

North, Falcons better, Hawks hurting

By Chris McCosky
staff writer

THE GIRLS high school soccer scene in the Farmington School District can be summed up in these words: the resurgent, the hopeful and the desperate.

All three teams — North Farmington, Farmington and Farmington Harrison — are coming off losing seasons a year ago. Of the three, North appears to have the most reason for optimism. Farmington should also improve. But for Harrison, things may be going from bad to worse.

The season begins this week for all three teams. Here is a brief sketch of each.

NORTH FARMINGTON

There's a new coach and a new attitude on the horizon for the Raiders.

Cathy Cole has replaced her cousin Debbie Pacheco as head coach. A 1979 Raider graduate and soccer player at Central Michigan, Cole has set out to transform the Raiders into winners.

"The team was real weak last year," Cole said. The Raiders were 2-12-1. "I think there were some attitude problems last year. There's a total different picture this year. I don't think you

can label this team a losers any more."

The Raider spirit has been buoyed by a talented crop of freshmen, who have been playing on Bonanza League and Farmington Soccer Club teams for many years.

Cole is banking on freshmen Kristi Spahn to step in and make large contributions to the Raiders' season.

"Really, I expect these freshmen to carry this team," she said. "I'm hoping they will bring about a different attitude to the team."

Junior captain Mary Bort, junior Renee Terrault and 10 senior Michelle Mackie (the goalie) are also expected to contribute to the Raider fortunes.

"Our strength is in a midfield," Cole said. "(Livonia) Svenson and (Livonia) Bentley are very tough teams, but I think we are going to give them trouble because of our defense. Hopefully, our defense will keep us in games and help build our confidence."

Cole said the toughest thing will be for the Raiders to get a losing image. She's confident that it will be the turnaround season.

"I think by the time the freshmen are seniors, they are going to be awesome," she said.

soccer

The Raiders open Wednesday at home against the defending state champions — Livonia Stevenson.

FARMINGTON

Ed Bartram is in his fourth year as the Falcons' head coach. Last year, his club suffered through a dismal 2-12 season.

But things should be better this year — much better, Bartram hopes.

"We are getting more girls in the program now that have been playing soccer for awhile. That makes a big difference," he said.

One reason Bartram can afford to be optimistic is sophomore goalie Pam Faulkner. She was a standout performer as a freshman last year.

"We've always managed to be fairly good defensively," Bartram said. "Hopefully, we can get on an offensive roll this year."

Junior Katie McIntosh and sophomore Laurie Dingle and Carry House will be counted on to pace the Falcon offense.

Defensively, senior Sue Bartram

(Ed's daughter) and Karen Pennywick are the anchors in the midfield.

Farmington has more depth this season. Bartram said he has 11 returning players on 23 players.

Will the Falcons contend for Western Lakes title this season?

"I wouldn't go that far, just yet," Bartram said. "Just put it this way — we are better off than we've been in the past."

The Falcons travel to Southfield-Lathrup Tuesday for their season opener.

FARMINGTON HARRISON

The Hawks were 5-10 last year, but coach Harry Swytun said things won't be so good this year.

When practice opened, Swytun was stunned to find just 12 players on the roster. He was even more disheartened because he has never had all 12 players attend a practice at the same time.

"It's been very disappointing," Swytun said. "I was expecting eight players back from last year's team, and only four showed up. Two of them were real

promising freshmen who went out for the football team this year. And they got cut from the varsity team" but elected to play junior varsity football instead of varsity soccer. I can't believe that.

Swytn also lost his only goalie, Andra Dull, who joined the cheerleading squad.

"The team will be led by juniors Michelle Wise, Michelle VanVleet and Jody Bennett, sophomore Jennifer Hughes and freshman Jeanine Whittemore."

"We have no seniors and very few experienced players. We're just going to field a team and hope we can improve at the season's end," he said.

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Marlins to start from scratch

By Chris McCosky
staff writer

The most important aspect of fast-pitch softball, coaches will tell you, is pitching.

Thus, Farmington Hills Our Lady of Mercy seems to have made a smart move naming Martha Sampson as new head softball coach.

Sampson, prior to coming to Mercy, was an assistant coach at Dearborn Heights Riverside, Allen Park and several other schools. Prior to that, she was a standout pitcher for Wayne State University. Her expertise, obviously, is in the area of pitching.

Mercy kickers hope for strong 1st year

Never has Farmington Hills Our Lady of Mercy fielded a soccer team. They will for the first time this season, and coach Gene Fogel wouldn't be a bit surprised if his club challenges for the Catholic League title.

"I think we have a fair shot at the Catholic League title," said the coach who is perhaps best known as a newscaster on radio station WJR. "Here's why I say that. I have seen Ladywood play. And I've coached several of their players. Ladywood was the league champion last year. I think, based on what I've seen, we are competitive with them. Of course, I haven't seen some of the other teams."

Fogel is not new to coaching soccer. He has been a long-time coach in the Northville recreation leagues. Of his 22 players, he has one senior, seven juniors, seven sophomores, and seven freshmen. Two of his players, Amy and Margaret DeMatilla, played for Fogel in Northville.

BETSY EADS, the lone senior, will see action in goal and on the field. Because she is valuable in both spots, Fogel can't afford to play her at just one position. Freshman Kathy Rush will also share time between goal-

But, the rookie coach is her work cut out for her in trying to rebuild the Marlins. They were 6-11 last season. Basically, Sampson said she will be starting from scratch this year.

"I really can't compare this team to last year," she said. "We're improving, but they have a lot to learn. We have a lot of newcomers and some of the older players are having to learn new positions."

"I see a lot of talent in this team and me to prove that we can win with it," Sampson said.

SEVEN PLAYERS returning from last year's squad: seniors Mary

softball

Costa, Lois Kaminski, Margaret Kelley, Colleen McGrath, and Michelle Reed, plus junior Sue Scott and sophomore Michelle Fryatt.

Kelley will be the mainstay on the mound for the Marlins, while talented Kaminski will do the catching. Scott, a three-sport athlete at Mercy, will play shortstop and Costa will play in the outfield. Those may be the only locked positions, thus far.

Fryatt and Reed, outfielders last year, are being converted into infielders. McGrath will play either outfield or first base.

Sampson is also trying to find positions for a slew of promising newcomers.

Jenny Callahan, a senior, has looked good at both third base and shortstop. Juniors JoAnn Morely, Jennifer Maise

and Chris Niebrzycki and sophomores Missy Delvecz, Jody Janita, Jean Wassenberg and Stephanie Cobb are all eyeing some playing time.

Niebrzycki, Wassenberg and Delvecz should see some mound duty for Mercy, backing up Kelley.

Sampson said she has been pleased with the way the players have responded to the new coach.

"They treat me with a lot of respect," she said. "They know I have a knowledge of the game. That's something I had some trouble with at Riverside. There are some really fine athletes at Mercy. I've been very impressed."

Don't expect a Catholic League title from the Marlins this season, but expect some marked improvement over last year's team.

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