

FARMINGTON —
FARMINGTON HILLS
SPORTS
SCENE

College swim winner

Albion College freshman Jennifer Bendick (North Farmington) contributed a first place in the 100-yard breaststroke Dec. 5 as the Britons defeated Tri-State University of Indiana in a women's swimming and diving dual meet, 169-61.

Bendick won the breaststroke in 1:16.33, and she also was part of Albion's winning 200 medley relay team, which posted a 2:01.74 time.

The Britons will end a month-long break from competition Jan. 2 when they take part in the CSCAA meet in Fort Lauderdale, Fla.

Power skating class

Suburban Training Center will have an intermediate power skating class for ages 9 and older on Fridays from 4-4:50 p.m. beginning Jan. 11.

The 10-week session will teach skaters the proper technique for forward and backward skating, crossovers, stride, transitional skating, body positioning, balance, coordination and agility.

Full equipment is required. Skaters must know how to stop in both directions and have experience with forward crossovers to take this class.

Pre-registration is required. For more information please call Suburban Training Center at (248) 868-1400 or visit www.suburbanhockey.com.

Ladywood skaters win

Jana Beumel, Aimee O'Malley and Marybeth O'Den had two goals each and one assist as the Livonia Ladywood hockey team improved to 4-2 on the season with an 8-1 victory Dec. 19 over visiting Port Huron at the Arctic Pond.

Jess Blasser and Molly Zarb had the other goals for the Blazers, who led 3-1 after one period and 7-1 after two periods.

Katie Karabekli finished with four assists. Other assists went to Amanda Regulski, Bridget Scanlon and Meg MacDonnell.

Mychel Cudlip scored unassisted for Port Huron just eight seconds into the game. Danni St. Onge went all the way in goal for the Blazers.

New Year's Eve 5K run

The TLC New Year's Eve Midnight 5-kilometer run/walk will be Monday, Dec. 31, at the Riverwalk Plaza Hotel, One Jackson Square, in Jackson.

The 5K run/walk route will tour historic Jackson followed by Light of Fireworks at Midnight.

To register online, go to www.AthleticVentures.com.

For more information, call Risa Wilkerson at (617) 788-4376.

YMCA hoop leagues

The Livonia Family YMCA is staging its 18-and-over men's and women's basketball leagues beginning the week of Jan. 7.

Registration is ongoing until the deadline or leagues fill. The team entry fee is \$350. Teams must provide shirts or uniforms.

For more information, call (734) 261-2161.

EMU baseball camps

Eastern Michigan University will host winter baseball camps for boys and girls 8-18 years of age at Bowen Fieldhouse.

Camps will be Dec. 29, Jan. 19 and 26, Feb. 10 and 17 plus another on May 11. Workouts begin at noon at Bowen, or outside at Ostrick Stadium weather permitting and conclude at 4 p.m.

Single-day camps cost \$45, \$85 for two, \$120 for three, \$165 for four and \$175 for five or \$200 for all seven. Applications must be sent in a week prior to camps to avoid a \$10 late registration fee.

Coach Roger Coryell and his EMU staff will conduct the sessions, which feature position and team fundamentals. Topics include hitting and bunting, catching, baserunning, pitching, infield play, outfield play, strength and conditioning, arm and bat speed development.

To register or for more information and applications call (734) 487-0315, fax (734) 487-4668 or e-mail roger.coryell@emich.edu.

To submit items to the Sports Scene, write 36251 Schoolcraft Rd., Livonia, MI 48150, or send via fax to (734) 591-7279; attn: Dan O'Meara.

Gridder has memorable career finale
Farmington's Clinton
stars at wide receiver

BY DAN O'MEARA
STAFF WRITER
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It was a fitting end to a fine football career for Joe Clinton of Farmington. The Ohio Wesleyan University senior saved the best for last.

After starting at defensive back his first three years, Clinton switched to wide receiver for his final season and was instrumental in the Battling Bishops going 9-1.

"I wanted to make my senior year memorable," he said, adding he then asked coach Mike Holloway if he could make the move. "He had the same thoughts, too. One of our senior wide receivers graduated, so a spot opened up."

"I really did enjoy this season. It was by far the most fun I had since I've been here. I came here to play offense, actually, and they put me on defense."

"It worked out because I started all three years. It just wasn't as fun to me as offense. I wasn't as involved as I would've liked to have been. Catching the ball was more enjoyable than tackling people."

A quarterback at the University of Detroit-Jesuit High School, Clinton adapted well to being on the receiving end of the forward pass instead of throwing it.

That should come as no surprise since pass catching skills run in the family. Clinton's uncle is Jack Clancy, a standout at Redford St. Mary's, an All-America at Michigan in the 1960s and a professional with the Miami Dolphins.

Clinton (6-0, 170) caught 28 passes for 520 yards and eight touchdowns this year. He set a North Coast Athletic Conference record with an average of 29.3 yards per catch.

"I really got into the groove more on offense and felt more in the right place," he said. "I was just having more fun. That kinda made the difference for

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me. I was playing better because I liked it better."

"Our quarterback (Mike Jones) was real good this year. He got the starting job last year and blossomed after that. He and I meshed this season. He threw the ball up for me, and I went and got it."

Clinton's best game was a 51-47 win over Allegheny in which he caught eight passes for 248 yards and three touchdowns. He also returned a punt 61 yards for the go-ahead touchdown.

"It was just kind of a crazy game," Clinton said, adding it was his best single-game effort in any sport. "We hadn't beaten Allegheny in the three years I'd been here, previously."

"They were kinda down this year, so we really had a shot to put it to them. It ended up being a shootout. Whoever had the ball last was going to win, and that's what happened."

The Battling Bishops had hoped to make the NCAA Division III playoffs with that victory but were edged out despite their fine record.

"They do a point system based on strength of schedule," Clinton said, "and we were weaker than a few other teams that were 9-1; so we didn't get the bid."

"It would've been an at-large bid since we didn't win the conference. It came down to strength of schedule, which I understand. But it's still disappointing."

Clinton was the short man on the punt return team, and he was used more as a blocking back. But he ran track last spring to get faster, and he said it helped him a great deal, especially as a receiver.

"Most of the patterns I was running were deep patterns, so it was a matter of outrunning the DBs rather than catching it and making moves," Clinton



Farmington gridder Joe Clinton of Farmington (left) and teammate Mike Kubinski were in a good mood and posed for a picture following an Ohio Wesleyan victory last fall.

said. "On most of the touchdowns, I was catching the ball behind the defender and doing it from there."

One might wonder how a guy who attended Our Lady of Sorrows Grade School and a Jesuit high school ended up at a Methodist university?

When a counselor at U-D recommended the school, Clinton sent a tape to Holloway, who followed up with a phone call.

"His father coached my uncle at U-M, and we made the connection there," Clinton said. "That, basically, was it. I wasn't getting letters from other schools. I looked at two others (Villanova and Holy Cross) and Ohio Wesleyan. It was really a moot point."

Clinton will graduate in May with a fine arts degree with an emphasis in graphic design. He plans to return to the Detroit area and, hopefully, land a

job in the automotive industry.

Before he calls it quits in athletics, completely, Clinton said he might attend a professional combine workout early next year, however.

"Basically, it's done on your own initiative," he said. "You pay to go. (He and a teammate) will probably go to that. I'll give it a shot, but I'm not really expecting anything."

If there is no more football in his future, it's been a good career for Clinton at Ohio Wesleyan, which is located north of Columbus.

"I enjoyed playing down here," he said. "Division III competition is still tough, which I hadn't anticipated. It was a lot of fun."

"I didn't know one person (when he started there). It was kinda like starting over and having a fresh name. It's been real good for me."

Clarkston back on top in county tourney

BY CHRIS MAYER
STAFF WRITER

It had been six years since Clarkston celebrated an Oakland County wrestling title. But the Wolves wouldn't be denied on this day.

Clarkston dominated the 42nd Annual Oakland County Wrestling Championships, outscoring its next closest competitor by 59 points. The Wolves placed five wrestlers in the individual finals Saturday at Lake Orion High School, winning two, en route to their first county crown since 1995 and sixth in school history.

"We look at it the worst we've finished since the last time we won it is fourth," Clarkston head coach Mike DeGaul said. "So, I mean, we've been bucking for it every year. It's just this year we finally put it back together and got back here. The guys wanted it bad and they've been working real hard."

Clarkston, which captured medals (sixth place or

WRESTLING

higher) in eight of the 14 weight classes, completed the two-day tournament with 274.5 points. Novi earned runner-up honors with 215.5, Rochester Adams came in third with 201.5, Walled Lake Western was fourth with 196.5 and defending champion Oxford turned in a solid fifth-place showing with 164.

The remainder of the top 10 teams included Troy (160), Walled Lake Central (158), Lake Orion (154.5), West Bloomfield (137.5) and Waterford Mott (134.5).

"We're very happy," Troy head coach Gary Harlan said. "This group of seven seniors were freshmen when I first came back to Troy four years ago. It's a very special group of seniors."

The teams occupying spots 11-20 in the 42-team

standings - Milford (131), Auburn Hills Avondale (127.5), Rochester (117.5), Orchard Lake St. Mary's (114.5), Ferndale (113.5), South Lyon (112), Holly (109), Birmingham Seaholm (108), Birmingham Groves (105) and Oak Park (105) - all scored over 100 points.

The prestigious tournament began Friday with preliminary matches at South Lyon and Lake Orion high schools. Clarkston sat atop the standings after the first day and the Wolves simply applied the finishing touches on Saturday.

"When you have a county tournament with 42 teams, a lot of things have to go right to win that thing," DeGaul said. "The kids wrestled real hard the first couple of rounds - actually the whole time we got a lot of pin points - and that helped us get off to a pretty good lead after the first day. When

Please see WRESTLING, D3

Flames shine bright in tourney



Hockey champs: The Farmington Hills Pee Wee AA Flames won the Festival of Lights Tournament in Niagara Falls, N.Y., during Thanksgiving weekend. The Flames won their final game in a shootout. The team members are (front) goalies Thomas Whiting and Greg Holland; (kneeling, left to right) Matt Naughton, Grant Ponte, Michael Ellis, Jared Field, Mike Bowman, Scott Eberline and Joe Basset; (standing) Jack Mason, coach Brit Ponte, Jason Sharrow, Michael Kolis, Trevor Nill, Derek Schmitt, Alex Charette, assistant coach Brett Ellis and Carey Heikkila.

Shamrocks
notch 2 wins
in Showcase

Records can be deceiving as opponents of the Redford Catholic Central hockey team are finding out.

HOCKEY

The Shamrocks entered the Trenton Showcase last weekend with a 3-4 mark, but came away with two wins over top-10 ranked teams.

Eight schools participated in the two-day event.

On Saturday, the three-time defending state champions knocked off No. 8 Neganuee, 4-3, as goaltender Jim Blanchard preserved the victory with three key saves in the final period.

On Friday, CC stopped No. 3 Marquette, 5-1, as captain John Perkovich had a pair of goals.

"We've been struggling for wins this year so we're pretty happy to come out with two at Trenton," said CC co-coach Todd Johnson. "The Showcase was great and the City of Trenton did a great job of hosting it."

Against Neganuee, CC jumped out to a 3-1 first-period lead as Jeff Rrough

Please see HOCKEY, D5