

# Mercy makes bid for rare district crown



Eric Green and his Farmington baseball teammates face a tough task at Walled Lake Western Saturday.

By Chris McCosky  
staff writer

Suzanne Brown can't remember the last time Farmington Hills Mercy won a Class A district softball title.

"I don't think we ever have," she said. Brown graduated from Mercy in 1978, a standout on both the basketball and softball teams. She went on to Central Michigan University but has returned and has the Mercy softball team ready to claim the elusive title.

"I like our chances," the first-year coach said.

Indeed, Mercy, 21-1 and champions of the Catholic League, will play Southfield at 10 a.m. Saturday in the district semifinals at the Southfield Civic Center.

In the other semifinal, Livonia Franklin (25-5-1) will face Livonia Stevenson (8-18). The championship game is slated for noon.

MARLINS have obtained their 21-1 record with a dangerously aggressive style of play, a style that places heavy emphasis on bunting, base stealing and other risk-taking that have frustrated opponents all season.

But will the Marlins continue their washbuckling tactics even against stronger, more experienced foes like Franklin — a state finalist last season?

"It's what got us here," Brown said. "We won't change at all. We feel that if we make things happen the others will make the mistakes. We like to put the odds back into their laps."

If the Marlins are exciting offensively, then their defense has been classified as well, predictable. The Marlins have received consistently strong pitching all year from Terri Nalodka and Amy Edwards. Nalodka is 7-1 in Catholic League play with 45 strikeouts and a 1.82 ERA.

The defense is led by shortstop Michelle Fryatt (center fielder) and Janitz. Fryatt has made four errors in 63 chances, while Janitz has made only one all season. Janitz has thrown two runners out at first base on balls hit up the middle.

AT BAT, Nalodka is leading the team with a .488 average (statistics are from Catholic League games only). Janitz is hitting .390 with 18 stolen bases. Fryatt, the leadoff hitter, has reached base in 31 of 82 plate appearances. She has stolen 24 bases.

Rounding out the Marlins' starting lineup are Jean Wassenberg (right base or right field), Kristin Orlan-dini (third base), Molly McLeod (second base), Nikki Fraser (catcher) and Linda Raymond (left field).

FARMINGTON HARRISON, on paper, may look like a long shot to

advance out of the Class B baseball district at Dexter Saturday. The Hawks are 11-12 and will play Linden (29-4) at 10 a.m.

But not many people expected Harrison to go far last year, either. The Hawks were only one game above .500 entering the tournament last year but made it to the state semifinals.

"Our record is a little deceiving," Harrison coach John Harrington said. "We've lost five games by one run."

Tom Blase is leading the Hawks' offense with a .400 average. Shortstop Brian Smolinski is the team's most dangerous hitter. He carries a .373 average. He's scored 24 runs, rapped four home runs and has drawn 17 walks.

Second baseman Ken George is hitting .338 and leads the team with 23 RBI.

Other big guns for Harrison are first baseman Jon Welsberg (.388, four homers), Shawn Brennan (.356) and Sam Rineer (.354).

On the mound, Mark Schmidt, who threw a no-hitter Friday against Fenton, Jason Hicks and Gary Schwedt will be called upon to carry the load.

FARMINGTON, surprise, is still alive in the state tournament. The Falcons sandwiched 18 straight losses between their two victories. The second victory game in the pre-dis-

trict game with Walled Lake Central Friday.

The Falcons, led by Steve Howell, Jim Howell and Joe Bob Wenson, will play Walled Lake Western at 10 a.m. Saturday at Western. The winner will play either Plymouth Canton or Bloomfield Hills Andover for the title.

CLASS A DISTRICT  
BASEBALL PAIRINGS  
(All Saturday, May 31  
unless otherwise noted)

at SOUTHFIELD HIGH

Semifinals: Livonia Franklin vs. Redford Catholic Central, 10 a.m.; Redford Union vs. Livonia Stevenson, 12:30 p.m.  
Championship final: 2:30 p.m. (winner advances to the Plymouth Salem regional vs. Walled Lake district champion).

at GARDEN CITY PARK

Semifinals: Dearborn Fordson vs. Garden City-Detroit Mackenzie pre-district winner, 10 a.m.; Westland John Glenn vs. Wayne Memorial, noon.  
Championship final: 2:30 p.m. (winner advances to the Plymouth Salem regional vs. Walled Lake Western district champion).

at WALLED LAKE WESTERN

Semifinals: Farmington vs. Walled Lake Western, 10 a.m.; Plymouth Canton vs. Bloomfield Hills Andover, noon.  
Championship final: 2:30 p.m. (winner advances to the Plymouth Salem regional vs. Garden City district champion).

CLASS B

at DEARBORN HIGH

Semifinals: Harper Woods Lutheran East vs. Royal Oak Grove, 10 a.m.; Dearborn vs. Redford Thurston, 12:30 p.m.

Championship final: 2:30 p.m. (winner advances to the Allen Park regional vs. Tecumseh district champion).

at DEXTER

Semifinals: Farmington Harrison vs. Linden, 10 a.m.; Fowlerville vs. Oxford-Brandon pre-district winner, noon.  
Championship final: 2:30 p.m. (winner advances to the Mount Morris regional vs. Essexville-Garber district champion).

CLASS C

at ORCHARD LAKE ST. MARY'S  
(Friday, May 30)

Semifinals: Hamtramck St. Florian vs. Orchard Lake St. Mary's, 11 a.m.; Redford St. Agatha vs. Pontiac Catholic, 1 p.m.  
Championship final: 2 p.m. (winner advances to the Burton-Bentley regional vs. Burton-Bentley district champion).

CLASS A DISTRICT  
SOFTBALL PAIRINGS  
(All Saturday, May 31  
unless otherwise noted)

at SOUTHFIELD CIVIC CENTER

Semifinals: Livonia Franklin vs. Livonia Stevenson, 10 a.m.; Farmington Hills Mercy vs. Southfield, 10 a.m.  
Championship final: Noon (winner advances to the Southfield regional vs. Taylor Center district champion).

at TAYLOR CENTER

Semifinals: Wayne Memorial vs. Taylor Center, 10 a.m.; Westland John Glenn vs. Dearborn Heights Greenwood, 10 a.m.  
Championship final: Noon (winner advances to the Southfield regional vs. Southfield district champion).

at HOWELL

Semifinals: Plymouth Salem vs. Howell, 10 a.m.; South Lyon vs. Brighton, 12:30 p.m.  
Championship final: 2:30 p.m. (winner advances to the Lansing Waverly regional vs. Grand Haven district champion).

## Mac splits Iowa State next for McIntyre?

By Brad Emons  
staff writer

Heralded, all-state basketball star John McIntyre wants out of coach Don Sisko's University of Detroit cage program.

In a letter hand delivered May 22 to U-D athletic director Brad Kinsman, McIntyre, a Redford Catholic Central graduate, expressed his intentions to leave U-D and possibly attend Iowa State.

But before McIntyre can get an athletic scholarship from another NCAA Division I school, he must obtain a written release from U-D.

Sisko said Tuesday that granting a written release is usually a formality, but for McIntyre that may not be the case.

"I'm in the process of discussing this with my athletic director," Sisko said. "It's possible we wouldn't give him his release if there's been some tampering by other schools. It's going to take some time. I'm going to sit down and analyze it."

McINTYRE averaged more than 30 points per game at Catholic Central High.

As a freshman at U-D, the 6-foot-4 guard started 13 games, averaging five points per game and shot 36 percent as the Titans suffered through a disappointing 13-15 season.

McIntyre said Tuesday he wants to transfer to another school that better fits his up-tempo style of play. At U-D, he said, he was used primarily as an off-guard in a control-type offense.

"It's nothing personal," said McIntyre. "I thought I should be handling the ball more. I wasn't happy and I wasn't playing the position I wanted to play. I'm looking for a place where I can play point guard."

Iowa State, a running and pressing team, could fit his style, but McIntyre indicated he is also considering Bowling Green or the University of Michigan.

But if McIntyre were to transfer, he would have to sit out one season in accordance with NCAA rules.

UNDER NCAA rules, McIntyre or his parents cannot deal directly with another school until he is given permission by U-D.

Bernie Holowicki, McIntyre's longtime friend and high school coach at CC, has contacted other schools on his behalf, including Iowa State. (Holowicki may act as an intermediary. It is not an NCAA rules violation.)

"If John can't turn to me, who can he turn to?" Holowicki said. "John came to me right after the season and was very bitter, but sometimes when you're a freshman, everything doesn't go your way. I tried to talk him out of transferring and told him to wait four to six weeks to simmer down, but he came to me 10 days ago and was more determined than ever that he was leaving. They (Iowa State) have talked to me, but they have not talked to him. Coach (John) Orr and his people (at Iowa State) have been completely honest."

CC gets surprise

A bit of deja vu may have hit the Redford Catholic Central tennis team again.

The Shamrocks tuned up for their defense of the state Class A championship by losing the Catholic League meet for the second straight year.

Birmingham Brother Rice took the title by scoring 18 points. CC followed with 13, while University of Detroit High and Warren DeLaSalle

McIntyre's father, Jim, the head coach at Livonia Stevenson High School, said he has not had any contact or offers from other schools.

"There's nothing to it," he said, referring to the possible lamping rumors. "I removed myself completely from the situation and let Bernie handle it."

ORR, the former U-M coach, admitted he has talked to Holowicki, adding that it is well within the ground rules.

"We've done nothing illegal," said Orr. "I'm a little upset about this because we have not talked to John at all. I don't know that he's officially requested a transfer. I've just heard he's leaving school, but I haven't gotten a release in my office."

"I'm kind of upset because we're not the reason that caused him to transfer. It's up to the young man whether he leaves. John had not visited here this spring. I don't know where that came from but that's just not true. If I've done anything wrong, ask the McIntyres."

When McIntyre was recruited in high school, he narrowed his choices to U-D, Marquette, Iowa State and U-M.

"We recruited him and he visited our campus," Orr said. "I guess we were one of final schools."

SICKO SAID he heard rumors of McIntyre's departure as early as January.

"I'm only surprised in the way it happened," Sisko said. "I confronted him 15 to 20 times about it. It went from January to May, but every time he denied it."

"I didn't confront him every time I heard it, but maybe I was a little naive."

McIntyre, an honors student as a freshman, said he waited until last week to inform U-D officials of his departure only after a matter over his grade transcripts had been cleared up.

Because of a mix-up in the U-D registrar's office, McIntyre was given no grade for an accredited English course that he had completed.

Once the grade had been changed, McIntyre said he visited the U-D athletic offices Thursday with letter in hand.

"COACH SICKO wasn't there and neither was the AD," McIntyre explained. "I was told they were out to lunch together, so I left the letter and called the next day. I talked to Kinsman and I talked to him (Sisko) today (Tuesday) for 15 minutes. There's no animosity. It wasn't the school or my teammates. It was strictly a basketball thing."

McIntyre also said he recently quit his summer job. He had been working at a Detroit law office under Rick Neaton, a U-D alumnus.

"I felt it was only fair," McIntyre said.

Sisko said he was sorry his relationship with McIntyre didn't work out.

"I felt we could have worked it out

If it had just been between us," said the fourth-year coach. "But I think the people that surrounded him were all supporting him in the disappointment. All freshmen have the same feelings. John has. The transition from high school is too difficult for most."

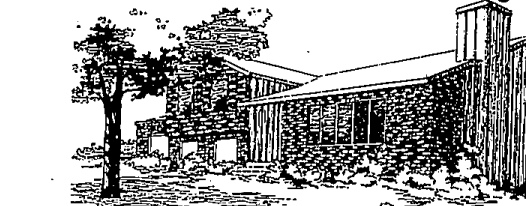
McINTYRE'S MOTHER, Marge, said she supports her son's decision.

"If he decides to go to Iowa State or anywhere else and he has to pay for his schooling, we'll back him up," she said.

McIntyre is adamant about playing basketball elsewhere, but whether U-D gives him its blessing is another story.

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