

# Sports

Dan O'Meara editor/591-2312



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(F1D)

## Mercy's title hopes dealt crippling blow

Farmington Mercy's hope of taking the Central Division softball title away from Harper Woods Regina was dealt a severe setback Tuesday when the Marlins dropped a double-header to the Saddletites.

Regina defeated Mercy's ace pitcher, junior Amy Edward, both times while claiming 5-1 and 2-1 victories on the Marlins' diamond.

Mercy's eight errors in the first game was a boon to the Saddletites, who held a 10-7 edge in hits.

Regina scored twice in the first inning and maintained a 2-1 margin until adding three insurance runs in the seventh. Edward struck out four and walked seven.

The Marlins cut their number of errors to three in the second game, but they were outlit 6-1. Edward's double scored Nicki Fraser with Mercy's lone run in the first inning.

"If you don't hit the ball, you don't win," Mercy coach Suzanne Brown said. "We were very timid at the plate and in the field."

The Saddletites, who used different pitchers in each game, scored both of their runs in the bottom of the third. Edward walked two and struck out none.

### Eagles defeat N. Farmington

Defensive mistakes cost North Farmington as it dropped its first softball game to Milford Lakeland, 20-4, in a five-inning contest Tuesday.

Lakeland, with five hits, had just one more than the Raiders, but errors made the difference.

Kelly Coulson slammed a two-run homer for North, and Karen Grace did the same for the Eagles.

Milany Fishell started and suffered the pitching defeat. Lakeland's Kelly Forbis struck out seven and walked three in five innings.

The Raiders travel to Farmington Harrison at 4 p.m. Friday.

*'If you don't hit the ball, you don't win. We were very timid at the plate and in the field.'*

— Suzanne Brown  
Mercy coach

### softball

Amy (Edward) played like it was her 20th game," she said. "I never have any problems with her. The rest of the team's overall play also was above par.

"They executed on the bases and at the plate. I was very happy with today's performance."

Edward, who last year led Mercy to the Class A regional finals, gave up just five hits on the day, while hitting safely four times herself. She struck out six Cabrini batters in Game 1 and also scored the game-winning run in the seventh inning.

With less than two outs, Edward scored from third base when the Cabrini catcher threw the ball to second base in an effort to throw out Kristin Orlandoni, who was trying to steal second base.

The Marlins didn't need any last-minute heroics in the nightcap as they spotted Edward a 4-0 lead after two innings. Edward helped her own cause, going 3-for-4 at the plate, including a double, and batting in four runs.

Orlandoni, a senior shortstop, went 2-for-4 in Game 2, with two RBI. Sophomore Nikki Burns also collected two hits in the second game and one RBI.

Senior catcher Nicki Fraser was 3-for-3 in the rout, and she also drove in one run.



Mercy coach Suzanne Brown sends Lisa Cook, softball double-header from Allen Park Cabrini around third base and to score another run during the team's season-opening sweep of a

## Pitcher's return to form pivotal

By Steve Kowalski  
staff writer

If senior pitcher Jason Hicks has the kind of year he did as a sophomore, Farmington Hills Harrison will be a team to reckon with in the Western Lakes baseball race.

Hicks was Harrison's ace in 1986, winning five games and losing two. Last year, however, Hicks fell to 1-3 and his earned run average ballooned to 6.55.

He allowed 42 hits in 31 innings in 1987, but the Hawks still managed to win the Western Division at 7-3 and were 12-14 overall.

Mark Schmidt and Sam Rincer picked up where Hicks left off the year before, winning a combined nine games on the mound in '87. Both have graduated, however, and success won't be so easily attained.

Unless, of course, Hicks returns to the form he had in 1986.

"I don't know what the heck happened; he just had a bad year," Harrison said of the left-handed throwing Hicks. "I look for him to come in this year."



Hicks threw mostly off-speed pitches a year ago.

"It looked like some hitters were waiting on his curveballs," Herrington said. "He'll try to throw more fastballs this year."

Other pitchers expected to draw starting assignments for Harrison are right-handers Craig Murray and Jason Lichtman, Herrington said. Bryan Wauldron and starting shortstop Leo Devine will be the relievers.

Schmidt and Rincer will be

*'Realistic for us is .500. We'd like to finish high in the division and make a good showing in B play.'*

— John Herrington  
Harrison coach

missed more than for their roles as pitchers. Schmidt also played center field, hitting at a .389 clip. Rincer played third base and batted .337.

Devine is the leading infield returnee. A senior, he hit .355 last year and scored 20 runs. Devine committed 22 errors last year and that's an area of concern, Herrington said.

"Believe it or not, Leo has a great glove," Herrington said.

"He's a great competitor."

HERRINGTON IS undecided at third base between Murray, Dave Najarian and Millard Coleman. Murray and Najarian are juniors and Coleman is a 10th grader.

Lichtman appears to have the inside track at second base after starting there on the junior varsity in '87. Jeff Skinner, a junior who played half of last season at the varsity level, returns to play first base. Skinner batted .381 and had 16 RBI, second most on the team.

When not pitching, Hicks will play in left field. The center fielder is Tim Horton, a junior varsity player in '87. Wauldron is the leading candidate in right field.

The catching duties belong to junior Rob MacDonald, another junior varsity player last year. Sharing the designated hitter spot will be senior Eric Osterbeck and sophomore Sean Murray.

Herrington's goal is for Harrison, a Class B school, to finish at or above .500.

"Realistic for us is .500," Herrington said. "We'd like to finish high in the division and make a good showing in B play."

## Grand slam key to Wayne's win

The baseball season is only three games old for unbeaten Wayne Memorial, but it can't get much more exciting than Tuesday's Wolverine A clash at Monroe.

The Zebras trailed 3-0 after five innings, before Ron Wojewski's sixth-inning grand slam home run and four more runs in the seventh inning gave Wayne a thrilling 8-3 win.

Wayne earned the win on the mound for Wayne, allowing 11 hits and striking out 12. Abner walked just one Monroe player as all three Monroe runs were earned.

Wayne's junior outfielder Rob Puckett had a double and a single, scored two runs and batted in one run.

Highlighting the four-run seventh inning for Wayne was a two-run triple by Mike Heard. Also recording RBIs for Wayne were Christian Desir, on a fielder's choice, and Kevin

### baseball

Besco, whose walk forced in a run with the bases loaded.

In doubleheader action last Saturday, Wayne swept Redford Thurston, 12-2 and 2-0.

In the second game, Mike Goodwin relieved Wojewski on the mound and pitched the last four innings to pick up the win as each team had just one hit.

Heard went 4-for-4, including two doubles in Game No. 1. He scored three runs and knocked in two. Abner was the winning pitcher, while Desir had three singles for the Zebras, and Doug Florn had a two-run double.

GARDEN CITY 6, TAYLOR TRU-

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## North Farmington ready to make another title run

By Dan O'Meara  
staff writer

It will come as no surprise to North Farmington's boys' tennis team to know it has been pegged as the team to beat in the Western Lakes Activities Association.

The Raiders won the league championship and placed 15th in the state, and second-year coach Mariann Ring has eight players, including her entire singles quartet, back from that team.

"This year the pressure is on to do just as well," she said. "Last year was the first time we went to state and did so well in the conference."

The success North enjoyed helped to inspire the team, and Ring is hoping a carryover effect will keep the Raiders at the top.

"That motivated them, and most of them played during the winter," she said, adding most had not previously done so.

"THEY FEEL more confident after doing so well, and I think we'll do well again. They're playing better this year and are in better condition."

### tennis

Tennis preview, 2D

The Raiders, who were ranked 15th in Class A. In the latest preseason poll, are led by defending conference champions Jay Graff and Josh Hoffman, both seniors.

Graff won the WAAA title at No. 1 singles while Hoffman played No. 2, but they were locked in a battle for the top position earlier this week.

Senior Jason Weis and junior Joe Howitt return to play Nos. 3 and 4 singles, respectively. Weis was runner-up in the league meet, and Howitt was second in the Lakes Division.

Senior Alex Steinbock and junior Matt Berman were second in the division at No. 1 doubles, but Ring has rearranged her doubles teams and will pair Steinbock with senior Brian Slesman and Berman with senior Jason Greenberg.

GREENBERG played No. 2 doubles and Slesman No. 3 doubles last year, and they were division runners-up with partners who have graduated. North's only losses from last year's squad.

Ring was undecided whether the Berman-Greenberg combination or the Steinbock-Slesman team would play Nos. 1 and 2 singles or vice versa. Junior Tim McMinn and senior Brian Lance were the frontrunners for the starting role at No. 3 doubles.

North surprised some opponents by doing so well last year without having had much previous success, but Ring knows the Raiders won't sneak up on anybody this time around.

"We were the darkhorse last year," she said. "We were nervous and not real confident."

"We have to concentrate on one match at a time. I don't want (her players) to think they'll walk through every match."

"I want them to take each one seriously," she said. "This team has a lot of potential, and I think we can finish pretty well at state if we get through our regional."

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