

# Sports

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THE FARMINGTON HIGHLANDS  
EAST TOWN  
92737 West Twelve Mile Road  
Farmington Hills, MI 48334-3302

## Race results

Farmington cross country  
runners competed in state  
meets Saturday, 11/9/02

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## Sidelines

### Vikings football

The North Farmington-West Bloomfield Vikings varsity football team will play in the Oakland-Macomb Youth Football Association's Super Bowl game Sunday evening.

The Vikings (10-0) will play the Madison Heights Wolverines at 5 p.m. on the artificial turf at Birmingham Seaholm High School. Admission is \$2.

### Hockey tourney

The Compuware Hockey Club of Plymouth will host some of the top hockey teams in North America Friday through Sunday, Nov. 8-10, in the Pee Wee Minor AAA Invitational at the Compuware Sports Arena.

### Rugby players

The Washtenaw Rugby Football Club will have its Second Annual Rugby Clinic to introduce the sport to newcomers and potential recruits 13 p.m. Sunday, Nov. 10, at Freeman School in Dixboro.

Rugby is a fast-paced, rugged contact sport that's played around the world. Size, ability or experience is not necessary. The Washtenaw RFC is looking for high school-aged boys for its team.

The club has a "no-cut" policy; everyone who practices will play. Freeman school is located off Dixboro Road on Dixboro Lane. For more information, call (734) 761-1988.

### St. Fabian hoops

Tryouts for the St. Fabian CVO basketball teams continue tonight and Friday in the school gymnasium at 32200 W. Twelve Mile Road.

Eligible players must be either a student or parishioner of St. Fabian or a parishioner of either St. Clare or St. Colman.

### Big-game back

Grand Valley State senior running back Reggie Sparano (Westland John Glenn) had 136 yards rushing and three touchdowns in the Lakers, ranked No. 1 in Division II, romped to a 62-24 victory Saturday over host Mercyhurst (Pa.).

Grand Valley is 7-0 overall and 6-0 in the Great Lakes Intercollegiate Athletic Conference.

## There's more at stake in Harrison-Rice rematch

BY DAN O'MEARA  
STAFF WRITER

Two of the state's most storied football programs will meet for the sixth time Saturday, but none of the previous games was as big as this one.

Farmington Harrison and Birmingham Brother Rice will face each other in the post-season playoffs for the first time, so there's a lot more at stake in the Division II district championship game.

Spectators will be treated to a rematch of the season opener in which Rice posted a 34-20 victory at the Silverdome in last August.

### FOOTBALL

Both teams are 8-2. Kickoff is set for 1 p.m. at Harrison, the top seed in the district based on its higher playoff point average.

"I don't like to play a team twice," Rice coach Al Fracassa said. "It's kinda hard to beat a team twice. We're going to have to play hard to beat this team."

"They'll be fired up and will try to get back at us. This is the playoffs. They're not going to be playing games with us."

"I think the game is going to be a toss-up," Harrison coach John Herrington

said. "Both teams are well prepared at this time of year and ready to go. They beat us the first time; so, hopefully, we can turn that around."

The Warriors have won the last four games with the Hawks, including victories in 1993, 1994 and 1995. Harrison's lone win occurred in the 1991 season opener.

Rice had a scare in the first half against North Farmington last week, trailing 17-7 at halftime, but the Warriors ended up with a 42-17 win.

"We can't wake up in the second half," Fracassa said. "We have to be awake when we open the game. We just can't

fall around here. We have to play hard all the time to beat those guys."

"That Marcus Woods is probably the best back in the state. He's a very dangerous runner; so we hope we can contain him a little bit. He's going to get his yards but, hopefully, he doesn't have the ball all the time."

Woods, the all-time leading rusher at Harrison with nearly 4,800 career yards, has 1,506 this season and is averaging 6.1 yards per carry. He has rushed for 23 touchdowns and has scored 26 overall. The 5-foot-8, 180-pound tailback suffered a sprained foot last week in

PLEASE SEE REMATCH, D2



BILL BRASLER/Observer

Harrison's Charles Pickett reaches for a pass Saturday in a Division II district playoff game with Pontiac Northerns. The Hawks won the game, 24-0, and will meet Birmingham Brother Rice in a rematch of their season opener Saturday at Harrison.

## Hawks start with victory over Huskies

BY RICHARD L. SMOOK  
CORRESPONDENT

It was more like work than a work of art.

Farmington Harrison started down the playoff road Saturday with a workmanlike, 24-0 victory over Pontiac Northern in a Division II game at Duller Field.

Whether that road leads to a sixth straight state title for the Hawks will be determined.

Harrison hosts Birmingham Brother Rice on Saturday in the second meeting of the season between the schools. The Warriors defeated the Hawks, 34-20, in the season-opener at the Silverdome.

"We've had six rematches, I think," Harrison coach John Herrington said, "and in all six, if we won the first, we won the second. But that doesn't always mean something."

Harrison was a team in search of its

PLEASE SEE HAWKS, D2

## Shamrocks, Chiefs have similar look

BY PAUL BEAUDRY  
STAFF WRITER

It is relatively easy for Canton and Catholic Central's football teams to prepare each other.

All they have to do is look on the other side of the ball at practice this week.

### FOOTBALL

Both teams are quick on offense; both love to run the football; both have solid line play on both sides of the ball, and both are very, very talented.

And, when they meet Saturday afternoon in their Division I district final, the winner must not be decided by the better team, but the one that can take advantage of the big plays.

"Yeah, we're pretty even, but they run the Tight T (formation) better than we do," laughed CC coach Tom Niemi. "They run that well; they fake well and it's difficult to tell who has the ball sometimes."

Both teams are 9-1 and have big-play backs with Canton's Reggie Joyner, Devin Thomas, Corey Rutledge and quarterback Dave Niemi to counter CC's Randall Means, Eric Vojtkofsky, Derek Brooks and QB Dave Thomas.

But the keys to both teams' offensive fortunes lie not necessarily in those carrying the ball, but in those trying to spring them free.

"Everyone at this level has a good quarterback, good receivers and good backs," said Canton coach Tim

PLEASE SEE CC, D3

## Raiders throw scare into Warriors

BY DAN O'MEARA  
STAFF WRITER

### FOOTBALL

At halftime Saturday, North Farmington was on the verge of another huge upset of Birmingham Brother Rice in a playoff football game.

The Raiders stunned the host Warriors in the first half of a Division II district tournament contest by taking a 17-7 lead at Birmingham Groves.

But Rice regrouped at halftime and scored 35 unanswered points in the second half to claim a 42-17 victory.

"It seemed like we fielded a different team in the second half," Rice coach Al

Fracassa said. "Sometimes you wake up too late and the game is over and you lost. I'm glad we woke up on time."

The game was a tale of two halves, which is reflected by the yardage totals for each team.

North outgained Rice in the first half, 269-110, and resurrected thoughts of its 1978 victory; but Rice dominated the second just as thoroughly, 240-86.

"You never know how kids are going to react in the second half," Fracassa said.

"We just tried to settle them down, tell them they're a good football team and to go out there and do the things that will help us win."

They talked amongst themselves a little, too. I didn't know what to expect, but they sure came back nicely and won the game; so I was happy about that."

The Warriors (8-2) scored on their first five possessions of the second half and were able to spring halfback Anthony Jackson on the outside for touchdowns runs of 29 and 40 yards on the first two.

With 4:52 remaining in the third quarter, Rice was on top for the first time, 21-

PLEASE SEE NORTH, D4

## Farmington's next goal: District title

BY DAN O'MEARA  
STAFF WRITER

Once the euphoria of last week's thrilling, come-from-behind victory had faded, it was back to work Monday for the Farmington High football team.

The Falcons (9-1) have been preparing this week to meet Detroit Central (8-2) in a Division II district championship game to be played 7 p.m. Saturday at Farmington.

"Instead of the usual Friday night date, the game is a day later due to another event taking place at Farmington High."

"It doesn't change our routine that much," Farmington coach John Bechtel said. "We're playing at the same time as normal. Our place is nice at night; we have those new lights, so we might as well use them."

The Central Trailblazers won the Detroit Public School League's Division IV title with a 5-0 record and started out 7-0 before losing to Murray-Wright and Pershing - both Division I playoff qualifiers - in the PSL playoffs.

"They're very well coached; that's pretty obvious," Bechtel said. "They have some real gifted players. They

PLEASE SEE FALCONS, D4



BILL BRASLER/Observer

Farmington's Sherman Taylor looks to the end zone after catching a pass at the Henry Ford 4-yard line last week. He didn't score on the play, but it helped to turn the game in Farmington's favor.

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