

# North tips Falcons; Mercy ices division

"It wasn't a good way for them to lose, but I guess it was a way for us to win."

What North Farmington softball coach Denny Mikel is trying to say is: he'll take it.

North Farmington took advantage of a wild throw to nip rival Farmington 7-5 in eight innings Monday. It was the Raiders seventh win against nine losses this season, and Mikel was refusing no gifts.

The Raiders scratched back from deficits of 5-1 and 6-2.

Trailing by a run in the bottom of the seventh, sophomore Stephanie Knapp singled and moved to second on a Falcon error. Mo Paradis scored Knapp with her second hit of the day.

After pitcher Robyn Weatherford kept Farmington off the scoreboard in the top of the eighth, Debbie Arnold singled for North. With two

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outs, Libby Shaw hit a ball back to the mound. Pitcher Lisa Edwards' throw eluded the first baseman, and Arnold came all the way around with the winning run.

Both Paradis and Knapp had two hits apiece for the Raiders. Julie Gallagher had a pair of hits for Farmington (4-11).

Weatherford pitched a strong game, scattering six hits (most in the first two innings) and fanning six.

**MERCY 7, GALLAGHER 4:** Farmington Hills Mercy clinched the Catholic League's Central Division title with this win Tuesday.

A four-run sixth inning, keyed by a three-run double off Amy Edwards' bat, provided the margin of victory. Edwards knocked in four of the Marlins' seven runs.

Torri Nalodko was the winning pitcher, scattering four hits and fanning seven.

Mercy is 17-1 overall this season and ranked No. 2 in Observerland. They are 12-1 in the league.

**CHURCHILL 11, HARRISON 5:** Livonia Churchill's six-run second inning uprising proved fatal for Farmington Harrison Monday.

The Charger bats rang out 10 hits off Hawk twirler Heidi Reyst. The Hawks countered with nine hits, but couldn't put together the big inning.

"We played sloppy and they played really well," said Harrison coach Mike Teachman. "We made a lot of baserunning mistakes, which cost us."

Dawn Culbertson rapped a solo home run, Katie Doll a triple and Reyst collected a pair of hits for the Hawks (4-12).



Leah Damiani slides around Falcon catcher Becky Philp for a Raider run.

RANDY GORST/staff photographer

## Raiders upend Farmington, 6-4

Each team put together one good inning Monday. North Farmington's good inning bettered Farmington's and the Raiders won the Western Lakes baseball game 6-4.

Jim Howell knocked in a pair of runs with a single. Steve Howell and Chuck Plumley also had RBI singles as the Falcons jumped out in front 4-0 after one inning.

But North countered with five runs in the top of the second. Brian McDaniels' two-run home run was the big blow of the inning.

The rest of the game belonged to the pitchers. Rick Karcher was virally perfect after the first inning in picking up the win. Todd Shepard came on to retire the final two Farmington hitters in the seventh to record a save.

Steve Howell took the loss for Farmington.

"After that first inning, Karcher pitched fantastic," said North coach Irv Horwitz. "He pitched quite a ballgame."

The junior left-hander struck out seven and allowed five hits. He also

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rapped out a pair of hits.

McDaniels was 2-for-2 and Steve Brown was 2-for-3.

The Raiders are 10-8 on the season and in second place in the Lakes Division behind Westland John Glenn.

**HARRISON 7, CHURCHILL 2:** The Hawks evened its record (9-9) with a convincing victory over Livonia Churchill Monday.

Mark Schmidt subdued the normally potent Churchill bats on just four hits. He fanned eight.

The Hawks scored three runs in the top of the seventh inning to pull away from the Chargers.

Tom Blase had two hits and two RBI to pace Farmington Harrison's 11-hit attack. Brian Smolinski also rapped two hits.

By Brad Emons  
staff writer

Tom Lang is back coaching girls basketball in the Western Lakes and that may be bad news for the rest of the league.

With a record that rivals Plymouth Salem's Fred Thomann, Lang has taken the reins at Livonia Churchill, replacing Roger Springsteen, who resigned recently after posting a 28-34 record in three seasons.

Lang is best remembered for his coaching prowess at Livonia Bentley.

During an eight-year stint before the school closed its doors in 1985, Lang's overall record was 152-35. He guided the Bulldogs to four league championships, including the 1983 Western Lakes title, along with five district and two regional crowns.

Because of seniority rules in the Livonia Public Schools, Lang was forced to take a sabbatical, of sorts, last season.

"It was tough not coaching a variety team, but I had the JV boys last year (at Churchill) to help alleviate that," Lang said. "And I coached the ninth-grade girls at Churchill so it helped me quite a bit."

SPRINGSTEEN stepped down after Churchill finished its most successful girls basketball campaign ever, posting a school record 14 wins in 21 games.

"I have two daughters, 11 and 8 years, and I needed to spend more time with them," said Springsteen, the departing coach. "I coached for 19 years (in Livonia) and I think I'll miss it, but I know the day would come when I'd have to step aside."

"I'm sure Tom will do a great job. A lot of the kids he already knows."

Lang forces an adjustment period at Churchill.

He said the team will be built around four seniors: Tracy Greenwood, Liz Monroe, Julie Scruggs and Nancy Call. Lang is familiar with Monroe and Scruggs. Both played for him as sophomores at Bentley.

"I'm going to have to gauge the type of material I have and see if I can do the same things I did at Bentley," he said. "I don't know if I can play the same way, but after the first year I'll train them for the type of ball I'm used to playing."

LANG'S BENTLEY TEAMS were noted for their aggressiveness, strength and fast-paced style. During Lang's coaching tenure, Bentley also developed a fierce rivalry with Salem for supremacy in the old Suburban Eight League, which carried on through to the new Western Lakes circuit.

Bentley produced several college basketball standouts including Kim Plahta and Ann Roy, Wayne State; Carla Campbell, Eastern Michigan; Krista Fray, Northern Michigan; Kim Archer, Michigan State; and Laurie Day, Lake Superior State.

Lang's most immediate concern is developing a cohesive coaching staff.

"One of the ingredients we had at Bentley is that our ninth grade and JV coach stayed with the program," he said. "Right now we

have to find people at the ninth grade and JV level. That makes it tough to build."

Lang, a math teacher at Frost Junior High in Livonia, plans to open an eight- or nine-day clinic as soon as school lets out. He also plans to take his players to a team camp to either Michigan State or Western Michigan University.

"RIGHT NOW I have 10 players coming back for sure who are dedicated and committed," Lang said. "I'm sure we'll have at least 20 out for the varsity."

But Lang will not have a middle school (seventh and eighth grade) program to build from like he enjoyed at Bentley. (Livonia Public School administrators do not believe in competitive, interscholastic sports.)

"It's going to be difficult to be as successful as we were at Bentley," Lang said. "But most of the players will come from Frost where I teach, and I'll be able to pick out the ones who want to play and place them in clinics or camps."

## Falcons fall pin shy at prep bowling tourney

Plymouth Salem and Livonia Stevenson were the big winners at the fourth annual Western Lakes Bowling Tournament Monday at Country Lanes in Farmington.

The Salem boys team posted a three-game total 2,018 to edge Livonia Stevenson (2,001) and Farmington (1,918).

The Stevenson girls team nipped Farmington by one pin, 1,764 to 1,763. A Livonia team made up of girls from Churchill and Franklin placed third with 1,591.

Other schools competing were Farmington Harrison, North Farmington, Northville, Walled Lake Central and Walled Lake Western.

**THE SALEM** boys team members were Joe Marzka, Bryan Maccek, Doug Popp, Ted Murphy and Paul Agius.

Renee Bushey, Amy Ouellette, Becky Ouellette and Becky Cochran were the Stevenson key players.

Bushey and Marzka took home all the individual honors. Marzka captured the boys high game (248) and high series honors (580). Bushey did the same on the girls side with a 232 high game and a 524 series.

North Farmington, last year's champ, hosted the event.

## Farmington boys 2nd at Lahser Relays

Two points were all that separated the Farmington boys track team from the Bloomfield Hills Lahser Relays title last Saturday.

The Falcons registered 55 points,

the same as Birmingham Brother Rice, which was two points shy of champion Southfield.

Farmington took four firsts and set a school record.

Ron Smedley, Bruce Kratt, Al Stebbins and Chris Inch won the distance medley in 10:46.1 — a new Falcon record.

bins won the 4-mile relay in 18:15.8.

North Farmington placed eighth overall in the meet, but earned a first in the 400-meter relay.

## Mercy outruns Blazers

Farmington Hills Mercy's girls track team scored well in the speed events Tuesday to knock off Catholic League Central Division foe Livonia Ladywood 77-51.

Tori Ford won both 100-yard (12.3) and 220-yard (27.5) dashes. Tonya Harbin took the 400 in 1:05.3. Mercy also won the 440 relay (56.2) and the 880 relay (1:56.3).

Nicole Kostecki won the 110 high hurdles (17.6) for Mercy and teammate Carrie Balog took the 330 low hurdles (54.4).

In the field events, Mercy took three of four. Sue Brown won the shot put (25-1). Heather Amlssegger won the discus (93-7) and Tasha Duff took the long jump (13-10).

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