

Sports

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PREPS ■ RECREATION ■ HEALTH

Red Arrows upset Warriors in state final, 31-14

BY CHRIS MAYER
STAFF WRITER

Birmingham Brother Rice will have to wait for a sixth state football championship.

The Warriors took the field Friday with hopes of winning the Division II title and adding another successful chapter to their storied history. Instead, they spent much of the day chasing after Lowell senior quarterback Mark Catlin

in a 31-14 loss before a crowd of 13,290 at the Silverdome.

Catlin rushed for 259 yards on 31 carries and passed for 162 yards — the 411 total yards shattered Mill Coleman's championship game record of 297 yards set in 1989 when he played for Farmington Harrison — and scored all

four of his team's touchdowns to help the Red Arrows (13-1) capture their first state title.

"He's a fantastic player," Brother Rice head coach Al Francosa said of Catlin. "But I think they have a very good football team. We got beat by a very good football team today."

Brother Rice (11-3) was appearing in the Division 2 final for the third time in four years, but the Warriors struggled with Lowell's four-receiver, one-back

offense and lightning-fast defense.

Operating out of the shotgun, Catlin scored on runs of 1, 5 and 10 yards. His impact was also felt on defense where he intercepted a Doug Pickens pass and returned it 28 yards for a touchdown with 61 seconds remaining. Catlin's 24 points tied a championship game record shared by six other players, most recently Kevin Woods of Harrison in the 1999

PLEASE SEE RICE, C3

Sidelines

Mercy star signs

Farmington Hills Mercy senior Tessa Kuykendall has signed a national letter of intent to continue her education and volleyball career at Rice University in Houston, Texas.

The 6-foot-3 middle blocker, earned all-area honors last year while helping to lead Mercy to a 45-11 record and runner-up finishes in the Catholic League and a Class A regional tournament. Kuykendall averaged 3.8 blocks and 3.1 kills per game last season and figures to be one of the top players in the state during the upcoming 2002-03 season.

A varsity player at Mercy since her freshman year, Kuykendall is a two-time, all-league and all-district selection, and she received All-America recognition last summer at the AAU nationals in Florida.

In the classroom, Kuykendall has a 3.75 grade point average.

"Tessa is a fast and strong athlete in the middle," Rice coach Julio Morales said. "She has the potential to be a potent hitter in our offense and a big talent for us."

The Owls (18-13) closed out their 2002 season this weekend at the Albuquerque Thanksgiving Classic in Albuquerque, N.M.

Lady Raiders win

Oakland Community College outscored visiting St. Clair by 15 points in the second half Tuesday night to earn a victory in women's basketball, 68-54.

The Lady Raiders overcame a 25-24 halftime deficit with a 44-29 advantage in the second half.

Larissa Taylor came off the bench to lead OCC in scoring with 17 points. Megan Thornberry tossed in 16 and Ashlee Larsen 11.

Thornberry also had 11 rebounds and Taylor seven.

Larsen had seven assists and eight steals. The Lady Raiders are 4-2 overall.

Danielle Reinbold scored 15 points and Kelly Harrison for the Skippers, who dropped to 1-2 despite having a 48-37 advantage on the boards.

Top Prospects

The USA Hockey Top Prospects Tournament is scheduled for Monday through Wednesday at Compuware Arena, and it will feature the top American-born junior hockey players.

There will be four all-star teams in the tournament: one each from the North American Hockey League, the America West Hockey League and the Eastern Junior Hockey League.

A fourth team, called Team TPT, will feature all-star players from the NAHL, the AWHL and the United States Hockey League.

Each team will have 20-player rosters. Among the NAHL players chosen for Team TPT are a pair of defensemen from Detroit Compuware: Jeremy Branson and Brad Robbins.

The tournament is round-robin in format. For more information, check out the NAHL website at www.nahl.com.

PLEASE SEE MERCY, C3

FOOTBALL



BRYAN MITCHELL / OBSERVER

Clayton Burch, the new boys basketball coach at Farmington Harrison High School, oversees a practice drill in the school gym last week. Burch is a former Lansing Waverly star and University of Toledo player.

Coaching next step for Burch

BY DAN O'MEARA
STAFF WRITER

Before Marcus Taylor was a star basketball player at Lansing Waverly High School, there was Clayton Burch.

As a senior point guard in 1996, Burch led the Warriors to the Capital Area Conference championship and was named the league MVP.

Burch, who averaged 20 points and three assists in his final year at Waverly, earned a scholarship to the University of Toledo and played nearly three seasons for the Rockets.

But an irregular heart beat, a form of arrhythmia that was previously undetected, cut short Burch's playing career and caused him to turn his attention to coaching.

The 24-year-old Burch was hired

PLEASE SEE BURCH, C2

Mercy rolls over first 3 opponents

BY DAN O'MEARA
STAFF WRITER

Farmington Hills Mercy bowlers are doing quite well in their first year as a club sports team.

The Marlins are 3-0 in dual meets with victories over three Livonia schools — Clarenceville, 21-9; Ladywood, 16-14; and Stevenson, 29-1.

The Kowalski family is very involved in the Mercy program and was instrumental in getting it started.

Mike Kowalski is the team's coach, and his wife, Vicki, the longtime and highly-successful coach of the Mercy

BOWLING

golf team, is the staff moderator.

Their daughter, sophomore Cathleen Kowalski, leads the Marlins with a 190 average — the second-highest in the Southeastern Michigan Bowling Congress.

Mercy is in the same SMBC-Canton with three teams from Livonia Public Schools, Clarenceville, Dearborn Edsel Ford, Redford-Detroit Catholic Central, Ladywood and Dearborn Divine Child (boys only).

Farmington High, North Farmington and Harrison also have boys club bowling teams. Due to a lack of interest, none of the Farmington schools have girls teams, however.

The Farmington teams are in a division with the three Plymouth-Canton public schools, Novi and Northville. Downriver schools comprise a third division.

In addition to conference meets,

PLEASE SEE MERCY, C3

Lakers survive OT battle with Chiefs

BY TIM SMITH
STAFF WRITER

Wednesday night's overtime thriller in the Class A Region 6 girls basketball final between West Bloomfield and Canton moved at such a frantic, urgent pace that most players, coaches and spectators at Northville High School were out of breath.

And West Bloomfield head coach Pam Mahoney barely had a voice afterward. She was thankful she didn't need to "sing," since the 21-4 Lakers fought back for a 62-57 victory over the quick, physical Chiefs (22-3). West Bloomfield faces Fraser at 7 p.m. Tuesday in a state quarterfinal at East Detroit High

BASKETBALL

School.

"It's not over until the fat lady sings," said Mahoney, about how her team staged a never-say-die rally to overcome a 10-point deficit in the third quarter. "I'm the fat lady and I have no voice."

Canton head coach Bob Blohm described the game as one "with so much flow to it, and so much transition to it. It was everything you'd want in a high school game."

Actually, West Bloomfield could have won in regulation. But junior guard-forward Samantha Mahoney (25 points) missed a layup opportunity that would have clinched the contest with just

under 10 seconds left in the half.

Canton junior Briana Wolcott (nine points) then was fouled, and she canned two free throws with no time on the clock to deadlock the score at 51-51, setting the stage for a four-minute extra frame.

COURAGE AND PRAISE

"It took a lot of courage," said Blohm of Wolcott's pressure-packed foul shots. "There was nobody on the line, (and) just knocking them down. That was just tremendous."

The tough loss aside, Blohm praised his team for reaching the Final 16.

"Our kids came out really

great at the start," Blohm said. "We have nothing to be ashamed of, it's a great group of young people. I thought we competed hard, both teams did."

Canton was led by sophomore Katie Cozart, who scored 18 points and registered 13 rebounds. Senior Kristen Lake added 15 points and 16 rebounds and senior Christina Redd scored eight points. The Chiefs outrebounded West Bloomfield by a 46-31 margin.

After the presentation of the regional championship trophy and medals, tired-but-happy Lakers congratulated friends and family members who made it out to Northville.

PLEASE SEE LAKERS, C2

CC gains hard-fought win over Spartans

BY BRAD EMONS
STAFF WRITER

It was only the second week of the season, but four-time defending Division I state hockey champion Redford Catholic Central and Livonia Stevenson brought a playoff intensity level to the rink Wednesday night.

Playing before a near-capacity house at Livonia's Edgar Arena, the visiting Shamrocks skated past the Spartans, 4-0. CC improved to 2-0; Stevenson dropped to 2-1.

CC, which outshot the Spartans, 32-15, tallied a pair of goals each in the first and second periods to secure the win.

Bodies were flying all over the ice and the penalty box

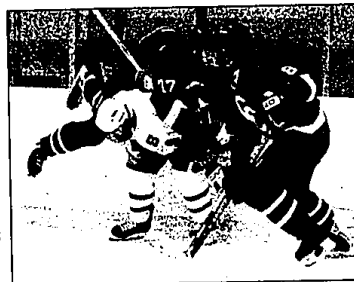
was busy as Stevenson was whistled for nine infractions to CC's eight.

The play resembled high school rodeo at times more than high school hockey.

But still fresh in the minds of some of the players from both squads was CC's come-from-behind, 6-5 double-overtime victory last March over the Spartans in the regional semifinals.

"It was a hard-fought game," CC co-coach Gordie St. John said. "They (Spartans) came after us and were hitting anything that moved. They made life miserable for us. That's a good hockey team."

CC, however, was clearly the better team on this night. The Shamrocks applied



JAN JACOBELLI / OBSERVER

Stevenson's Brett Rosbury upends CC's Michael Monterey (77) while Michael Evans (8) follows the action. CC won the game, 4-0.

PLEASE SEE HOCKEY, C2

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