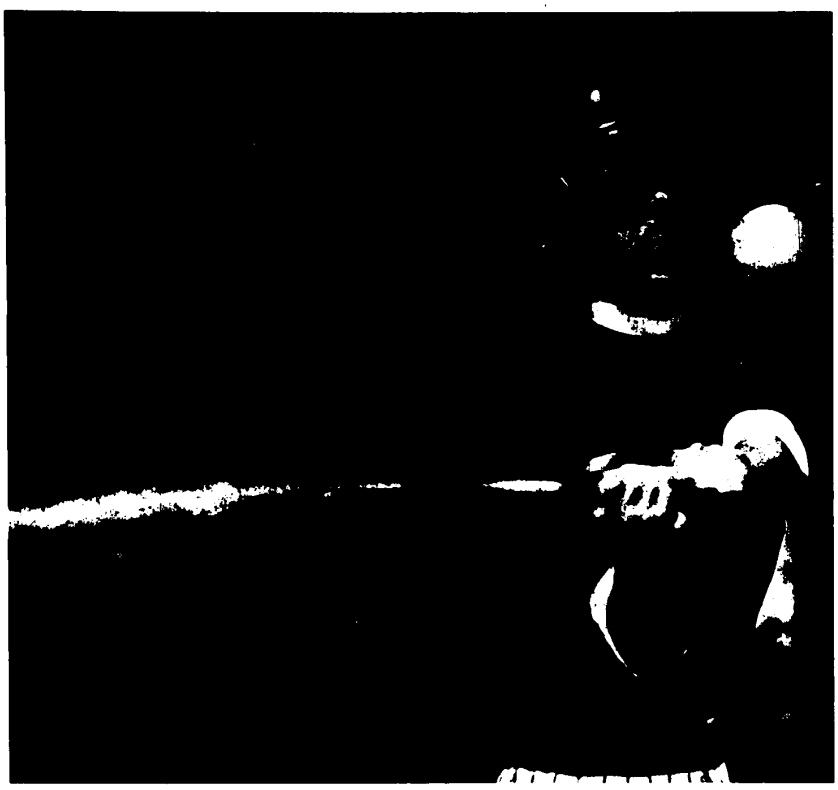

Farmington Our Lady of Mercy's Diane Dietz takes her cuts against Southfield-Lathrup in the semifinals of the state Class A softball district tournament last Saturday at Southfield's Civic Center. Lathrup defeated Mercy, 9-5, in the semifinals, but Wayne Memorial tripped Lathrup, 4-0, in the finals.

Class A softball district

Mercy falters in tourney tilt

By TOM BAER

Southfield-Lathrup softball coach Jim Owens had hopes of a long state tournament run. Owens' Chargers owned a 16-4 overall record and the Metro Suburban Association title.

Farmington High and Farmington Our Lady of Mercy, both sporting excellent softball records were not to be taken lightly. Nobody knew much about Wayne Memorial, the other team in the state Class A district, played last Saturday at the Southfield Civic Center.

But at the end of the one-day district, Lathrup, Mercy and Farmington were finished for the season and it was Wayne who had survived to play in the regional tournament at the Civic Center next Saturday.

Memorial nipped Farmington 2-0 in the semifinal, and then went on to blank Lathrup 4-0 in the final. Lathrup earned a shot in the finals by defeating Mercy, 9-5.

Memorial pitcher Carol Hemmell held Lathrup to five hits-four singles and a bases-empty triple in the championship contest. She struck out three, walked two and pitched out of trouble twice to preserve the victory.

"She was fast and she got the ball over the plate", said Owens, whose team had never been held scoreless before this game. "We've been averaging something like 10 hits in every game this season. In this game, we just couldn't come up with the clutch hits when we needed them.

"Of course that girl (Hemmell) was pretty fast. And the team behind her was solid. They didn't make too many mistakes."

MEMORIAL, WHICH managed just six hits off losing pitcher Ruth Fraser, was leading 1-0 in the seventh inning when Sue Karzma belted a two-run triple and then scored on a fielder's choice.

"That triple was a big hit for them," Owens said. "It made a big difference because we could have scratched out a run to tie it in our half of the seventh. But after that hit we found ourselves down by four runs."

Lathrup wasted a threat in the first inning when Pam Rendine smacked a triple with two out and the bases empty. Fraser, the next batter, lined out to end the inning.

Again in the second inning Lathrup's situation looked ripe for a rally. The Chargers loaded the bases with nobody out on singles by Mary Przygocki and Denise Zack and a bunt safety by Lynn Monohan.

But Malorie Whitefield grounded to the pitcher, who threw home for the force out. Judy Farrell then grounded to the first baseman, who tossed the ball home to force Zack. Cindy Wright ended the threat by flying out.

Fraser, who has pitched in most of Lathrup's games this season, worked 6 innings against Memorial. She gave up all six hits, walked six and struck out two. Rendine finished up, allowing no hits and walking none.

Fraser was the winning pitcher in Lathrup's victory over Mercy.

She gave up five hits, walked four and fanned three.

Mercy scored a run in the first and then added three in the third when Lynn Zesson trippled. Diane Dietz walked and Diane Banfield singled to knock in Zesson. Jean Otto singled to drive in Dietz.

Lathrup sent seven girls to the plate in the sixth inning and tied the score at three all. Rendine had the bag hit, a run-scoring double, and then crossed the plate herself on a fielder's choice and and error. The Chargers scored the go-ahead run when Zack tripled and scored on Whitefield's single.

Lathrup collected nine hits off losing pitcher Judeen Barlos who worked five innings, striking out none and walking six.

Mercy's Diane Jones gets some infield practice before her team played Lathrup in the district last Saturday. (Staff photos by Gary Friedman)

Heat slows trackmen in Class A state meet

By TOM BAER

Fifteen trackmen from four high schools in Southfield and Farmington had qualified for the Class A state track finals, held last Saturday at Houseman Field in Grand Rapids.

All the local athletes had turned in good performances in qualifying for the state meet, and all were looking forward to ending the prep track season by scoring points against the toughest competition in the state. But the finals turned into "a disaster" for the locals, in the words of one coach.

None of the 15 trackmen from the four schools—Southfield-Lathrup, Farmington High, Farmington Harrison and North Farmington—managed to score any points at the state finals.

Farmington qualified six men through a regional tournament last month. Sophomore high jumper Rick McKibben turned in the school's best performance at state when he made the opening height of 6-2 before failing at 6-5. Teammate Brian Steuloff qualified in the long jump and the 180-yard low hurdles. He leaped 19-5, his worst effort of the season, and ran a slow :21.0 in the low hurdles.

Farmington's Arno Sist qualified in the two-mile run and logged a 10:19.8, almost a minute slower than his best time of the season. Other Farmington performances at the state meet: Stuart Glatfelter managed a 4:31.1 mile, Marty Popp threw the discus 124-6, and Kevin heaved the shot 50-7.

THE BLISTERING heat, which reached 88 degrees in Grand Rapids last Saturday, may have been one reason that the times and distances were subpar, according to Farmington coach Gerald Young.

"It was a scorcher of a day," Young said. "And down on that track, it had to be close to 100 degrees. You could sit in the stands and see the heat coming off that thing. The kids were coming off the track with bad blisters on their feet. Their feet were just burning up.

"We put Arno (Sist) under the shower before he ran, hoping that would get his body temperature down. The heat really hurt everyone, especially the distance runners."

And there were other factors: the high level of competition at the state meet, and the large number of traditional end-of-the-school-year activities.

"A lot of the kids look forward to running against the good competition," Young said. "Some come through. Some don't. And it's the end of the season. A lot of kids are dragging what with proms, graduations and other activities."

Southfield-Lathrup had two athletes, sprinter Brian Gould and pole vaulter Bob Driessnack, in the state meet. Gould, who qualified in the 100-yard dash and the 220-yard dash, had a poor day and failed to make the finals in either event.

"I couldn't even tell you what his best time of the day was," said Lathrup coach Jerry Mineweaser. "I don't know what happened to him. He choked, maybe. That's about the best explanation, I guess."

DRIESSNACK, SUFFERING from a bruised and swollen hip, didn't make the starting height of 12-0. "He was too sore to do much of anything," Mineweaser said.

Farmington Harrison's 440-yard relay (Tom Reynolds, Greg White, Bill Hausmann and Mike Bowden) ran a :44.7, which wasn't good enough to make the finals. Another Harrison trackman, Karry Welborn, had qualified in the discus, but couldn't compete because of a back injury.

"Welborn had wrecked himself up in wrestling last winter," said Harrison coach Tom Shalla. "He reinjured his back during the track league meet while running in the shot put relay, which is a nothing event. It doesn't count at all."

Two North Farmington runners, David Good and David Levy, qualified for state. Good qualified in the two-mile, but didn't compete "because the doctor didn't think it advisable that he run," according to North assistant coach Ed Davis.

Levy qualified in the 880-yard run, and turned in a 1:50.9 at the state meet. That time was far from his fastest of the season.

"No excuses," Davis said. "It just wasn't what he wanted. It's too bad because he's been a great kid for us. He's worked hard and he's been real dependable. I would have like to have seen him go out with a school record."

Flint Northern won the 880 and 220, and topped the state meet team scoring with 35 points. Defending champion Flint Southwestern was second with 35 points, and Ypsilanti High was third with 34½.

Birmingham Groves scored 13 points and finished in a 13th-place tie with Detroit Redford. Groves' Ron Lunetta took third in the discus with a 158-0 toss. Teammate Bill Morgan finished sixth in the mile run in 4:22.4. Groves' mile relay finished seventh in 3:22.9.

John Kretchmer, of Bloomfield Hills Lahser, won the pole vault at 15-0, four inches below his best vault. Paul Manza, of Birmingham Brother Rice, finished fifth in the two-mile at 9:25.5.

The Observer & Eccentric

SPORTS

Inside / Classified Ads

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Christian miler tops in Class D

Southfield Christian School has a state champion in girls' track. She is Joan Alderink, a senior, who finished the mile run in a meet record 5:10.4 at the state Class D girls' finals last Saturday at Lansing Sexton High.

Alderink's performance may have surprised some people, but not Christian coach Cathee Martin. "We expected it," Miss Martin said. "Her times in the mile have been getting better and better all season. I just didn't think there were many girls in Class D who could beat her.

"Joan is a very disciplined individual, not only in track, but in everything. She always gave it all she had in practice. Then she'd go home and run some more. She's very motivated, and we're all very proud of her."

Alderink is the salutatorian of her graduating class, and will attend Wayne State University on a full academic scholarship next fall.

Southfield-Lathrup sophomore Joanna Jacobs provided five team points in the Class A girls' finals at Bloomfield Hills Lahser. Jacobs finished fourth in the high jump at 5-5, a personal best.

"That's an excellent showing for a sophomore," said Lathrup coach Mike Murphy. "The competition at the state meet was real keen, but she was ready. She also does a good job in the 100-yard dash and the 220-yard dash, so she has plenty ahead of her."

Another Lathrup girl, Gina Kuntzle, qualified for the state finals in the 880-yard run. Her best time at state was 2:28.4.

Farmington High's Laurel Kleppinger qualified for the Class A finals in the discus. Her best toss went 88 feet—not good enough to score.

Detroit Cass Tech won its third-straight girls' Class A track title, scoring 35 points. Detroit Pershing was second with 34 points, and Detroit Bishop was third with 33. Morenci scored 50 points to win the Class D title. Battle Creek St. Phillip was second with 48.

Eric Larson: Eagles' best in D Finals

Southfield Christian's Eric Larson finished seventh in the mile run at the state Class D boys' track finals last Saturday at Lansing Waverly High. Larson, who provided Christian's two team points, finished the mile in 4:35.6, a varsity record.

"I was disappointed and I think he (Larson) was too," said Christian Coach Carl Tischenor. "We had planned on about a 4:29. The terrific heat that day was definitely a factor. Eric finished the race with a huge cut on the outside of his right foot from the blistering heat."

Christian's Eric Davis qualified in the high jump. At state, he cleared 6-1 before failing at 6-3. Teammate Bob Kurtzman, a freshman, ran a 4:30.0 mile at the finals. Christian's 880-yard relay (Dan Hoffis, John Buller, Scott Newport and Neil Kluter) finished in 1:35.6.

Detroit DePorres won the 88-school meet with 73½ points.