

Sports

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North gymnasts face stiff test in 1986



Kathy Temple is certainly no stranger to Observerland gymnastics. Temple was an All-American gymnast at North Farmington High School. The past four years she has been a standout for perennial Big 10 champion Ohio State University. The team has won the title the past three seasons. Temple gained All-American status as a freshman. She's home now, having graduated from OSU, but she can't seem to stay away from her sport. She has spent the past few weeks scouting the area prep teams for the 1985-86 season. Here is her report.

By Kathy Temple
special writer

Although a couple of the teams managed to sneak in a meet prior to the holiday break, the gymnastics season will begin in earnest Monday, Jan. 6.

The general consensus among area coaches is that the Western Lakes could again boil down to a two-team fight between perennial champ North Farmington and Plymouth Salem, although Plymouth Canton and Farmington Harrison appear much improved.

An interesting feature of the Observerland gymnastic scene this year is that all six first-team All-Area performers from last year are back: Jackie Huff and Beth Rafall (Salem), Lucine Toroyan, Eileen Murtough and Kara Karhu (North) and Tracy Solomon (Harrison).

Also, there is a good deal of talent on the underclassmen level.

Here's a brief look at the Observerland gymnastics squads.

PLYMOUTH SALEM

Coach Kathi Kinsella has big plans for her team this year.

"I have so much depth this year and I want the girls to be dedicated, apply themselves and take initiative," she said. "They know they are good and I know we can be an All-American team."

"Our main goal is to beat North Farmington. I think we'll give them a good run for the money, and we want that league championship."

Last year Salem won the Lakes Division title in the Western Lakes, but North won the overall conference title.

Kinsella is confident that her team will qualify for the regional meet and she hopes to land five gymnasts in each event.

"We have a good chance at placing top four in the region," she said.

Six freshmen, 10 sophomores, seven juniors and a senior make up the team with eight returning from last year. While the Rocks have six or seven potential all-around performers

(those that can compete in each of the four events), Kinsella said her team is led by a trio of solid all-arounders who can score 30.0 points per meet or better.

Jackie Huff, a junior who qualified for state championship competition last year on the balance beam and vault, will be a major scorer for the Rocks as will senior Beth Rafall. Rafall qualified for state on the balance beam.

The third leg of Salem trio of all-arounders is Becky Talbot, a junior who transferred in from Dearborn.

Specialists on the team include freshman Dana Holda (uneven parallel bars), freshman Jenny Syra (beam), sophomore Amy Pastori (bars and vault), sophomore Sharon Way (beam), junior Sue Lally (vault and bars) and junior Jenny Breed (floor exercise).

Salem will open the season Monday, Jan. 6 at home against Westland John Glenn.

NORTH FARMINGTON

Four juniors and four seniors return from last year's team, along with three sophomores and a pair of freshmen.

Despite a season-opening loss to Ann Arbor Pioneer last week (130.15-119.20), coach Mary Giltz feels her team is stronger than last year's team, which posted a 13-2 dual meet record, won the Western Lakes and qualified for regionals as a team.

"I have most of the same girls back and by the end of the year they will be stronger than they were by the end of last year," Giltz said. "We are working harder tricks. After the meet, the girls realized they have a lot of work to do, and we're ready to work hard over Christmas break."

North is guided by a trio of All-Area gymnasts: senior Eileen Murtough, juniors Lucine Toroyan and Kara Karhu.

"These girls are capable of qualifying for state in any event and Lucine is especially strong on the bars," Giltz said.

Strong specialist performers for the Raiders include junior Marilyn Dunn (a regional qualifier on the bars) and senior Laura DiCicco (regional qualifier on the "It's very possible for us to win but I know Salem and Harrison will be tough. I know they at least have a couple of good girls."

"I also think we will make it to regionals as a team, and I'll at least have some girls in the state meet, for sure."

The Raiders resume action Jan. 6 at home against Northville.

FARMINGTON HARRISON

The Harrison squad opened its season on an encouraging note, topping Birmingham Seaholm last week 121.25-104.05.

Second-year coach Linda Perkins was pleased with her team's performance and its

regional qualifying score.

The Hawks were 9-3 in dual meets last year and won the Western Division of the Western Lakes. The goal this year: win the conference crown outright.

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Jody Solomon, along with sister Tracy Solomon, will be the big point scorers for Harrison this year.

Lucine Toroyan is one of three All-Area gymnasts returning to the North Farmington roster this season. She will be joined by Eileen Murtough and Kara Karhu.

All-Area swim team



Jennifer Rowe
N. Farmington



Cindy Cramer
N. Farmington



Marge Cramer
N. Farmington



Liz Worthen
N. Farmington



Amy Menellley
N. Farmington



Jennifer Morton
Mercy



Sheila Taormina Stevenson



Michele McKenzie Stevenson



Sherrie Sudak Stevenson

Nobody's fools in the pool

By Chris McCosky
staff writer

MARK DOWN 1985 as the year Observerland girls swimming gained state-wide prominence.

Oh, we've had our share of success at the state meet in past years. Mostly, though, it has been through various individuals. Observerland teams always seemed to be a notch below the Birmingham schools and the Ann Arbor schools and the Bloomfield Hills schools.

Not this year.

Only Ann Arbor Pioneer placed ahead of Observerland's best — Livonia Stevenson, which placed in a close second place with Andover. North Farmington also placed among the top 10 (eighth). In all, seven area teams scored at the meet.

Observerland also owns a state record, thanks to Stevenson. Ann Bollinger, Sheila Taormina, Sherrie Sudak and Michele McKenzie set a 400 freestyle record with a 3:33.12 clocking.

Observerland also placed at least one swimmer in the top 12 of every event except the 100 freestyle — Observerland swimmers swam in the championship final heat (top six) in all but three events.

Add those achievements to the fact that observers across the state regard the Western Lakes swim conference among the most competitive and you have reason to designate 1985 as a hallmark year for Observerland girls swimming.

Here, then, is a hallmark group of All-Area competitors:

ALL-AREA SWIM TEAM FIRST TEAM

Michele McKenzie, Livonia Stevenson, 200-yard freestyle: There's a

strong possibility that this sophomore's 1:54.01 time to the 200 will carry her into the Western Lakes and the All-American honors. In addition, she placed fourth in the state in the 500 freestyle (5:04.56) as well as an All-American consideration. She won both the 200 and 500 freestyle events at the Western Lakes schools.

Audra Martin, Livonia Churchill, 200 individual medley: A freshman, Martin placed fifth at the state in the IM (2:01.72) and an impressive third in the breaststroke (1:07.70). Martin won both of those events at the Western Lakes schools.

Ann Bollinger, Livonia Stevenson, 50 freestyle: The transfer student from Dearborn has fit nicely into the Stevenson program. The junior placed fourth in the backstroke (1:00.86) and 10th in the 50 free (25.15). She placed in the 50-free title in the Western Lakes.

Jamie Koester, John Glenn, diving: Koester, a junior, placed 11th at the state diving championships with 259.80 points. She was undefeated through the dual meet season, and placed second to Stevenson's Calby Stafford at the Western Lakes meet. She scored significantly higher than Stafford at the state meet.

Sheila Taormina, Livonia Stevenson, 100 butterfly: Although she fell short of an individual state title, this junior has an impressive IM. She placed second in two events at the state meet, earning All-American consideration in both. She swam a 2:07.41 in the IM and a 57.52 in the butterfly. She won the butterfly event at the league meet as well. She maintains a 4.0 grade point average.

Maureen Sudak, Livonia Stevenson,

100 freestyle: A valuable though unassuming member of the Spartans, Sudak was Western Lakes champ in the 100 freestyle (53.51). She plied many lines for the Spartans and will be one of the team's captains next year.

Jennifer Worthen, North Farmington, 500 freestyle: Worthen, a junior, overcame a midseason shiner to post an impressive third-place finish at the state meet in the 500 freestyle (5:03.85). She also placed ninth in the 200 freestyle in the state (1:57.34, a North varity record). She placed second at the Western Lakes meet in both the 200 and 500 freestyle at the league and Menellley scored in both the 50 and 100 freestyle at the league.

Sherrie Sudak, Livonia Stevenson, second backstroke: Named Stevenson's most valuable swimmer, Sudak garnered All-American honors with her second-place 58.07 clocking in the state meet. That time eclipsed a nine-year-old Stevenson varity record. The senior also placed third at the state meet in the IM (2:09.52, an All-American record).

Cindy Cramer, North Farmington, 100 breaststroke: An honorable mention All-American performer as a freshman, Cindy Cramer placed fourth in the state in the breaststroke (1:07.65). She also took sixth in the IM (2:12.92). She owns two individual North varity records and is on two relay teams holding varity records.

Lois McDonald, Livonia Stevenson, 100 butterfly: Although she fell short of an individual state title, this junior has an impressive IM. She placed second in two events at the state meet, earning All-American consideration in both. She swam a 2:07.41 in the IM and a 57.52 in the butterfly. She won the butterfly event at the league meet as well. She maintains a 4.0 grade point average.

Maureen Sudak, Livonia Stevenson, coach of the year: After 20 remarkable seasons, McDonald is leaving the coaching ranks at Stevenson's to their fourth state runner-up finish. Her teams have long been the dominant team in Observerland swimming.

THE RELAYS

200 medley relay — Liz Worthen, Marge Cramer, Cindy Cramer, Amy Menellley, North Farmington: This group won the Western Lakes title and placed 10th at the state meet (1:55.0). It also established a North varity record. Marge Cramer was Western Lakes co-champ in the 50 free; Worthen scored in both the backstroke and IM in the league and Menellley scored in both the 50 and 100 freestyle at the league.

400 freestyle relay — Sheila Taormina, Ann Bollinger, Sherrie Sudak and Michele McKenzie, Livonia Stevenson: An impressive quartet. It's 3:33.12 at the state meet eclipsed Andover's 1981 record of 3:33.95. The time was automatic All-American. The team, minus Bollinger, set a new Western Lakes mark also.

AT LARGE

Jenny Morton, Farmington Hills Mercy: A transfer from Birmingham Marian, Morton placed fifth at the state in the 500 freestyle (5:07.93) and 10th in the 200 freestyle (1:57.95).

Kathy Sullivan, Livonia Stevenson: A senior, she placed in two events at the state meet: sixth in the backstroke (1:01.4) and 11th in the IM (2:14.95).

Jule Cox, Plymouth Canton: A junior transfer from Alabama, she qualified for the state meet in five events and placed ninth in the breaststroke. She was third in the Western Lakes in both the butterfly and breaststroke.

Kristal Taylor, Plymouth Canton: One of the best swimmers to come through the Salem program. She qualified for

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