

## Sports

Dan O'Meara editor/644-1101



Monday, February 1, 1988 O&amp;E

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# Victory provides team with emotional release

By Dan O'Meara  
staff writer

Emotion was sure to play a role of some sort Friday night when Farmington entertained North Farmington on the basketball court.

When the final second ticked off the clock to end a dramatic, whirlwind finish, the Raiders couldn't — and wouldn't — suppress their sense of joy after they rallied to nip their rivals 53-52 at the wire.

That was in marked contrast to the sorrow that enveloped North Farmington earlier in the week after Matthew Leiter, a 6-foot-1 junior on the varsity, died of apparent cardiac arrest following Tuesday's game against Westland John Glenn.

The Raiders, wearing black patches on their game jerseys in memory of Leiter, dedicated their first game after the tragedy to him. A moment of silence was observed for him before the start of the game.

Jim Ratajski, who scored the winning basket with one second left, best expressed the emotion he, his teammates and the many students from North who flooded the court at game's end experienced in victory.

"IT WAS A great way to take out some emotion," he said.

North coach Tom Negoshian called it the most emotional game he has been involved in during his 20-

## basketball

**'This just peaks it out emotionally for the kids and everybody at North Farmington . . . (The players are) all in there crying right now.'**

— Tom Negoshian  
North basketball coach

year coaching career.

"This just peaks it out emotionally for the kids and everybody at North Farmington," he said.

"To play well and to play hard meant more (to his players) than anybody could ever imagine. They're all in there crying right now."

North's victory was keyed by sophomore guard Matt Hoffman, whose accurate shooting from three-point range kept the Raiders in the game and put them in position to finally win it.

Hoffman scored a game-high 22 points, which included six triples —

four in the last quarter. Furthermore, he had the biggest assist of his young career, dumping the ball off to Ratajski for the winning basket.

"WE JUST WENT out there and played hard," Hoffman said. "Coach said to put the past behind us and go out and play hard the rest of the year."

Kurt Dudek added 10 points and John Shelton eight for North, 2-3 in the Lakes Division and 4-7 overall. Jason Brown scored 12, Steve Quenneville 10 and Brian Browne eight for Farmington, 1-4 and 3-8.

For the Falcons, the defeat was a tremendous letdown since they led practically from start to finish and appeared to have the game in hand most of the way.

Hoffman sank a three-point shot, and Shelton, stealing the ball off the ensuing inbound play, made a layup to pull the Raiders within 50-48 with 45 seconds to play.

Farmington, however, was on the verge of wrapping up the win when Browne, a sophomore recently promoted from the junior varsity, took a pass from Quenneville for a layup and a four-point lead.

BUT HOFFMAN'S last triple closed the gap to one, and Farmington's Drew McDougall missed the front end of a 1-and-1 with 17 seconds left.

North's Bill Green grabbed the rebound, and Hoffman hurried the ball into the front court. He drove into the lane, drawing the Farmington defenders to him and passing behind them to Ratajski.

"It was a great way to end the game," Ratajski said. "I thought it was a good team game."

It was only the second time North was ahead. After the Raiders scored the first basket of the game, Farmington had the lead until the clock reached :31.

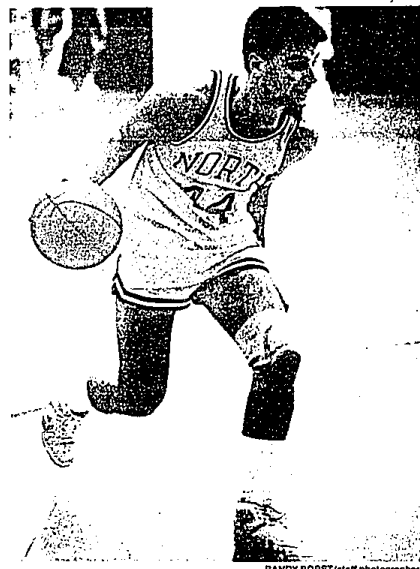
"In order to do anything with our program, this is the kind of game we have to win," Farmington coach Bob Kaump said.

"I THOUGHT my kids gave a  
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RANDY BORST/staff photographer

North Farmington's Kurt Dudek wins the battle between big men for the rebound on this Friday night. Others in the midst of the action are teammate Bill Green (54) and Farmington's Jason Brown (42) and Mike Myers (50). The Raiders came from behind in the final minute to clip the Falcons 53-52.



RANDY BORST/staff photographer

Kurt Dudek scored 10 points to help North achieve an emotional victory in a game dedicated to former teammate Matt Leiter, who died after the team's last game.

## Raiders to remember teammate

THE black bands North Farmington's basketball players wore on their uniforms Friday night were a symbol of mourning.

They also were a reminder of the traumatic event that resulted in the death of a teammate earlier in the week.

When the players voted to play their game with cross-town rival Farmington as scheduled, they elected to honor the memory of Matthew Leiter for the duration of the season.

Leiter, a 17-year-old junior, collapsed in the locker room after Tuesday's game with Westland John Glenn and died a short time later at Botsford Hospital of apparent cardiac arrest.

On Wednesday, his coaches and teammates, as well as the entire North Farmington community, tried to cope with the shock of such a sudden loss.

ON FRIDAY, the Raiders returned to the basketball court for the first time since Leiter's death.



Dan O'Meara

A day after burying a teammate, the North Farmington players — young men in the fullness of life whom reason says should be free of such a burden — were compelled by the ongoing demands of time to resume day-to-day activities, to attempt to regain a sense of normalcy.

"I'm not even worried about the games," coach Tom Negoshian said of the half season yet to be played.

"I'm worried about the emotional stability of the rest of the kids, that they're able to carry on with the rest of life. I think that's what we all

should care about."

Playing the game Friday night was probably best for the well being of the players. Psychologists and counselors who counseled students and staff members at North Farmington last week said a resumption of daily routines would help them work through the grieving period.

NEGOSHIAN, WHO is recognized for his concern and fatherly approach he demonstrates in dealing with his players, took pains to make sure all players were included and made to feel a part of the team at the point of great crisis late Tuesday night.

Leiter had just exchanged warm-up suits with another teammate and was talking with fellow players when he was stricken. His teammates were the ones who summoned help.

Leiter had an asthmatic condition, and his col-

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## North knocks off Vikes

North Farmington played a near flawless volleyball match Thursday at Walled Lake Central, downing the Vikings 15-9 and 15-5.

The Raiders, who missed only one hit in the match, are 17-3 overall and tied for first in the Lakes Division with Livonia Stevenson at 4-1. Central falls to 15-4 overall.

Stephanie Knapp was 11-of-12 serving, including six aces for North. Debbie Weintraub had two service aces and was 12-of-14 in serves.

Pam Konjarevich had four aces and was 10-of-10 in the hitting department. Suzi Butcher was 3-of-3 hitting with two kills and three blocks.

Thursday's match was the first action for Butcher since suffering an ankle injury Jan. 9.

FARMINGTON faced a tall order Wednesday at home, falling to Livonia Stevenson by identical 15-7 scores.

The Falcons are 0-6 overall, 0-3 in the Lakes Division. Stevenson, No. 3 in Class A, raised its record to 17-1, 3-1 in Lakes play.

Farmington, with no one taller

## volleyball

than 5-foot-8 in its lineup, could not contain Stevenson's 5-11 Sue Zatorski at the net. Zatorski had 10 kills in 17 attacks. Laura Brown collected four kills in 11 attacks.

"We were prepared to attack at the net," Stevenson coach Lee Cagle said. "Farmington is a small team that's forced to play defense and block all the time."

Despite the outcome, Farmington coach Maureen McNabb praised the play of her team and Keith Koss and Dawn Montrose in particular.

"Stevenson was not as dominant as I thought it would be," McNabb said. "The score didn't show how well the girls played. There were a lot of side-outs."

FARMINGTON HILLS MERCY defeated Harper Woods Regina Thursday, 15-13, 8-15 and 15-6. Mercy is 3-3 in the Central Divi-

sion, 15-5 overall. Regina also is 3-3 in Central Division play.

Sophomore Jenny Goff served eight aces for Mercy in the deciding game, giving the Marlins a commanding 10-1 lead.

Senior Kristin Orlandoni had five kills in eight attempts for Mercy, and Meg Pinkerton collected five kills in 10 attempts.

PLYMOUTH CANTON didn't perform up to coach Allice Suffley's standards Wednesday at home, but the Chiefs still prevailed over Farmington Hills Harrison, 14-16, 15-11 and 15-9.

The Chiefs are 3-2 overall, 3-1 in the Western Division.

"They were three of our poorest games," he honest," Suffley said. "We got just enough to get by."

"We made a lot of mistakes, but we came back. In past years, we'd have given up."

Suffley said he'd like to see a better hitting percentage. In the first game, Canton converted six of 13 attacks. The Chiefs had eight kills in 21 attacks in the second game and were 9-of-27 in the final game.

## Shamrocks rout 2 foes

Redford Catholic Central was perfect last week, winning two dual swimming meets by lopsided scores.

The Shamrocks, 6-1 overall, defeated Dearborn 49-33 early in the week and on Friday handled Harper Woods Notre Dame, 51-29.

CC won 10 events against Notre Dame, including both the 200 and 400-yard freestyle relays. Jim Kovach, Bill Mathews, Andy Jacobs and Jon Teal were members of the 200 team that won in a time of 1:44.1. Teal, Mathews, Matt Hepburn and Troy Shumate won the 400 title in 3:24.7.

Hepburn won the 200 freestyle in 1:58.1. Shumate placed first in the 200 individual medley in 2:05.9 and Teal won the 50 freestyle, clocking 22.5.

Others recording wins for CC were Jacobs (100 butterfly), Alan Afari (500 freestyle), Mike Hoeflein (100 backstroke) and Mathews (100 backstroke).

Against Class B power Dearborn, Shumate and Teal each won two events, leading the visiting Shamrocks to a 49-33 win.

Shumate captured the 200 and

## swimming

500 freestyle events, clocking a 1:49.0 and 4:51.8, respectively.

Teal's time of 22.5 won the 50 freestyle and he clocked a 49.4 to win the 100 freestyle.

Other CC winners included Jacobs in the 200 IM (2:07.4) and Jim Kovach in the 100 butterfly (57.6).

CC's team of Jim Nitzkewicz, Shumate, Matt Hepburn and Teal won the 400 freestyle relay in a time of 3:24.5.

CHURCHILL 101, FARMINGTON 70: The Chargers ran their record to 2-4 Thursday as the expense of the host Falcons.

Mark Paplerski finished first in two events for the Chargers, taking the 200 freestyle (1:51.57) and 100 breaststroke (1:04.94).

Against Class B power Dearborn, Shumate and Teal each won two events, leading the visiting Shamrocks to a 49-33 win.

100 butterfly — with times of 22.55 and 55.62, respectively.

Also recording wins for the Falcons were: Brad Moore (IM, 1:13.36), Adam Krause (100 freestyle, 53.84) and Scott Hawkins (backstroke, 1:02.12). The team of Vik, Krause, Hawkins and Moore won the freestyle relay in 3:32.39.

FARMINGTON 87, W.L. CENTRAL 76: The Falcons won their first boys swimming meet of the season Thursday, Jan. 21, by defeating Walled Lake Central.

Farmington won six events, including the 200-yard medley relay, in a time of 1:48.25. Members of the medley team were Scott Hawkins, Brad Moore, Jim Vik and Adam Krause.

Moore and Vik also won two individual events. Moore's time of 2:12.53 won the individual medley, and he also placed first in the breaststroke with a time of 1:10.61.

Vik won the 50 freestyle and the 100 freestyle in times of 22.41 and 49.35, respectively.

Hawkins won the backstroke in a time of 1:03.07, and G.T. Mell placed first in the 500 free in a time of 5:16.55.