

# Lakers frustrate Groves' title hopes

BY MARTY BUDNER  
STAFF WRITER

Birmingham Groves had a chance to wrap up the Oakland Activities Association Division II boys basketball championship Tuesday evening on its home court. West Bloomfield wouldn't let it happen.

West Bloomfield registered a come-from-behind, 52-51 triumph to retain one game behind the division-leading Falcons with one game left on the regular-season schedule.

Groves leads Division II with an 11-2 record, while West Bloomfield stands at 10-3. Groves concludes its season at home Friday against Troy Athens while West Bloomfield plays on the road against defending Class B state champion Auburn Hills Avondale. The Falcons can still win the division title with a victory over the Red Hawks.

"We know Groves has a good team, but we just wanted to come over here and show everybody that the first time wasn't a fluke," said coach Larry Moore, whose Lakers defeated Groves earlier this year at West Bloomfield by three points.

"We wanted to let Groves know that strange things have happened. Before my guys went out (two players suspended for two games) we were right there with them as far as us tied for the league lead."

"We came ready to play and we wanted to show them that we play ball in West Bloomfield," he said.

The Lakers played from behind most of the game, but rallied in the fourth quarter when senior guard Mando Martin canned one of two free throws with 6.7 seconds remaining to put West Bloomfield on top, 52-51.

The Falcons took the ball out of bounds, but had a desperation three-point shot attempt bounce off the front of the rim.

It was a somber Groves locker room afterwards.

"We played poorly. We shot poorly and we made poor decisions," said Groves coach Bill Norton. "We just haven't played this poorly. We've played well this year, but not tonight. It's extremely frustrating (not to have wrapped up the title)."

"We have to shoot better, handle the ball better, feed the post better and compete better," he said. "We have very, very high expectations (in the upcoming state tournament), and we won't go very far if we play like this."

After spotting the determined Lakers a 6-0 lead, Groves scored 10 of the next 15 points - all from senior forward Vova Severovas. The Falcons and Lakers were tied by the end of the first quarter, 14-14.

Groves netted a pair of treys (Severovas and Mike Salicidoli) to begin the second quarter to take a lead it would not relinquish until the final seconds. The Falcons held a 30-26 halftime lead and each team scored a dozen third-quarter points. Groves maintained the four-point advantage (42-38) heading into the final eight minutes and held a 49-42 lead with 4:48 remaining after senior guard Giordan Watson canned a three-pointer.

From that point on, West Bloomfield outscored the Falcons, 10-2. Junior guard David Merritt hit a three-point shot to tie West Bloomfield a 51-49 lead. With 1:01 remaining, Severovas laid in a basket off an in-bounds play to tie the game at 51-51.

West Bloomfield then ran the clock down to 10 seconds.

Moore called a time-out to set up a play, and that's when Martin was fouled while taking the in-bounds pass to the hoop. He missed the first shot, but the eventual winning point fell through cleanly to keep his team alive in the Division II race.

"We came ready defensively. I thought we played a very smart, strong defensive game," said Moore. "We played very well (against Severovas) in the second half and that was crucial."

Groves was led by Severovas, who had a game-high 18 points and 13 rebounds.

## THE WEEK AHEAD

**BOYS BASKETBALL**  
Friday, Feb. 28  
N. Farmington at Latsey, 7:45 p.m.  
Oak Park at Farm. Harrison, 7 p.m.  
Farmington at Madison, 7 p.m.

**GIRLS VOLLEYBALL**  
Saturday, March 1  
Class A district tournaments at Farmington High School  
Berkley (A) vs. Mercy (B), 4 p.m.  
Southfield vs. Southfield Lutheran, 5 p.m.  
Farmington vs. A.B. women, 6 p.m., championship, 7 p.m.

**BOYS HOCKEY**  
Division I regional tournament (Oxford Catholic Central host)  
Monday, Feb. 24: Royal Oak Rimball (A) vs. Dearborn Ideal Ford (B), 5 p.m.  
Birmingham Groves (C) vs. Livonia Stevenson (D), 8 p.m. Both games at Redford Arena.

Tuesday, Feb. 25: Livonia Churchill (E) vs. Redford Union (F), 5 p.m. at Redford Arena; Redford-Detroit Catholic Central (G) vs.

Farmington United (H), 8 p.m. at Commerce Arena.  
Thursday, Feb. 27: A.B. winner vs. C.D. winner, 5 p.m.; E.F. winner vs. G.H. winner, 8 p.m. Both games at Redford Arena.  
Saturday, March 1: Championship, 8 p.m. at Redford Arena. (Winner advances to the state quarterfinal Wednesday, March 5, against the Ann Arbor Huron regional winner at Redford Arena.)

**GIRLS HOCKEY**  
Saturday, March 1  
Mercy vs. Northville, 8:30 p.m. at Suburban Training Center

**ONTARIO HOCKEY LEAGUE**  
Friday, Feb. 28  
Ottawa at Plymouth Whalers, 7:30 p.m.  
Saturday, March 1  
Sarnia at Plymouth Whalers, 7:30 p.m.

**GIRLS GYMNASTICS**  
Saturday, March 1  
Regional tournament  
Tri-Farmington will host meet at Farmington Training Center, TEA.

**BOYS SWIMMING**  
Saturday, March 1  
Catholic League meet at Borders, TEA.

**PREP SKIING**  
Monday, Feb. 24  
State championships in Marquette, TEA.

## GYMNASTICS

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were favored two years ago and ended up second. Northville-Novi beat them.

Dwyer said it's not so frustrating, having a good team when Adams is good, too. It's all about the competition, and his gymnasts have shown they can compete with the best.

"I'm just thrilled that we can compete at this level," he said. "When you can compete with the top teams in the state, it gets your adrenaline going."

"It's a great competition, so that's why I keep coaching. I think the girls derive on that, and it has created a great atmosphere in the gym."

"Tri-Farmington has been beset by injury and illness, making its continued success all the more impressive, according to Dwyer.

Alyse Quinn didn't compete in the OAA meet due to an injury, and Dayna Warheit probably wouldn't have either except she

was a little less injured than Quinn.

"I give her a ton of credit for just competing," Dwyer said. "That's where the depth of our team helps, because Kelly Patrick came through strong on beam with a 9.3."

Tri-Farmington's Clara Seymour was fifth and Patrick ninth in the Division I all-around, and Warheit was fourth in Division II.

The other girls competing for Tri-Farmington were Sara Houchins, Caitlyn McPherson, Rachel Wasson, Sarah Tomkovich and Lindsay Smith.

"I'm just really happy with the team," Dwyer said. "They're a very gutsy team. We might have two healthy girls on the whole team. Everyone is hurt, but we're doing a great job."

"It's a tough sport. Toward the end of the season, you get beat up. I think we're going through a couple boxes of tape a week. But they're holding it together and they're not letting down."

"We have two more weeks to get through, and these two

weeks mean a lot. It's probably more of an attitude, a mental game, than it is physical right now. They're staying tough and working hard."

Tri-Farmington enters the final phase of the season and will be host for a regional meet at 9 a.m. Saturday at the Farmington Training Center.

The top three teams, top eight gymnasts in each event and the top six all-arounders will qualify for the state championships March 7-8 at Plymouth Canton High School.

### OAKLAND ACTIVITIES ASSOCIATION

#### DIVISION I GYMNASTICS MEET

##### Tri-Farmington individual results

Vault: 6. Clara Seymour, 9.1; 7. Caitlyn McPherson 9.0; 8. Lindsay Smith, 8.95; 9. Rachel Wasson, 8.9.  
Bars: 8. Sara Houchins, 9.10; 9. Clara Seymour, 8.8; 12. Sarah Tomkovich, 8.55; 13. Kelly Patrick, 8.5.  
Beam: 2. Clara Seymour, 9.5; 5. (tie) Kelly Patrick and Lindsay Smith, 9.3; 7. Sara Houchins, 9.05.  
Floor: 2. Sara Houchins, 9.55; 10. Lindsay Smith, 9.3; 11. Clara Seymour, 9.2; 12. Caitlyn McPherson, 9.05.  
All-around: 5. Clara Seymour, 36.66; 9. Kelly Patrick, 34.9; Division II: 4. Dayna Warheit, 33.2.

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