

FARMINGTON —
FARMINGTON HILLS
SPORTS
SCENE

Field hockey champs

Mercy High School seniors Stephanie Yuhasz and Kaitlin Hayes participated in the United States Field Hockey Association's national tournament — the "Hockey Festival" in West Palm Beach, Fla., during the Thanksgiving weekend.

As invited members of the Camarillo Cougars, a field hockey club team from Moor Park, Calif., they participated in the Under-19 Girls Division in the tournament.

The division included select college, high school and club players from the United States, Canada and Ireland. The Cougars captured the tournament championship in their pool with a 5-1-1 record.

Yuhasz and Hayes, both all-state selections from the Michigan High School Field Hockey Association, contributed to the team's success.

Yuhasz, who was an all-state goalkeeper for Mercy, allowed only four goals in the seven games, and Hayes contributed strong defensive play in the midfield and backfield.

The tournament brings together teams from the East Coast, where field hockey is a major sport, and other isolated locals such as the San Diego and Moor Park areas where the U.S. national men's and women's teams practice and play.

Wright is All-America

Heidi Wright of Farmington Hills helped lead Cedarville (Ohio) University to its first NAIA national championship in women's cross country.



Heidi Wright

The graduate of Southfield Christian High School was part of a Yellow Jackets team that produced the best season in school history.

Wright, a junior majoring in Middle Childhood Education, was Cedarville's No. 3 runner at the national meet in Kenosha, Wis.

She completed the 5,000-meter course in 18:53 to place 29th overall out of 238 runners, earning NAIA All-America honors upon placing in the top 30.

Wright also was named an NAIA All-America scholar-athlete for maintaining a minimum 3.5 cumulative grade point average in the classroom. Cedarville outran 27 other schools to win its first national title in any sport. The Lady Jackets also won the National Christian College Athletic Association and the American Midwest Conference championships, as well as four invitations.

Wright was the team's No. 3 runner throughout the season. She ran 20:00 or faster in all nine meets with a career-best time of 18:27 at the Wilmington Invitational.

The daughter of Mr. and Mrs. William Wright also was named an NCAA All-America for placing fifth in 18:43 at the national meet.

FPS seeks coaches

Farmington Public Schools has need for coaches in the following areas: girls track, girls soccer and boys diving. Anyone interested in the positions should contact Athletic Director Brian Swinehart's office at (248) 489-3352.

Adult hockey players

The Farmington Hills Adult Hockey Association needs additional players for the current season in the over-30 and over-40 age groups. Players of all skill levels are needed; however, the association has a sufficient number of goalies. To inquire about playing, call the FFAHA at (248) 471-6004 and leave a voice-mail message.

AAU girls hoop tryouts

• Tryouts for the Michigan Motion AAU girls basketball club will be Dec. 8-9 at Novi Middle School at the corner of 11 Mile and Wixom roads.

A parent or guardian must sign participating players in. For more information, call Pat or Mike Tuck 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. at (248) 488-1515.

• Tryouts for the Motor City Blazers, a 15-and-under AAU girls basketball club, will be 5 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 2, at Schoolcraft College in Livonia.

For more information, call Patrick Battant at (810) 264-4035.

Raiders return solid hoops nucleus

BY DAN O'MEARA
STAFF WRITER
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North Farmington enters a new season in a good situation with nine players returning in boys basketball, including four who either started or played a lot.

The Raiders, who were 6-5 in the Western Lakes Activities Association and 10-12 overall, lost five to graduation: Blair Weiss, Mike Patterson, Kenny Kasyouhanan, Danto Sanders and Eric Wilder.

But their leading scorer returns in 6-foot-1 senior Mike Leach, an all-round athlete who earned first-team, All-Oakland recognition in track and soccer.

Leach, who can play either wing or post, averaged 11½ points and four rebounds, and he was named to the all-area fourth team in basketball.

"He played great as an undersized post player," North coach Tom Negoshian said. "Hopefully, we can put him on the perimeter more and he can be an even better leader than last year."

Five-foot-11 junior Marcus McComb will start at point guard for the third straight season. He averaged 10 points, three rebounds and three assists.

"He improved his shooting and ball handling and he handles pressure, but he needs to be more of a leader on the floor for us," Negoshian said. "As he gets older, he needs to keep stepping that up, also."

Seniors Brian Johns and Jason Neal were key players last year, too, and will have greater roles to play this season.

Johns, a 6-2 wing/post player, averaged four points and four rebounds, and he had a good year in football as a wide receiver.

"He was playing great and then he had an ankle injury," Negoshian said. "He never got back to where he was after he got hurt."

"We're hoping, with experience and a healthy year, to get a little bit more of everything from him."

Neal, a 5-8 wing, contributed four points per game and had a key role at the front of North's press. "We're looking for him to have a healthy year," Negoshian said, adding Neal also had an injury (hip). "Hopefully, all the hard work he put in over the summer will pay a dividend for him."

The fifth starting spot is up for grabs, but a prime candi-

BOYS BASKETBALL

date is 6-1 senior Earl Higgins, who sat out last season after transferring from Harrison.

Higgins, who can play wing or post, is the brother of former University of Michigan player Sean Higgins and the son of former Eastern Michigan and NBA player Earl Higgins.

"He has a good history of basketball in the family, and he seems to have a knack for the game," Negoshian said, adding Higgins practiced with the team all last season.

Other returning players who could earn a starting position and will be key reserves are 6-3 senior Andy Zak, 6-8 senior Greg Stitt and 6-5 senior Scott Bernstein.

"Andy came off the bench and gave us some pretty good defensive minutes, but we look for him to help us a little more offensively," Negoshian said. "He's probably one of our more athletic kids."

"Greg is a good athlete who gives us strong minutes and brings a great work ethic to practice. Obviously, being the tallest player on a small team, Scott's development in the post would be a big plus for us."

Seniors Brian Shulman, a 5-11 guard, and Matt Clark, a 6-foot wing, also return. Completing the varsity roster are three first-year players: 6-foot junior Robert White, 6-3 junior Will Hathaway and 6-4 freshman Sean Mackler.

"Our team is improved," Negoshian said. "We have two experienced perimeter players in McComb and Neal who shoot and attack the basket well."

"Mike Leach can score in the post, but we hope to put him on the perimeter. If Mackler, Higgins and Bernstein develop in the post, we should do well."

"With a lack of size, we'll struggle a bit to rebound and stop big post players. That's why we'll press and try to create havoc to keep the dominance of a big man against us to a minimum."

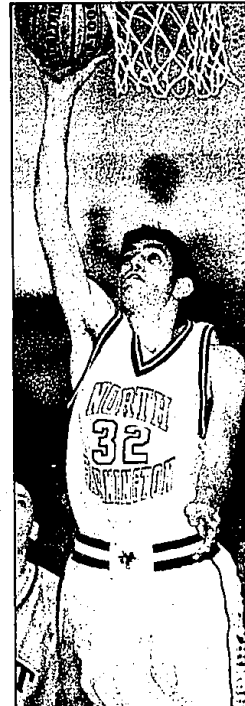
The Raiders begin the season — Negoshian's 20th — Tuesday when they play host to Detroit Mumford.

"I think it's a great group of kids to work with," Negoshian said. "They come to practice and have great work habits."

"What happens with wins and losses we'll let fall where it may as long as we're working hard and playing hard."



STAFF PHOTO BY BILL ENGLISH
Raiders veteran: Brian Johns (15) is one of several key returning players.



STAFF PHOTO BY BILL ENGLISH
Leading scorer: Mike Leach did battle under the boards a lot last year but might play more on the perimeter this season.

A lot is new for Farmington cagers

BY DAN O'MEARA
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Farmington High will have a new coach on the bench and a lot of new faces on the floor when a new season in boys basketball begins Tuesday.

Steve Korpusik, 23, replaces Denny Mikel, who coached the Falcons for the last decade but decided to step down two weeks ago.

It's the first head coaching job for Korpusik, who had been a freshman boys coach at Farmington the past two years. Before that he was a varsity assistant at Fraser for four years.

Korpusik, who played ball at St. Clair Shores Lake Shore High School

where he was a 5-foot-7 guard, was "caught off guard" by Mikel's resignation but is excited to have the opportunity.

"You never see too many tall coaches," he said. "Almost all coaches were guards, just as many baseball managers are former catchers."

"Being in those positions, they get to see the entire game unfold in front of them. They studied the game and developed a better understanding of it. At least I've got (the Farmington players) convinced."

BASKETBALL

The Falcons, who were 16-6 and lost in a district tournament final to West Bloomfield, must replace their top six players after losing Matt Mikel, Curtis Tillman, Mike Griffin, Jeremy Maxey, Brad Baranick and Layne Bodily to graduation.

The only returning players are seniors Ryan Koeinski, Jamie Nelson and Robert Nagy.

Koeinski is an aggressive, hustling, 6-7 guard who had the most playing time of the three. His enthusiasm for the game is contagious, according to Korpusik.

"He's one of the better rebounders we have," he said. "In rebounding drills, he does well because he's will-

ing to be aggressive and physical even for his size."

"Ryan is as hard a worker as I've ever seen at the varsity level. He has a passion for playing basketball. If every kid in every program had it, basketball would be a much better sport."

Nagy is the team's tallest player at 6-4. He plays an intelligent game and catches on to things quickly, according to Korpusik.

"He's positionally sound," he said. "He's where he's supposed to be when he's supposed to be there. He's a good kid to coach."

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STAFF PHOTO BY BRIAN MITCHELL
Puck stopper: Farmington's R.J. Ulrich makes a save in the first period Friday against Livonia Franklin. Farmington won, 5-4.

Heraghty's goal gives Flyers win over Pats

BY RICH SHOOK
STAFF WRITER

Farmington had a big edge in shots over Livonia Franklin but only a tiny edge in the score.

Brad Heraghty scored out of a scramble to the side of the net with just 15 seconds to play Friday night to let the Flyers escape from Eddie Edgar Arena with a 5-4 victory over the Patriots.

Cocher Mike Harris' team piled up a 4-0 lead midway through the middle period but saw coach Terry Jobbitt's squad rally frantically, finally tying the score with 7:16 left in the third period.

"(Goalkeeper) Kyle Susewicz played a great, great game," Jobbitt said. "They outshot us, 31-13, but he held us in there."

"We played a very, very sloppy and terrible first period. Everybody. There was not a lot of effort and a total breakdown of systems."

"In the second period, we played a little better. In the third we came out and played like gangbusters."

The Patriots were playing their Western Lakes Activities Association opener and are 0-1-1 overall. The Flyers are 1-1 in WLA play, 3-1-1 overall.

Mike Hand scored an unassisted

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short-handed goal for Farmington with 8:09 left in the second period. Franklin coughed up the puck; Hand picked it up, swooped in and scored.

With 8:30 to play in the same period, Dave McCall rallied the Patriots with a power play goal, assisted by Corey Garbutt and Andy Garbutt.

McCall set up Ross Robert at 14:07 to slice the deficit to 4-2 and Jason Robinson started the third period off with a bang for Franklin when he stole the puck at the red line, walked in and fired a goal in from the top of the circle just 12 seconds after the puck was dropped at center ice.

Andy Garbutt tied the score at 7:16, assisted by Jim Walla and Corey Clearman.

Farmington scored three unanswered goals in the first period en route to its 4-0 lead.

Mike Colombo, assisted by Brett Laird and Matt Lee, scored with 7:26 showing on the clock. Then Laird, from Heraghty and Chris Frayne, scored for the Flyers at 11:09.

Heraghty scored the first of his two

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