

Sports

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suburban life inside



Monday, December 10, 1984 O&E

(F18)

Salem, Mercy go again

By Chris McCosky
staff writer

Do you get the feeling that the girls basketball post-season madness could be titled, "Same Time Next Year"?

After all, Plymouth Salem defeated Trenton in one regional tournament — just like last year.

Farmington Hills Mercy knocked off Detroit Murray-Wright in the other regional tournament — just like last year.

And, just like last year, Mercy and Salem will gather at Southfield High School Wednesday and battle in the quarterfinals for a trip to Kalamazoo.

Now, if you are Salem coach Fred Thomann, you're hoping all this Same Time Next Year stuff ends, pronto. Because last year at this time, his Salem team got beat by Mercy 37-25.

"HOPEFULLY, we will execute better than we did last year," Thomann said. "The key to the game, I think, will be how well we're able to defend against their inside game. Amy (DeMattia) and Mary (Rosowski) are so strong. And they get good balance from their wing players and Annette (Ruggiero) can penetrate and create so much — it's really a tough match-up for us."

"But, the key is, we can't let Rosowski and DeMattia get 30 rebounds between them (the duo pulled in 28 against Murray-Wright). If they do, we won't have a chance."

There aren't likely to be many surprises pulled Wednesday.

"We're very acquainted with Salem," said Mercy coach Larry Baker. "We've been following them since the Livonia Stevenson game. We've followed them through their ups and downs."

"We know they will throw a very oppressive man-to-man defense on us. The key could very well be how well



RANDY BORST/staff photographer

Sue Scott (15) takes an elbow from Murray-Wright's Angie Middleton in Mercy's regional championship win Friday night. Amy DeMattia is the Marlin in the background.

'Nette 1 for Mercy

Ruggiero foils Pilots' upset bid

By Chris McCosky
staff writer

It was just as Mercy assistant coach Mike King had envisioned. It was just as senior Annette Ruggiero practiced it Tuesday. It was a dramatic and beautiful way to close out a dramatic and beautiful basketball game.

Farmington Hills Mercy trailed Detroit Murray-Wright 46-47 with just 12 seconds left to play Friday night in the Class A regional championship at Livonia Bentley.

Murray-Wright's Angie Middleton was at the free throw line with a chance to bury the Marlins.

It was a situation that the Mercy brain trust had thought about very, very often since that night at U-D High when Mercy lost to Bishop Gallagher in the Catholic League playoffs.

Earlier in the season, coach Larry Baker and assistants King and Jim McKee traveled to East Lansing to attend a basketball clinic put on by Vanderbilt University coach C.M. Newton. At that seminar, they learned how to win in the situation that was presented them Friday.

THE MARLINS practiced what they call their "quickie" play — a play devised by King — right after night. Last Tuesday, on the final play of practice, Ruggiero canned the winning shot.

Guess what? Middleton missed her free throw. Mary Rosowski grabbed the rebound. She dribbled off to Amy DeMattia who got it across the time line to Ruggiero.

Ruggiero had Sue Scott in one corner and Terri Ford in the other — just as King had diagramed. They weren't necessary this time.

With 7 seconds left, Ruggiero

GIRLS BASKETBALL CLASS A QUARTERFINAL

at SOUTHFIELD

Wednesday, Dec. 12: Plymouth Salem (21-4) vs. Farmington Hills Mercy (20-2), 7:30 p.m. (Winner advances to state semifinals at 8 p.m. at Kalamazoo Stadium High School vs. Lansing Eastern quarterfinal winner).

CLASS B QUARTERFINAL

at LANSING

Wednesday, Dec. 12: Livonia Ladywood (22-2) vs. Colchester-St. Joseph regional champion, 7:30 p.m. (Winner advances to state semifinals at 8 p.m. at Kalamazoo Central High School vs. East Grand Rapids quarterfinal winner).

snaked her way through three Pilot defenders.

With 3 seconds left, Ruggiero, poised as ever, let go a 17-footer from the left of the free throw line.

With 2 seconds left, this sound was heard: Twish.

Final score, Mercy 49-48.

"I knew there was 12 seconds left when she (Middleton) was at the free throw line," Ruggiero said. "That's the last time I knew. I had a feeling it was under 10 when I got the ball. I wanted to get the shot off early enough so we could get a rebound."

Again, not necessary.

HER HEROICS earned Mercy its 10th regional crown, more than any other Class A team. The Marlins have won eight regionals under head coach Larry Baker, including the last five in a row.

They will take on Plymouth Salem (21-4) in the quarterfinals Wednesday night at Southfield.

After the game, Baker gave Ruggiero a victory ride across the gym on his shoulders, but moments earlier he was contemplating what he might say if the Ruggiero's shot had not gone in.

"Had we lost, I was all set to say that when you miss free throws and you miss layups, you've got to blame both yourselves," he said.

Mercy missed a pair of 1-and-1 foul shot opportunities in the final 2 minutes and a slew of layups throughout the game.

Mercy led 44-38 with 3:48 left to play. But the Pilots, led by super-talent Margaret Jackson, scored the next 6 points to tie it up, 44-44, with 1:31 left.

Jackson and Terri Ford then traded hoops and with 52 seconds left, Jackson fouled out. Before doing so, she scored a game-high 23 points.

"Jackson was just a nightmare for us," Baker said. "We didn't even begin to shut her down."

ROSOVSKI, WHO won her personal battle with Middleton, hit 1 of 2 free throws to put Mercy up 47-48.

Rosowski scored 18 points and grabbed 15 rebounds on the night. Middleton scored 7 points and grabbed 7 rebounds.

With 41 seconds left, Murray-Wright's Carol Smith put up an off-balance 14-footer that rolled in and the Pilot bench erupted in euphoria.

It turned out, however, to be their last laugh.

Amy DeMattia's contribution should be noted and underscored. She played a very physical and effective game underneath. She pulled down 13 rebounds, helping the Marlins completely dominate the glass at both ends. She also scored a key bucket in the fourth quarter.

Ford added 14 points for Mercy. Ruggiero scored 9 points and dished out 10 assists.

Smith scored 11 for the Pilots.

Mercy will take a 20-1 record into the quarterfinals Wednesday.

Area team unites 2 powers

By Chris McCosky
staff writer

INTRODUCING THE 1984 All Livonia Stevenson-North Farmington girls swim team.

Well, not exactly, but you get the picture. The 1984 All-Area girls swim team, selected by Observerland coaches, is dominated by Stevenson and North swimmers, and for quite a good reason. The two teams dominated the Observerland swim scene this season and had lofty state rankings.

Stevenson, ranked No. 1 in both the area and the state for much of the season, placed second a week ago at the state meet. North Farmington, ranked No. 2 in Observerland and No. 9 in the state, placed sixth at state.

Consequently, 13 of the 17 All-Area swimmers were from the two schools. Nine of the swimmers achieved All-Area status a year ago.

This is a nice squad, meet them:

FIRST TEAM

Michele McKenzie, Stevenson, 200 freestyle: McKenzie was the only freshman competitor in this event at the state meet and she placed sixth with a swift 1:57.25 clocking. She also took a seventh in the 500 freestyle (8:11.71). She was the Western Lakes champion in both the 200 and 500.

Sherrie Sudek, Stevenson, 200 individual medley: This effervescent junior is one lone state champion. Her 2:08.51 was her best of the best in the IM. She also placed fourth in the state in the 100 backstroke (59.08). She was the Western Lakes backstroke champ as well. Ironically, she took third in the IM at the league meet, finishing behind a pair of Stevenson teammates.

all-area swimming

Marge Cramer, N. Farmington, 500 freestyle: Just a sophomore, Cramer helped North's freestyle relay team to a sixth-place finish at the state meet. She also placed 10th in the 100 free (54.70). Her best 500 free time, 25.3, earned her first place in the Northwest Suburban League.

Katie MacIntosh, Farmington, diving: It was an up and down season for this multi-talented senior. For the first time in two years, she did not win the Western Lakes diving competition. But, she finished strong placing 10th in the state. Just 7 points out of fifth place. Her highest dual meet total this year was 248.5, by far the best in the area and a Farmington High record.

Sheila Taormina, Stevenson, 100 butterfly: "She's like a wound-up coil," says Stevenson coach Lois McDonald of her super sophomore. "She has endless energy." Taormina was the second best butterflyer in the state with a 58.30. She also placed third in the IM (2:09.09). As McDonald said, "She is a natural talent and has a lot of class, win or lose."

Colleen Carey, N. Farmington, 100 freestyle: It is said of swimmers, especially girl swimmers (no chauvinism intended), that they reach their peak by the time they are sophomores and juniors. This personable young lady proved that wrong. In her senior year she placed fifth in the state in the 100 (54.09) and ninth in the IM (2:12.70). For four years she has been one of the main reasons for North's success.

Jennifer Rowe, N. Farmington, 500

freestyle: Raider coach Pat Duthie says of this sophomore, "The farther she swims the faster she swims." And he's right. She's good in the 200 free (seventh in the state, 1:57.45), great in the 500 (third in state, 5:02.85) and she would be unbeatable in the 1,000 — the problem being of course, there's no such event as a 1,000 freestyle.

Kathy Sullivan, Stevenson, 100 backstroke: There is something to be said for hard work and this junior knows all about it. Perhaps not as gifted in terms of raw talent as some of her teammates, Sullivan worked to reach and even surpass their level. She placed 10th in the backstroke with a 1:03.3 and 12th in the IM.

Mary Schenle, Stevenson, 100 breaststroke: This is another senior that didn't "peak out" in her younger years. She took a pair of seconds at the state meet, 1:06.5 in the breaststroke and 52.3 in the 100 free. She is being heavily recruited by major college swim teams nationwide.

AT LARGE

Ginmie Johnson, Plymouth Canton: Johnson burst upon the state swim scene as a sophomore placing fourth in the butterfly. She has continued her state-class pace for three seasons. This season she placed seventh in the fly with a 59.68.

Juli Quinlan, Stevenson: This versatile junior placed ninth in the 200 free and swam on the eighth place 400 free relay team. Teams do not place second in the state without depth, and Quinlan

helped provide that element for Stevenson.

Suzie Knipper, Farmington Hills Mercy: Mercy boasts one of the best dual meet squads in the state (they haven't lost a dual meet in 21 years) and Knipper is one of the driving forces. At the state meet she placed 11th in the backstroke (1:03.26) and helped Mercy's medley relay team to a 10th place finish.

Kristal Taylor, Plymouth Salem: This junior has owned the 100 freestyle event in the Western Lakes the past two seasons, and that's quite a feat considering that Stevenson's Schenle is in the Western Lakes. Taylor holds three rarity records at Salem and she placed 13th at the state in the 100 (55.06).

Cathy Stafford, Stevenson: In only her second year of diving, this sophomore is poised to take over for Katie MacIntosh as the area's queen of diving. She, in fact, beat MacIntosh at the Western Lakes meet this season. She placed one notch behind the Farmington senior (11th) at the state meet.

RELAY EVENTS

Sherrie Sudek, Mary Schenle, Sheila Taormina and Maureen Sudek, Stevenson, 200 medley relay: This talented quartet placed fourth at the state meet with a swift 1:50.62. Maureen Sudek, the only swimmer not previously mentioned, swam on both Stevenson relays and is another of those crucial versatile swimmers who add depth to the team.

Marge Cramer, Jill MacIntosh, Cathy Cramer and Colleen Carey, N. Farmington, 400 freestyle relay: What a nice group this has been for North. They

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The Best of the Best