

Sports

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Raiders vault to 2nd

By C.J. Risak
staff writer

Jeff Dwyer? Surprised?
"I wasn't totally surprised," said the North Farmington gymnastics coach. "I knew we had a shot at it. Each time we went against Troy, Athens we lost by less than a point."

so I figured if we could stick with them we'd do pretty well." As the state meet turned out last Friday at Grand Rapids Creston, the Raiders couldn't match Athens. But no other team could, either. The Red Hawks rolled to the state title, scoring 139.3 points in the team competition.

And although North couldn't stay with Athens, its score of 136.5 points was sufficient enough to gain the Raiders second place. Finishing runners-up to Athens was no sure thing, not until the final scores were announced. North edged Rockford (136.1 points) by just .4. Holland finished fourth (134.75) and

Freeland was fifth (134.65), so there was less than two points separating second and fifth. Jackson County Western placed sixth (132.05), followed by Midland Dow (130.1) and Plymouth Salem (127.35).

"IT CAME down to the end, and I knew it would be close," said Dwyer. "I thought we'd blown it after the beam. That's what it always seems to come down to, the beam. Athens hit everything; they did just great."

North, though, struggled in the balance beam. Not a single Raider placed among the top eight in the event during Friday's team competition. Grand Rapids Kenowa's Kristin Averill won the beam with a two-day total of 18.2; her score in the team competition was 9.0.

North's best on Friday was Lucine Toroyan's 8.45. In a meet in which second and fifth in the team standings is decided by less than two points, a swing of .55 between two teams' top performers in one event looms large.

But the Raiders did not succeed on the strength of one outstanding gymnast. Indeed, Kim Heller's tie for third in the vault (a two-day total of 18.55) was the best individual effort for North.

BALANCE BUOYED the Raiders. They weren't the only team to suffer setbacks on the beam, but their four gymnasts each scored over 8.0. Behind Toroyan came Heller at 8.35 and Cindy Tijan and Nicki Yuskowatz at 8.05.

Those scores hardly instilled Dwyer with confidence regarding his team's chances.

"We were in the same situation as at the regional," he said. "We bombed on beam there, but came back strong on the vault and floor exercise. The vault is where we improved most late in the season. That's what got us going."

Heller's vault, which included a 9.4 in Friday's team competition, gave North a lift. Toroyan scored 9.0, Kara Karhu had an 8.95 and Yuskowatz collected an 8.4.

The Raiders' best event was the floor exercise. Heller and Karhu each notched 9.05 in Friday's team competition to place among the top eight and qualify for Saturday's individual meet. Heller finished fifth individually with a 18.30 total; Karhu was seventh at 18.0. Toroyan scored an 8.85 on Friday and Yuskowatz had an 8.3.

On the uneven parallel bars, Toroyan placed fifth in the individual

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Kara Karhu scored 18.00 points in the floor exercise in two days of competition for the

Raiders, earning a seventh-place finish in the individual standings.

photos by RANDY BORST/staff photographer



North got a superb performance from Kim Heller at the state meet. Heller finished 10th in the all-around standings.

Selzer, Murray to join all-stars

Seven players and two coaches from Observeland have been selected to represent the east squad in the seventh annual Michigan High School Football Coaches Association All-Star Game, beginning at 1:30 p.m. Saturday, Aug. 1, at Michigan State University's Spartan Stadium in East Lansing.

Area players selected to play defensive positions include all-star Alex Marshall of Redford Bishop

football

Borgess, a 6-foot-5, 225-pound end headed for the University of Michigan; Joe Juppil of Plymouth Salem, a 6-2, 205-pound end bound for Hillsdale College; Mike Hammon-tree of Westland John Glenn, a 6-2,

170-pound safety, headed for Eastern Michigan University; and Greg Haeger of Redford Catholic Central, a 6-1, 170-pound safety.

Named to the East All-Star offense were: Kevin Rich of Redford St. Agatha, a 6-5, 220-pound tight end bound for Central Michigan; Mark Murray of Farmington Harrison, a 6-foot, 170-pound quarterback headed for Wayne State; and

all-starer Scott Selzer, a 5-10, 170-pound running back committed to MSU.

Glenn's Chuck Gordon will serve as the east team's defensive coordinator under head coach Dennis Tuomi of Detroit Lutheran West. Glenn's Jeff Mate will also be an assistant.

Irv Sigler of Cheboygan will coach the west squad.

Success: It's how you view it

TRIUMPH AND TRAGEDY. Crazy how those things are equated in the world of sports. I'm an observer (no newspaper pun intended) of sports, and I was told I should be impartial and objective. In pursuit of these objectives, I often witness emotional outbursts far too serious to be associated with a game.

There were dozens of examples last weekend of athletes weighing the seriousness of their sport too heavily. It's tournament time, both nationally and statewide, which partly explains the extreme impact games make. This is the sudden-death season.

But sports overemphasizes goes beyond the time of year. What determines success and failure often has less to do with performance than it does expectation.

In other words, one individual's — or team's — failure is another's success.

FINDING EXAMPLES isn't as difficult as limiting them. Watching Iowa's girls basketball team lying face down on the court and sobbing after just missing the game-winning shot on ESPN explains a lot.



C.J. Risak

They were disappointed. That missed shot cost them a trip to the Final Four. Yet how many teams would have been delighted to finish their season among the top eight in the country?

Expectations make one person's victory another's defeat.

For example: It wasn't a great weekend for Iowa. The Hawkeyes were ousted from both NCAA basketball tournaments and came in second in the NCAA wrestling tournament. A second-place would delight most college wrestling teams, but Iowa had won nine straight titles and was gunning for an unprecedented 10th. Alas, disappointment.

The Hawkeyes' men's basketball team also just missed upsetting No. 1-ranked Nevada-Las Vegas. However, disheartening the 84-81 loss might seem, consider Iowa coked out an

overtime win Friday against Oklahoma. And B.J. Armstrong, Iowa's sophomore point guard, had a superb regional tournament.

Armstrong, a Birmingham Brother Rice grad, scored 16 points and dished out 10 assists against Oklahoma. Among his points was a three-pointer that tied the game and forced overtime. In the loss to UNLV, Armstrong had 16 points.

It was a great individual performance for Armstrong. But it's a team sport, and Iowa — which led UNLV by 15 at halftime Sunday — lost a game it should have won. Again, disappointment.

KARA MCGRATH is further example of expectation's pressure. McGrath, a Birmingham resident and a senior at the University of Texas, is one of the best swimmers

in her specialty — the butterfly — in the world.

How many age-group swimmers wouldn't love to be in McGrath's situation? And yet, at last weekend's NCAA championship meet in Indianapolis, McGrath wasn't happy — even though she finished second in the nation to world record-holder Mary T. Meagher in the 200 fly, and her team won the NCAA title.

McGrath, though, has been second before. But she's never beaten Meagher. No improvement, no success.

Joe Urso, on the other hand, was ecstatic with his NCAA performance. He didn't win a title, but he advanced beyond expectations and earned himself All-America designation.

The Redford Catholic Central grad from Livonia finished fourth in the Big Ten wrestling meet March 5-7 to qualify for the NCAA championships last weekend. Urso was unseeded, but he had incentive: last year, he rushed back from a shoulder injury to compete in the Big Ten meet and ended up losing three straight matches.

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