

FALCONS

FROM PAGE C1

Farmington returns its top pitcher, senior Andy Brown, a four-year varsity player who pitched the division-clinching game. Senior Joe James threw the most complete games — three of the team's five.

Unlike most teams, the Falcons are loaded with left-hand pitchers. In addition to James, senior Markus Barlage and sophomores Tim Mitchell

and Andy Anderson are southpaws, too.

Sophomore Ryan Brodowsky and junior J.J. Kiselski also will do some pitching.

"I think we'll throw strikes consistently," Finn said. "There is some experience there. We also have some youth, so it's a mixed bag. It's nice we have a variety, and it looks like they'll be pretty interchangeable."

Senior Brian Dickey and sophomore Phil Scott will share the catching duties.

"They have the right mechan-

ics, but there's not a lot of experience, so they'll be learning as we go," Finn said.

"The things they have good hands. Once they learn and get some repetitions, they should be OK."

Junior Tim DePaulis is a returning starter at second base, and Brown will play shortstop when he's not pitching.

Senior Mike Kish, who will probably play short when Brown pitches, and Kiselski will handle the hot corner. Barlage

and Mitchell will share the job at first base.

"Before Fischer went down, we had a lot of experience (on the infield) — second, third and short all being returning starters," Finn said.

"If we can get consistent play at shortstop, we should be OK, because first, second and third look good."

"We should be able to pick it up and throw people out. I'm not sure we'll make the outstanding play; I just hope to make the routine plays."

The Falcons are set in center field with junior Dave Justice, who started all last season.

Either Brodowsky or James will play in right field. Anderson, Dickey and Mitchell will likely take turns in left field.

"There's a lot of versatility there," Finn said. "A lot of guys can do more than one thing, more so for this team than any team I've had."

"With missing players, you always worry you're not going to have kids to fill. With this

group at least, we have the talent to fill if not the experience."

"Because kids can play a lot of positions, they understand the overall defensive scheme a little better. That's the way we benefit. On the other hand, you don't get the singular repetitions at the same position over and over."

The Falcons, who had scrimmage games last week with Brother Rice and Milford, started actual competition Saturday at Livonia Stevenson. *Observer & Eccentric* (734-953-2232)

WHALERS

FROM PAGE C1

He's been the No. 1 star the last two games."

The Whalers' power play continued to click; they converted 2-of-3 chances, the first coming from Chris Thorburn at 1:31 of the second period. Karl Stewart and James Wisniewski assisted, giving Plymouth a 1-0 lead.

Jimmy Gagnon made it 2-0 when he took a pass from Fiedler and scored at 10:43 of the second. A little more than four minutes later, the Whaler lead grew to 3-0, thanks to Nate Kiser's power-play goal. John Mitchell and Fiedler assisted.

However, Owen Sound — as it had done throughout the series — was not surrendering. A penalty to Kiser gave the Attack a power-play opportunity, and this time they cashed in (after missing on their first five chances). Andre Deveaux scoring with assists from Mark Giordano and Juris Stals at 9:07 of the third period.

Plymouth's two-goal lead was trimmed to 3-2 when Matt Passfield got another power-play goal for Owen Sound, this one with Mike Letizia in the box. Pat Jarrett and Deveaux assisted.

The Attack still had a chance. Fiedler ended that hope with his goal with 1:28 left in the game, restoring the Whalers' two-goal edge. David Liffiton and Gagnon assisted.

Thorburn scored into the empty net with :47 to go. Mitchell and Sean Thompson assisting, to ice the victory.

"That line had a big series for us," said Vellucci of the Fiedler, Gagnon and Tim Sestito line. "They've been a checking line all year, but they've learned in the playoffs anyone can score."

Which is something the Whalers learned the hard way last year, when they were eliminated by London in the first round after posting the OHL's best record during the season.

Asked what the difference in the Owen Sound series was, Vellucci replied, "There were three things really."

"No. 1, our power play. We were 10-for-21, just under 50 percent (47.6 percent), which is unbelievable."

"No. 2, our goaltending was better than theirs. And No. 3, we got some timely goals."

"Those ingredients were lacking in last season's first-round loss."

The biggest improvement this year? "Attitude," Vellucci answered. "They were focused. They didn't take anything for granted."

"They were just more focused."

The result: four wins in four games. And a guarantee of at least one more best-of-seven series.

RAIDERS

FROM PAGE C1

Glenn's Winnie DeLuca went 2-for-4 with a double, solo homer and two RBI. Losing pitcher Julian Fraser went 2-for-2 with a double.

On Wednesday, the Raiders scored four runs in the bottom of the fourth to take a 6-5 lead. Each team added a run in the sixth.

Smith was the winning pitcher, working the last four innings in relief of Mike Hand. Smith, who fanned five, allowed one run on two hits and a walk.

North's Rich Hegstrom had three RBI — two on a double. Andrew Stalis knocked in one run with a double.

Smith and Moscow had RBI singles, and Levick drove in a run with a groundout.

Hawks whip Warriors

The season opener went well for the Farmington Harrison baseball team Friday as the Hawks overwhelmed host Walled Lake Western, 10-3.

The teams played only five innings at which point the game

was called due to lightning.

Harrison pitchers Andy Wingert, Eric Zatklin and Danny Doig combined on a one-hitter.

Wingert and Zatklin threw two hitless, scoreless innings each. Zatklin fanned four batters and Wingert three while walking one each.

The Warriors scored three unearned runs in the fifth. Doig struck out two.

Harrison had seven hits, including two apiece by Mike Sacha and Kevin Zerbo.

Sacha drove in three runs with a pair of home runs. Zerbo had a double and two RBI.

Nick Vitantis hit a two-run double; Doig and Jake Channam chipped in a base hit each.

Sacha and Channam also scored two runs apiece. The Hawks scored nine runs in the second inning for a 10-0 lead.

CLARKSVILLE 12, AGATE 10: Ryan Wild's two-run double in the sixth inning was the difference Friday at host Livonia Clarksville 12, 10, won in Mike Henry's debut as coach against Carter Lake Christian.

Wild and winning pitcher Charles Bolander went 2-for-5 and knocked in two runs apiece. Bolander worked the first five innings, allowing three hits while striking out eight.

"In the midfield, we struggled from sideline to sideline," Russell said. "We have terrific players at every midfield position, but they didn't come ready to play today. When they did turn it on, they won the game for us. We just have to work on playing a full 90 minutes."

"Once again, our most dangerous offensive threat was Annie Gabriel. Her goal was beautiful, but she had another, perhaps even better, offering that forced the Glenn keeper to make a huge save."

"This was a great game for us since we played very poorly and still came away with a victory. Our early critics can have taught us a great deal about ourselves. Hopefully, we can continue to build upon these lessons."

Muldrew double winner for N. Farmington girls

Jaya Muldrew was a double winner for North Farmington in the team's season opener Thursday in girls track and field. She won the long jump with a leap of 14-4 and the 100-meter dash with a time of 13.4 seconds.

Overall, the Raiders didn't fare as well, losing the meet to host Milford, 114-23.

North had another first place from Susan Barrows in the 3,200 run (12:20.2).

Ai Kawashima was second in the 100 hurdles (17.6), and Christy Stockton was second in the 400 dash (1:10.2).

The Raiders had a pair of thirds from Naisha Gaines-Hanna in the 100 dash (14.2) and Barrows in the 1,600 run (5:37.0).

"We had a lot of good personal performances," North coach Bill Pinnell said. "Milford is very tough, but we had a lot of good results."

Milford, which won the Michigan Interscholastic Track Coach Association's Meet of Champions last year, also defeated the North Farmington boys Thursday, 119-18.

The Raiders had second places from Kyle Goldman in the shot put (45-7.5), Demetrious Milhouse in the 100 dash (12.2), Eugene Furman in the 400 dash (53.7) and Safet Gammulaj in the discus (121-8). North's Will Hathaway was third in the shot put (41-4.75) and discus (120-11) and so were Doug Anderson in the pole vault (10-6), Jeff Mataya in the 1,600 run (4:52.3), Ken Uy in the 100 dash (12.2) and Ashwin Raghu in the high jump (5-8).

"I was very pleased with the effort and times we had from our kids," North coach Jeff Simpson said. "We're in a good position at the start of the year as far as where we need to be."

"We knew they were a very good team. They lost only one kid from their team last year. They have a lot of seniors, and they know how to compete."

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