (Elena Page, Elizabeth Garlow, Katie Naglick, Caitlin Kelly), 1:52.35.  
200 freestyle: 1. Katie Benedict, 1:58.72; 2. Page, 2:04.85; 5. Jackie Wayneville, 2:05.04; 6. Moira Cronin, 2:05.63.  
200 individual medley: 3. Garlow, 2:15.30; 4. Jackie Smith, 2:19.43; 5. Becca Hallin, 2:20.75; 7. Annette Merchant, 2:18.16.

50 freestyle: 2. Kelly, 25.44; 4. Carrie Roble, 25.50; 5. Kristin Loris, 26.77; 7. Sarah Schuchardt, 28.15.  
Diving: 4. Amanda Darling, 7. Aila Kasvika, 9. Krista Milewski, 10. Lucy Butler.  
100 butterfly: 1. Naglick, 1:01.13; 2. Smith, 1:01.70; 3. Emily Gariepy, 1:02.52; 6. Laura Mackay, 1:05.32.  
100 freestyle: 1. Kelly, 54.97; 2. Benedict, 55.01; 3. Schuchardt, 56.61; 7. Rochelle Hughes, 59.30.  
800 freestyle: 1. Loris, 5:16.04; 3. Wayneville, 5:25.91; 4. Merchant, 5:29.20; 5. Leslie Bana, 5:39.64; exhibition: Coon, 5:37.16.  
200 freestyle relay: 1. Mercy (Garlow,

Benedict, Loris, Kelly), 1:40.02, league record; old record: 1:40.43 by Marian in 2000.  
100 backstroke: 2. Cronin, 1:03.53; 3. Page, 1:03.86; 4. Naglick, 1:04.52; 5. Fran Murphy, 1:05.27.  
100 breaststroke: 5. Milewski, 1:11.11; 2. Garlow, 1:09.50; 7. Roble, 1:12.00; 12. Kelly Price, 1:16.16.  
400 freestyle relay: 1. Mercy (Loris, Page, Naglick, Benedict), 3:44.70.  
**NON-MERCY EVENT WINNERS**  
200 medley relay: Marian, 1:51.02; 200 IM: Jen Thompson (IM), 2:13.21; 80 freestyle: Katie Runyon (IM), 2:42.07; 400m: Jackie Babin (HWR), 4:10.40; backstroke: Thompson (IM), 1:02.58; breaststroke: Samantha Ashby (PNPD), 1:08.80.

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## Falcons from page D1

Westra stopped a shot by Farmington's Matt Konopinski midway in the first half, and Eric Gaughan and Nate Meyer had near misses after that.

But the Falcons' best opportunity occurred with 44 seconds remaining in the first half when Joe Russo sent the ball toward the goal and rushed forward to get the rebound. Westra covered the ball at the corner of the goal before Russo could finish the play, however.

"In the first half, I thought we had the better chances," Juncj said. "If (Russo) had scored, it probably would have been a different game."

"I thought it was anybody's game (at halftime). I knew they didn't score that many goals, and we hadn't scored many against good teams."

The only goal was scored at 37:28 in the second half when Sieplings lifted a shot from 25 yards that hit the crossbar and rocketed down into the Farmington net.

"Any time you score the first goal in a big game, it's a huge psychological lift," Klansen said. "At the start, the kids are questioning whether they belong here, even if they act differently. The first goal is a huge advantage."

"That was a great shot; the goalie had no chance on that play," Juncj said. "Our center midfield didn't come back in time, and their player was wide open; he had a real good shot."

Farmington's best chance in the second half came at 13:43 when Matt Kopny crossed to Meyer in front, but Meyer's

header went over the top.

The Falcons were frustrated offensively, finding it difficult to build an attack and impossible to keep possession long enough to penetrate the inner circle of the Eagles' defense.

Christian played a regular 4-3-3 alignment, but it appeared it had five and sometimes six players in a row defensively.

"We did four in back, but we ask our halfbacks to do a lot of running," Klansen said. "That's one reason we sub a lot. If they don't run back on defense, they don't play."

"We do a lot of reading in back; we try to absorb speed and intercept the pass, and it worked today. We ask the weakside halfback to come back deep, so sometimes it looks like we're playing five deep."

Christian managed to shut down Konopinski, who has good foot skills to go with speed and was Farmington's leading scorer this year.

"We heard he was a good player, but we were more concerned about staying in our set," Klansen said. "If we do that, those things will take care of themselves."

The Falcons went a game farther in the tournament this year, and Juncj hopes 2002 will be the year they finally win the state championship.

"It was a great season, getting to the state final," he said. "Making it here was a great accomplishment."

"Hopefully, next year will be the year we win it. We'll have nine starters back, so we should have a solid squad."

## Flyers from page D1

ing conferences along with the rest of the district's athletic teams. Birmingham United is part of the Oakland Activities Association, which the Farmington schools will join next season.

Harris thinks this year's squad will improve upon last year's record. His assistant coaches are Mark Vellucci and Jay Johnson.

"We not only have talent," Harris said, "but a lot of character as well. I'm quite certain the chemistry of this team is going to mold together."

"I'm quite certain because of

the speed and talent of our forwards. We're going to score a lot of goals, which is going to win a lot of games for us."

Spending a lot of time in the opposition's end will give Farmington's young defense a chance to come around.

"I have some concern about our defense," Harris said, "and defense is what wins championships. If we can get them to develop at a rapid pace, we should do quite well."

The measuring stick comes out tonight.

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