

# North's 'tough kid' shoots for mat title

By Tom Baer  
staff writer

North Farmington wrestling coach Jim O'Leary's eyes light up and a happy tone comes into his voice when he talks about his top competitor — senior Eric Collier.

"He's tough enough to beat anybody," O'Leary said. "He's just a tough kid... and he's gotten better every week."

Collier will have a chance to show how tough he is this Friday and Saturday, March 4-5, at the state Class A finals at Lansing Eastern High School's fieldhouse.

Collier, who owns a 34-9 record and the school record for pins with 27, wrestled his way into the state meet by finishing second in an old nemesis — Plymouth Salem's John Beaudoin — in the 138-pound competition at the Trenton High regional last Saturday.

Beaudoin, the defending state champion, dethroned Collier, 22-9, in the 138-pound regional final. The two met in the district final a week earlier with a similar result.

"Eric's getting closer," O'Leary said. "He almost had him (Beaudoin) pinned this time. It really was an exciting match. He (Collier) is going to get him next time. He gets more confident each time out."

## Big 2nd half lifts FHS, 61-46

Farmington used a strong second half to overcome Plymouth Canton, 61-46, in a losers bracket game in the Western Lakes Activities Association tournament Tuesday.

Farmington, which led by two (30-28) at halftime, scored 31 second-half points to Canton's 18. Scott Hayash led the winners with 20 points. Chris Miller and Terry Gelsler each added 12. Ron Ruelas led Canton with 15.

Farmington coach Rich Roy said one key to the win was good free throw shooting. "We were 29 of 39 from the line," he said. "Most of them were one-

**COLLIER'S STRONG** points? "He's aggressive," said O'Leary, "and he's exceptionally quick. And he's a pinner. He gets you in the cradle (a wrestling maneuver) and you don't often get out of it."

Collier started regional competition by pinning Temperance-Bedford's Ross Gurney in 5:42. Then came an 11-8 decision over Brian Kim Kendall to set up the championship bout with Beaudoin.

"I really think Eric is going to go up there (to the state meet) and do a good job," O'Leary said. "I think he'll be in the top four or five. In his last 20 matches, he lost only to (Southfield-Lathrup's Chris) Parent once and Beaudoin twice."

Three other Farmington-area matmen — North's Terry Donovan, Farmington's Lenny Pitcel and Farmington Harrison's Dave Dickson — also made it out of the district. All were quickly eliminated in the regional.

Donovan, a 98-pound sophomore, lost his regional opener to Wayne Memorial's Dave Davis on a pin in 3:00 and then fell to Dearborn Fordson's Bruce Roberts on a 7-3 decision. Donovan finished with a 27-12-1 record.

Harrison's Dickson, a 155-pound senior with a 78-8-1 record, lost to Don

Forchione of Westland John Glenn on a pin in 2:58, beat South Lyon's Bill Harnette on a 5-4 decision and then was dethroned by Salem's John Woodchuck, 8-4.

Pitcel, the only senior on Farmington's team, lost two-straight at 110 pounds. Cliff Perez dethroned Pitcel, 6-2, in the first match, and then Livonia Bentley's Abe Yaffal did the same, 13-2. Pitcel finished with a 23-8-1 record.

"I'm sure it was tournament pressure, but Lenny didn't wrestle that well in either match," said Farmington coach Barry Walsh. "He lost to a kid (Yaffal) who he's beaten in the district and twice during the regular season."

**NORTH FARMINGTON** and Garden City each scored 18 points to tie for 17th place in the regional team standings.

Wrestling powerhouse Temperance-Bedford won the regional championship with 89½ points. Wayne Memorial was a close second with 84 and Redford Catholic Central had 80. Salem landed fourth with 55½ points, John Glenn had 48, Ypsilanti 42 and Dearborn Edsel Ford 40.

Wrestling begins at 11 a.m. Friday. The finals begin at 7:30 p.m. Saturday.




ART EMANUELE/Staff photographer

## Power punchers

Sluggers Mike Dardini (left) and Matt Swift shadow box during a workout at the Livonia Boxing Club. Dardini, a Farmington native, and Swift of Livonia will compete in the open class field this weekend in the Detroit-area Golden

Gloves semifinals Saturday at Dearborn Fordson High School. The finals will be held Saturday, March 12, at Oakland Community College. (Story on Page 2C).



**Tom Baer**

## Wrestling with ethics and assistant principals

**S**UCH A SIMPLE question, Eric. Why wouldn't you answer it? Eric is Eric Kopsch, the wrestling coach at Southfield-Lathrup High School. He has an outstanding athlete in senior Chris Parent, a 138-pounder who'll be shooting for a state championship this weekend at the Class A finals at Lansing Eastern High School.

Parent, who has lost only three of his 52 matches this season, won a regional title and finished second in the district despite being hobbled by a severe ankle sprain suffered in an earlier tournament.

Parent wore a special bandage during the regional competition last weekend. His coach doesn't think he'll need it in the finals, however.

Just an idle question: Which ankle is hurting, coach?

But the coach wasn't saying, although he had plenty to say about why he wasn't saying.

"You don't reveal which ankle," said Kopsch, a disgusted tone creeping into his voice. "People (future opponents and their coaches) may read the article and shoot on that ankle. Some people out there still might not know which one is injured."

Kopsch's concern stems from an incident he says happened at the district tournament two Saturdays ago at Troy High.

Chris reinjured that ankle last week (in the district) because an (opponent's) coach had fire in his eyes and yelled, 'Grab it and hurt him!'

**REMEMBERING THAT** incident really got Kopsch going on ethics — or, more properly, the lack of ethics — in sports today.

"All these years in football, the rule is to any league I've ever been in seems to be: Get the guy where he hurts. In hockey, it's the same thing: Hurt a guy. 'Where's he banded? Hurt him there. Put the quarterback out of the game and we'll win."

"Hey, we've lived on that philosophy for how many years now? It's gross. It's indecent. But it's what they're doing."

"I watched matches all day yesterday (last Saturday at the Hazel Park Regional). I watched people I've known for a long time. Their sons were wrestling. If there was a bandage on (an opponent's) arm, sometimes the father'd yell, 'Pull on his arm! Pull on his arm!'"

"I just don't know what's happened to people."

Well, Eric, you could always plead insanity — theirs, not yours.



*'All these years in football, the rule in any league I've been in seems to be: Get the guy where he hurts.'*

—Eric Kopsch  
Wrestling coach

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