

Falcons surprise coach, finish 3rd

Area wrestlers shine in Schoolcraft tourney

By TOM BAER

Farmington High's second-place finish in the Schoolcraft College Invitational high school wrestling tournament last weekend surprised a lot of people including Falcon coach Barry Walsh.

Southfield-Lathrup didn't finish that high in the tournament's final team standings but the Chargers had an individual champion, 121-pound Rob Parent. And Lathrup coach Ray Toohey wasn't at all surprised with Parent's performance.

Westland John Glenn, a Class A wrestling powerhouse, won the 32nd annual Schoolcraft tourney with 182½ points. Farmington's Barry Walsh scored 177 points. Farmington had 126, Clarenceville 123½, Farmington Harrison 102, and Birmingham Groves, 97.

North Farmington and Southfield

High finished 13th and 32nd, respectively.

"Our kids did a fine job, and I'm really proud of them," said Farmington coach Barry Walsh. "This is my first trophy as a coach. I'm real happy with the third place. I knew we had the potential, but I didn't think they were ready to finish this high in this kind of a tournament."

Farmington's Ron Stern won the 99-pound championship, defeating Dearborn Edsel Ford's Reg Gourd, 6-2, in the finals. Farmington took two second places with Jim Simmons and Dean Schultz. Simmons made it to the weight of 147 pounds before dropping a 5-3 decision to Mt. Clemens' Fred Wortham. Earlier, Simmons recorded a 4-3 decision over Harrison's Kevin Johns. Schultz lasted until the finals of the 157-pound class, where he lost, 5-4, to Bay City West's Barry Walde.

ANOTHER FARMINGTON wrestler, heavyweight Bruce McIntosh, finished fourth, losing on a referee's decision to Ypsilanti High's Mike Williams. McIntosh's performance represented a painful effort, according to Walsh.

"He injured his ankle in the third period of the overtime period," Walsh explained. "He wanted to go back in so badly that I taped his ankle and he went back in and finished the match — even though he could hardly stand."

Lathrup finished 19th with 44 team points thanks mainly to Parent, a tall, Detroit-born 165-pounder. Another Detroit-born sophomore, Dean Reed, 8-6. His 16-0 won-loss record includes 11 pins.

"I'm pleased with Parent, but I'm coming to expect a winning performance," Toohey said. "He's doing it every time I send him out there."

FARMINGTON HARRISON, a team

in the state one poll, had a respectable sixth-place finish at Schoolcraft.

Harrison's highest finish was in the 178-pound class, where Fred Blackmer finished second, losing to John

Glenn's Jim Meyer, 13-3, in the finals.

Johns took a third at 147, losing to Farmington's Simmons, 4-3.

Harrison's Damian Crudele captured third place at 137. He had decided to enter Parent, but Marty Reed, 41, in an earlier match, had to drop out because of a referee's decision to Cleveland's Mike Munyon. Harrison's Pat Maher advanced to the quarterfinals of the 134-pound class before losing to Wayne Memorial's Tim Clark on a fall in 1:05.

Harrison coach Dick Cook wasn't around at the completion of the tournament. He was back in Farmington at Botsford Hospital with his heavily-weighted wife. She had suffered a concussion during a match.

"He [Steve] is fine now," Cook said. "But I think I've lost him for a week. It was a freak accident. He was wrestling and his opponent's knee came down on his head. It was the first time I've ever seen anything like that happen."

NORTH FARMINGTON finished 13th with 69 points. One North standout was Barry Walde, who finished third in the 147-pound class. Walde lost a 5-3 decision to Glenn's Tim Meyers in the semifinals after pinning Groves' Mike Guffie in 3:55. Other North wrestlers and their finishes: John Cottier, fourth at 140; Bill Koss, sixth at 153; and Rick Curtis, sixth at 180.

"I was pleased with our finish," said North Farmington coach Jim O'Leary. "We're very young and inexperienced. We had a blend of seniors and freshmen. I think we will battle it out this season."

Southfield High finished last with only three points, but coach Ruel McPherson was happy his team had the tournament experience.

"This was our first big tournament

this season, and it was a good experience for us," McPherson said. "It was good for us to face some of the best wrestlers in the state. We need to be in four or five tournaments like this."

Southfield won only one match. Greg Cooper decisioned Livonia Churchill's Rick Stroyan, 2-0, in the 140-pound class before losing to North Farmington's Carter on a pin in 3:38. Another Southfield wrestler, Chris Cozens, was leading Ypsilanti's Kevin Bush in a 147-pound match. But the contest ended with Cozens being pinned in 1:03.

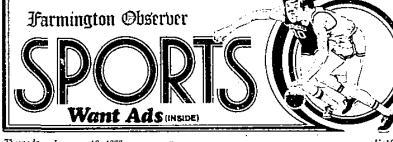
Meet summary

TEAM FINISHES — 1. Westland John Glenn 182½; 2. Farmington High 123½; 3. Ypsilanti High 126; 4. Southfield-Lathrup 62; 5. Farmington 102; 6. Clarenceville 97; 7. Dearborn High 96; 8. Mt. Clemens 94; 9. Livonia Churchill 93; 10. Birmingham Groves 92; 11. Dearborn High 73; 12. North Farmington 62; 13. Livonia Franklin 31; 14. West Bloomfield 29; 15. Westland 28; 16. Plymouth-Canton 24; 17. Southfield-Lathrup 23; 18. Farmington 22; 19. Dearborn Heights 21; 20. West Bloomfield 20; 21. Livonia Franklin 19; 22. Livonia Woods 17; 23. Livonia Laveco 16; 24. West Bloomfield 15; 25. Livonia Franklin 14; 26. Southfield High 13.

CHAMPIONSHIP MATCHES

88 POUNDS—Ron Stern (Farmington High) decisioned Reg Gourd (Dearborn Edsel Ford), 6-2. 102 POUNDS—Mike Williams (West Bloomfield) decisioned Buddy Ash (Dearborn High), 6-0. 114 POUNDS—Mike Williams (West Bloomfield) decisioned Jim St. John (Farmington High), 10-0. 126 POUNDS—Mike Williams (West Bloomfield) decisioned Tim Clark (Wayne Memorial), 1:05. 137 POUNDS—John Glenn (Westland John Glenn) decisioned Rick Stroyan (Livonia Churchill), 2-0. 147 POUNDS—Mike Williams (West Bloomfield) decisioned Barry Walde (North Farmington), 3:38. 153 POUNDS—Bill Meyer (Westland John Glenn) won on disqualification over Tim Clark (Wayne Memorial). 180 POUNDS—Chris Cozens (Southfield High) decisioned Mark DeWitt (Livonia Churchill), 1:03.

HEAVYWEIGHT—Mike Williams (Westland High) decisioned Mark DeWitt (Livonia Churchill), 2-0.



North Farmington's John Cottier stays on top of his opponent during a match at the Schoolcraft College high school invitational wrestling tournament. Cottier finished fourth in the 140-pound class, and North finished 13th with 68 points. (Photo by Bob Woodring)

Boys' gymnastics preview

Sport combines 'grace, strength, flexibility'

By SUSAN TAUBER KLEIN

Although boys' gymnastics in Farmington is overshadowed by other winter sports and by the lack of gymnastics training in the middle schools, coaches at the three Farmington high schools—North Farmington, Harrison and Farmington—are optimistic about the future.

Dominic Fitzgerald, a business teacher at North Farmington, doubles after hours as the boys' gymnastics coach. He anticipates the December-through-February season to be one of "learning and getting stronger" for his 17-member team which includes two seniors, nine juniors and six sophomores. "We should get better every week," Fitzgerald said, pointing out the team's stiffer competition will be late in the season when North Farmington meets Ann Arbor Huron on Feb. 14.

"Huron scored high early this season," said Fitzgerald, "and with gymnastics being a predictable sport, we know we'll have a tough time against them."

North's team has two strong all-around competitors who compete in all but one event—trampoline. They are juniors Greg Boscawen and Jim Meggs.

"BOSCABEN SCORED third at the Huron Invitational before Christmas, and Meggs has pushed Greg all season," Fitzgerald said. "One is strong where the other is weak."

Other top competitors for North Farmington are junior Bill Bern in floor exercises and trampoline, senior Mark Rapis on the side horse, junior Bob Linsky on the high bar, and junior Jeff Eddy on the rings. "And it's a team for parallel bars," commented Fitzgerald.

"North will host its invitational on Feb. 4. "We invited 11 high individually," explained Fitzgerald. "The meet will offer two hours of a lot of gymnastics from elementary school clubs to high school teams."

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Coach Bob Sallow explained their competition schedule includes two classes of teams, one which scores from 103-110 points, the other around 75 to 85 points. "There are seven or eight of these teams in the last category," he said. "Huron will probably battle it out this season."

A physical education teacher and a regional gymnastics judge, Sallow described his team as "average but with one very strong senior, Darrell Yee, who should place second or third in the state in rings this year."

"Most of them are beginners, just starting out. It takes quite a while to develop a gymnast," Sallow continued, explaining it can take up to three years to learn a trick.

"And it can take a good year to pick up the idea of flowing from one trick to another, making a smooth transition," he added.

In addition to Yee, other strong team members are seniors Larry Naser, Dave Sosnowski and Doug Harris. Sophomore Brian O'Connor is doing well in his first year, according to Sallow.

HARRISON'S TEAM was started by Sallow seven years ago when he was teaching at Beechview Elementary School. Although he has only been at Harrison for six years, he has been the coach for seven.

"Gymnastics is a great sport. It's a combination of grace, strength, and flexibility. The self-disciplining, it takes a special kind of person to be a good gymnast," Sallow said.

The Farmington High School team is in its second season. Coach Jim Hafke, a gymnast from the age of nine and now a national judge, has a 12-member team composed of two sophomores, four juniors and six seniors.

Farmington has lost its first three meets so far, and Hafke anticipates them losing the rest because "they aren't strong enough yet, even though six of them returned from last year. I want them to concentrate on their individual scores this season, to improve them from one meet to the next," Hafke said.

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