

# Sports

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Thursday, December 31, 1987 O&E

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## '87 good year for Farmington sports

### Athletic successes were many

By Dan O'Meara  
staff writer

As the old year prepares to take its place in history, the final week of 1987 seems an appropriate time to review the local sports highlights from events of the last 12 months.

Farmington saw its athletic teams compile an extensive record for success. Division, league, district and regional titles were won in numerous sports — and, on one occasion, a national championship.

The year in sports got off to a rousing start when Oakland Community College captured the National Junior College Athletic Association Division II crown in mid-March.

The Raiders were underdogs at the start of post-season play, but they were No. 1 when it was all over. OCC edged past Allegheny Community College of Pittsburgh, Pa., in the championship game played in Saginaw, 91-90.

Carson Butler, who paced the Raiders with 20 points, sank two free throws with 20 seconds left in overtime to give OCC the victory.

BUTLER, A 5-foot-10 point guard, scored 11 points in the final 5 1/2 minutes.

### year in review

utes of regulation play to help rally the Raiders. Coach Lynn Reed's team completed its banner season with a 29-8 record.

The winter sports season saw another group of Raiders excel, too. North Farmington's girls gymnastics squad placed second in the state with a balanced team effort.

Kim Heller's tie for third place on the vault was the best individual effort by a North gymnast, but the Raiders received strong performances from Lucine Toroyan, Cindy Tijan, Nicki Yuskowatz, Kara Karhu and Marilyn Dunn to put North second only to champion Troy Athens.

Track season proved to be one of the Farmington schools' most successful years.

North's girls team repeated as Western Lakes Athletic Association champion, edging Plymouth Canton by one point to retain the title.

CINDY CRAMER threw the

discus a school-record 115 feet, 5 inches for first place in that event, and the Raiders also won the shot put (Suzi Butcher) and the 800-meter relay (Wendy Love, DeDe Newman, Jennifer Sice and Tammy Spengler). Farmington had one of the area's best boys track teams, and the Falcons captured the Class A championship in the 3,200-meter relay.

Seniors Chris Inch and Al Stebbins and juniors Ron Smedley and Brandon London combined to post a state-record time of 7:48.5.

Inch — a cross country All-American, as was Stebbins — had accepted an athletic scholarship from the University of Illinois earlier and was named Athlete of the Year by the Observer at the conclusion of the school year.

Farmington Hills Harrison also distinguished itself in track and field, winning the Class B regional boys title at Linden High School.

The Hawks won the discus (Mark Bonasso) and two relays. Craig Moritz, Brian Soeder, Chad Burgess and Aaron Yavetski won the 1,600-meter relay and enabled Harrison to edge Hartland for team honors. Earlier in the meet, Moritz, Burgess, Chris Hart and Pat Runk won the 3,200 relay.

FARMINGTON reaped numerous individual awards in the boys A regional at Southfield High. Inch won the 1,600 and 3,200 runs, Stebbins the 800, Andrew Holliday the pole vault, Ed Sudakin the shot put and London the high jump.

Farmington Hills Mercy's softball team enjoyed the most success in either of the diamond sports.

Behind the pitching of sophomore Arvey Edwards, the Marlins advanced to the regional final at Hazel Park. Mercy eliminated the host team 7-2 before losing to Garden City 2-0. The Marlins, who lost only one starter to graduation, closed out the year with an 18-9 record.

Harrison won the Western Division baseball title in the WLAA, and the Hawks passed their pre-district test but lost to Class B power Linden in district action.

The spring season also saw North Farmington do a turnaround in boys tennis. First-year coach Marianne Ring took a program that had been down on its luck and guided the Raiders to the WLAA championship.

NORTH WAS unbeaten (10-0) in league dual meets and 11-1 overall, and the 1987 team became the first



RANDY BORST/staff photographer

The foursome that won the state championship 3,200-meter relay for Farmington High School included Brandon London (seated), Al Stebbins (left), Ron Smedley (center) and Chris Inch (right). Their triumph was one of many successes for city teams and athletes in 1987.

In school history to qualify for state. Jay Graff and Josh Hoffman were league champs at Nos. 1 and 2 singles, respectively.

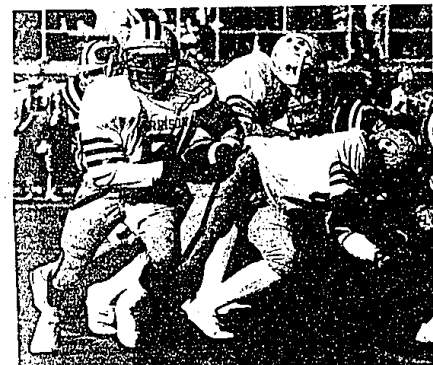
The summer months saw South Farmington, a Little Caesars-Mickey Mantele baseball team for 15- and 16-year-olds, recover from a poor start to make a good showing in the

National Amateur Baseball Federation Junior World Series, which was played in neighboring Northville.

Too many bases-on-balls led to a discouraging loss to the Long Island (N.Y.) Tigers in the opening game, but South Farmington came back the next day to defeat APS Computers of Maumee, Ohio, and remain alive.

Coach Lou Pirronello's ballclub proceeded to advance through the losers' bracket and got within one step of the tournament final, but Dixie of Lexington, Ky., halted the drive and went on to claim the trophy.

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RANDY BORST/staff photographer

Millard Coleman runs the option as quarterback of Harrison's football team. Coleman, a sophomore transfer, played a big role as the Hawks finished second in the state.

## Pioneer player nets 40 as OU wins tournament



CAMILLE MCCOY/staff photographer

OU sophomore Andre Bond helped his Pioneer teammates to the Convenient Food Mart Classic title Tuesday night by scoring 40 points and grabbing 15 rebounds in a 107-85 triumph over Siena Heights. For his efforts, Bond was named the tournament's MVP.

Winning basketball teams need scorers, rebounders, defenders — and, at Oakland University's mens team proved in the finals of Tuesday's Convenient Food Mart Classic at Lepley Sports Center, the better teams have those qualities in abundance.

The Pioneers needed depth to overcome Siena Heights 107-85. Sure, the score seems lopsided, but with 4:41 left and OU up 87-76, point guard Brian Gregory fouled out — the third Pioneer to do so.

OU could have folded, but didn't. In fact, the Pioneers — now 7-3 — finished with a flurry. After the Salts closed to within 91-83 with 3:21 to go, OU went on a 16-2 scoring spurt to ice the victory.

Scott Bittlinger was the key for OU down the stretch. With Gregory joining forwards John Henderson and Pete Schill on the sideline (Henderson fouled out with 11:23 left, Schill with 6:56), Bittlinger took control. He connected on eight-straight free throws in the final five minutes, finishing with 20 points, including 13-of-13 from the line.

But the real hero for the Pioneers was forward Andre Bond. Bond was unstoppable, pouring in 40 points, grabbing 15 rebounds, blocking four shots, making four steals and dishing out three assists. His effort earned him tournament most valuable player honors.

But it wasn't just Bond's show. Wallace Davis came off the bench to contribute 14 points and Mike McCan had four points and 10 boards. Henderson finished with 11 points and six rebounds and Gregory

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