

Sports

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Sidelines

OCC advances

Oakland Community College advanced to the semifinals of the National Junior College Athletic Association Region XII District H women's basketball tournament.

The Lady Raiders, who had a first-round bye since they won the MCAA state title, defeated St. Clair CCC Wednesday, 70-47.

Oakland (24-6) played host Toledo Owens in the semis Friday. The winner played the Mott-Wayne winner in the final Saturday.

All-state skiers

The Michigan Interscholastic Ski Coaches Association named Farmington Hills Mercy Junior Liz Kujala to the girls Class A all-state second team. Mercy senior Nicole Zaleski received an honorable mention.

Volleyball tryouts

Farmington Juniors Volleyball Club will have tryouts for ages 10-17 on Saturday, March 15, at St. Fabian Grade School in Farmington Hills.

Pre-high school tryouts will be 1-3 p.m., high school tryouts 3-5 p.m. Call (248) 594-4269 or visit <http://juniors.hometownlife.com>.

Tri-Farmington girls place 3rd in state competition

BY DAN O'MEARA
STAFF WRITER

Tri-Farmington did well in the gymnastics state team meet Friday at Plymouth High School but fell just short of achieving its goal.

Coach Jeff Dwyer's team had hoped to finish second and receive the runners-up trophy, but Tri-Farmington had to settle for third place.

That was still two places higher than Tri-Farmington finished in last year's state meet.

Rochester Adams became the first school to repeat as state champion since Holland won four in a row (1994-97) and the fifth in state history to win back-to-back titles.

The Highlanders joined an exclusive club that includes

Thyler Kennedy (1972-73), Ludington (1975-76) and Muskegon Mona Shores (1991-92).

Adams barely edged Grand Ledge for first place, however. The Highlanders were just a quarter of a point better than the Comets, 149.225 to 148.975.

Tri-Farmington was well ahead of fourth-place Portage, 144.225 to 141.850.

"We had three strong events," Dwyer said. "We started strong on floor and vault and were less than a point behind Grand Ledge."

"We went to bars and probably had our worst bars of the year. I don't know what happened. They're human beings and that's the way it went."

Tri-Farmington placed third on floor (36.875) and vault

(36.250) but dropped to fifth on bars (34.025). The team had a strong finish and rebounded with a second-place, 37.075 on beam.

"We knew we had dropped out of contention for first or second," Dwyer said. "I told the girls, 'We can finish anywhere from third to 10. You've been a gutsy team all year. Let's go strong on beam and do the best we can.'"

"We had our best beam routines of the season. I'm happy. The girls will always wonder, if they didn't have the bad bars set, what might have been. It was one of those things; you stand there and wonder 'What just happened?'"

"We came back strong and had a heckuva finish. All year we've

PLEASE SEE GYMNASTICS, C2



BILL BATES/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Junior Lindsay Smith scored 9.25 or better in all three of her events Friday to help Tri-Farmington to a third-place finish in the state meet.

CC coasts into state hockey final with 5-1 triumph

BY PAUL BEAUDRY
STAFF WRITER

The loose puck popped right in front of Marquette's Steve Dales.

All he had to do was swipe at it and he'd have pulled his team within two goals with 10:30 left to play.

And as Dales swiped at the puck, Redford-Detroit Catholic Central goalie Jimmy Blanchard swooped in and turned a

momentum-turning goal into just another save.

Dales lifted his head, looked at Blanchard, smacked his stick on the ice in frustration and skated back up the ice to his defensive end.

It wasn't the only time that Marquette was frustrated in Friday's Division 1 hockey semifinal, but it was a typical one. CC (25-3) took over at the midpoint of the first period and didn't stop until the final buzzer as the

Shamrocks wound up with a 5-1 win over the Redmen.

"You could see they were getting frustrated out there," said CC forward Eric Glosa, whose goal and two assists didn't help lower the blood pressure on the opposite side. "It started getting a little chippy and there was a little slashing. But we had good goal-tending and played good defense."

The win did a couple of things for CC. First, it moved them into Saturday's state championship

game against Clarkston. (Results were not available at press time and will be in Thursday's Observer.)

It also gave the Shamrocks a shot at breaking the state record for consecutive hockey titles of four, shared by Cranbrook (1985-88) and CC (1998-present).

And, if they won a fifth straight title, they would be tied for the 10th longest state championship streak, regardless of the sport.

"We try to work hard as a

team, and everything we do is building up for us to have a strong finish," defenseman Bryan Gerlich said. "Jimmy came through with some big saves and that helps get our bench pumped."

Actually, Dales was the only one to get the puck past Blanchard — taking a feed in the slot from Kris Danielson and slapping it in the net for a 1-0

PLEASE SEE HOCKEY, C2

Late triple gives CC narrow win over RU

BY PAUL BEAUDRY
STAFF WRITER

With a minute to play, Doug Creighton was wondering if he'd get a chance to make up for what could have been his biggest mistake of the season.

Some 30 seconds later, the Redford-Detroit Catholic Central guard made up for his turnover with his biggest basket of the season.

Creighton's three-pointer from the corner with 28 seconds left in the game gave CC the lead for good as the Shamrocks went on to beat Redford Union in a Class A district semifinal Thursday at Livonia Stevenson, 51-48, in the first meeting between the two schools on the basketball court in 22 years.

"I got the ball in the corner; I was wide open, but someone was coming at me. I felt pretty good about it, and I was hoping it would go in. But if I missed . . . ewwww," Creighton grimaced. He ended up with 10 of his 12 points on the night in the fourth

PLEASE SEE CC, C2

Lakers sail past Knights, win district hoop crown

BY MARTY BUDNER AND CHRIS MAYER
STAFF WRITERS

West Bloomfield's boys basketball team completed an impressive run through a Class A district tournament Friday night. Playing on their home floor, the Lakers posted an 81-62 triumph over Bloomfield Hills Laber behind senior guard Mando Martin's game-high 26 points.

West Bloomfield (19-4) will be back home Tuesday night for a regional semifinal matchup with the South Lyon district champion (Novi or Northville).

Dave Merritt (17 points) and Kyle Flanbaum (10 points) also reached double figures scoring in the win over Laber.

Laber (14-8) had a balanced scoring attack led by sophomore guard Rocky Gust's 18 points.

Nick Fritz followed with 15 points, and Anthony Williams,

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