

Mercy readies for final

Most coaches don't get excited about meeting the No. 1-ranked Farmington girls' soccer team and its 2-4-4 offensive alignment. But then there's Farmington Hills Mercy coach Henry Kilmes, who can't wait to play the Falcons at 4:30 p.m. Friday in a Class A district final at Southfield High. Mercy advanced to the final by routing Redford Union 10-0 Wednesday at Pioneer Park.

Kilmes is an experienced boys coach. Last fall he employed the 2-4-4 format at Redford Catholic Central, where he guided the junior varsity team.

Unranked Mercy, 9-5-1 overall, has outscored the opposition 29-1 in winning its last five games, but today in practice Kilmes will concentrate on defending the 2-4-4.

"FARMINGTON IS the only girls team playing the 2-4-4 and we played that when coached at CC," Kilmes said. "We'll have a few defensive tricks that'll somewhat stop that."

"But we're the underdogs. We're not in to lose as a goose. We're not supposed to win. The pressure's on them."

The only suspension registered against Redford Union came late in the first half when Mercy's dangerous forward Dana Lehmkuhl left the game after being kicked below the left knee. Lehmkuhl, who will play Friday, was one of seven Mercy players who scored one goal.

Kathryn Dudley led the rout with three goals and two assists. Collecting one goal each were Carrie Bowler, Michelle Geyer, Rachel Demasica, Laurie Chapp, Susie Aichinson and Tania Maslo.

Rene Larabek pulled up her sixth shutout in goal.

The Marlins received some good news Saturday when it was announced Dudley and Bowler were named to the Catholic League first team. Dudley, Bowler and Lehmkuhl each were selected to the Central Division honor roll.

Teams in the Central Division include Birmingham Marian, Madison Heights Bishop Foley, Mercy, Harper Woods Regina and Livonia Ladywood.



RANDY BORST/staff photographer

Carrie Malor, passing the ball in an earlier game with North Farmington, and her Farmington High teammates advanced to the district final with a 6-0 win Wednesday. Cheryl Waller gives chase for the Raiders.

Chiefs sidestep Salem in district

By Dan O'Meara
staff writer

If Plymouth Canton needs an ally in the girls soccer tournament, the Chiefs have no better friend than recent history.

The winner of the last two Canton-Plymouth Salem district games has gone on to win the Class A championship — the Rocks in 1987 and the Chiefs last season.

Canton's hopes of defending its state title received a monumental boost Wednesday with a 1-0 victory over Salem at Centennial Educational Park.

The Chiefs, who defeated Salem for the second time in the last week and improved to 13-2, will meet the Ann Arbor Pioneer-Huron winner for the district championship at 1 p.m. Saturday at Concordia College.

"It's a long way home," Canton coach Don Smith said, meaning the Chiefs need five more victories to win back-to-back titles. "But it's a nice first step."

SALEM COACH Ken Johnson, however, is betting on Canton, which handed the Rocks their only losses of the season, including a 2-1 setback in the Western Lakes Activities Association final last Friday.

"I think they'll go all the way," he said. "I thought if we beat them, we'd win the state. This game would have been an excellent state final."

In a showdown that pitted the second- and third-ranked teams in Class A — the Chiefs being ranked ahead of Salem senior Tricia Greenhalge's second-half goal on a direct free kick was the difference.

At the 52-minute mark, Greenhalge lifted the uncontested shot on a line that carried over Salem goalkeeper Jennifer Emmett and managed to get between her and the top of the net.

"The ball just curved in," Emmett said. "I could have punched it. Those type of shots are hard to judge. You don't know if they're going over. That shot was hit perfectly."

Smith agreed the difference often is a matter of inches on such goals and in such highly-competitive games. He added the Chiefs were ready for a shootout and had been practicing penalty kicks in anticipation.

Farmington eliminates North from tournament

By Steve Kowalski
staff writer

Farmington High faced two opponents Wednesday in a Class A girls soccer district semifinal: North Farmington and the much smaller Pioneer Park playing surface.

The top-ranked Falcons eventually conquered both, routing North 6-0 and finally overcoming the field, which wasn't quite conducive to their style.

Farmington coach Cathy Cole runs a 2-4-4 offense because she has one of the state's fastest teams, including track stars Carrie Maier, Amy Trunk and Sue Gibson.

The Pioneer Park field is about 30 yards shorter and not as wide as most fields, and it took the cat-quack Falcons time to click as they led only 1-0 at halftime on a goal by Margaret Martin.

THE GAME was played at Pioneer, just west of North Farmington High, because North's athletic facility was being used for a track meet.

"It was a lot tougher because we like to use the width of the field and have everyone stretch out instead of bunching together," said Maier, who failed to score. "But we adjusted well."

The win sends Farmington, 13-0-4,

SOCCER

into the district final at 4:30 p.m. Friday against Farmington Hills Mercy at Southfield High. Mercy also won a district semifinal Wednesday at Pioneer, beating Redford Union 10-0.

Mercy made Farmington exit the Class A playoffs early last year, beating the Falcons in a district game. Many of Farmington's players remember the outcome, but this is Cole's first year at the school, and she'd like to avoid the word revenge.

"I guess I want to change the term 'revenge,'" she said. "We just want to play well against Mercy. If we play well, that will produce positive results. Mercy always comes to play."

THE LOSS ended North's season at 4-9-3. Coach Matt Davis was excited about his team's play and believes it would have been closer had Cheryl Waller's shot early in the second half beat Farmington goalkeeper Deb Westerkamp instead of sliding just wide of the net.

Farmington responded with three unanswered goals by Gibson, Jen-

nifer Misaros and Martin within the next five minutes to put the game out of reach at 4-0. Trunk finished the scoring with two goals late in the game.

"It would have been a different story had that one goal in," said Davis, who probably benefited from the smaller field. "It would have put a scare in them and might have gotten it closer. I can't say I tried to use the field to our advantage, but it didn't hurt us today."

ALTHOUGH THE score didn't reflect it, North goalkeeper Leanne Adie played a solid game, turning away 36 of Farmington's 42 shots. It was reminiscent of Adie's performance last month when North tied Livonia Stevenson 1-1.

Davis is looking forward to next year when Adie and a host of letter-winners return.

"She's a good keeper and she'll be back," Davis said. "That's as good a game as she's put in. She didn't face nearly as many shots as she did against Stevenson, but the quality was just as good."

"I figure we're 3½ points over what we were last year. We have a victory and three ties more than last year with a team that's probably less talented than the year before."

Blue Jays no match for North

North Farmington plays soccer in the rugged Western Lakes Activities Association, and it showed in the Raiders' first-round Class A district encounter Monday against visiting Southfield.

North, which suffered through a 4-8-3 regular season, routed the out-matched Blue Jays 4-0 behind the two-goal, look-assist effort from Cheryl Waller.

Donna O'Brien and Carla Chelland accounted for the other Raider tallies, and Leanne Adie recorded the shutout. Mary Davis and Kim Benson, both midfielders, and forward Kirsten Harrison also played strong games for the Raiders.

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