

Offensive stars trigger North's hopes

By Dan O'Meara
staff writer

Scoring points won't be a problem for the girls basketball team at North Farmington.

Coach Greg Capling knows exactly where the offense is going to come this year.

North, 14-9 last season, brings back 30 points per game in three returning starters. Senior Kim Gurecki and junior Eve Clair were the leading scorers a year ago with 12-point averages, and senior Vikki Seamon represents an additional six.

All three will play pivotal roles for the Raiders, who start their season Tuesday when they entertain Novi in a non-league game. And they are cause for North to be a realistic contender for the Lakes Division title.

Gurecki, a 5-foot-2 point guard and all-division player, begins her third year as a starter and, because she'll direct the floor show and provide scoring punch, could have the most important charge of all.

"I'M HOPING she has her best year ever," Capling said. "She definitely has to be one of the team leaders. If she has a good year, I think we'll have a good year."

Clair, a 5-7 swing player, had an impressive sophomore season and made the all-star team at the Traverse City summer camp recently. Much of the offense will come from the one-two punch of Gurecki and Clair.

If (Clair) continues to improve, she'll be a dominating force in the league for the next two years," Capling said.

"She and Kim have to score for us. If they don't, we could be in a little bit of trouble because we're small again."

Mercy's rally negates Nouvel

To hear Larry Baker tell it, one might think his Farmington Hills Mercy girls basketball team was embarrassed in its opening game against Saginaw Nouvel Thursday at Mercy.

"They're a senior team, and they executed real well," said Baker of Nouvel. "We couldn't get over the hump. We missed some free throws (nine-of-14 for the game) and consistently turned the ball over."

Baker did add, "We made a nice run in the third quarter."

That "nice run" was the difference, as the Marlins nipped Nouvel 43-40. Mercy, trailing 18-14 at the half, outscored the Panthers 18-10 in the third period to take a 32-28 lead. Carrie Walton had eight points in the pivotal quarter, with Joanne Stephens adding six and Jenny Clinton four. Stephens, a senior forward, and Walton, a junior guard, each finished with 14 points — Walton scoring 12 in the second half. Clinton, a senior point guard, had 10 points and eight assists. Lisa Butko topped Nouvel with 15 points.

The lead changed hands early in the fourth quarter before Mercy assumed control, opening up a nine-point advantage. The Panthers never got closer than the final margin after that.

The Marlins played without starting senior center Leo Albrecht, their team's leading rebounder last season. She's out with a sprained ankle; her status is day-to-day, but Baker was hopeful she would be back in time for Mercy's game at South Lyon Thursday.

Since the Raiders have no more height than they did last year — Seamon is the tallest player at 5-10 — they again will rely on scrappy defensive play and an up-tempo offensive style. Capling also hopes a little more experience will mean a more aggressive team.

"We'll have to force other teams out from the basket and do a lot of trapping," he said. "We'll try to speed the game up, because when Kim gets the ball in the open floor she can cause problems for other teams."

THE FACT North will be a small team again makes Seamon a key figure for both rebounding and defense in the post. Besides her scoring, she was the No. 2 rebounder with nine a game.

Seamon also had arthroscopic knee surgery, and staying healthy will be just as important, Capling said, since the Raiders will have difficulty enough guarding big people.

North also returns 5-9 senior Amy Post, who will play forward. She had limited playing time last year but has improved quite a bit, Capling said.



Rounding out the varsity roster are four players off the JV team that won its last seven games and finished 13-7. The quartet consists of seniors Ginger Donoghue (9-9) and Carla Cholland (5-9), junior Dana Botwick (5-4) and sophomore Karen Sermet (5-6). All are guards except for Donoghue, who plays forward.

"We have only eight people on the team, so everybody will have to contribute," Capling said.

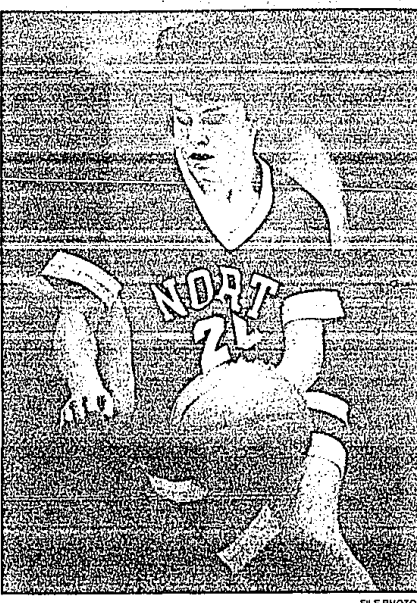
The Raiders lost guard Debbie Weintraub and forward Donna O'Brien, the leading rebounder on the previous team, to graduation, and Capling plans to rotate Post and the four varsity newcomers at those positions.

NORTH CAME within seconds and a few points of twice upsetting Western Lakes Activities Association power and Lakes Division champ Plymouth Salem last year. The Raiders, who finished 6-4 in the division, knocked off Walled Lake Central and West Bloomfield to get to the district final in November.

With three starters back, the coming season looks promising for the Raiders, Capling believes.

"I think we've got as good a chance as anyone else in the league," he said. "Salem should be favored to win (the division), but we should be right up there."

"We had a good team last year, but the competition was a little stronger. I think the league is a little more balanced this year. I don't see anyone running away and hiding."



Kim Gurecki, in her third year as the starting point guard, will play a pivotal role in what the Raiders hope will be a successful campaign.

Salem is 'Golden' in triumph

Matt Gold's two goals helped boost the Plymouth Salem boys soccer team to a convincing 4-0 victory over Brighton last Wednesday.

Midfielder Jeff Gold added a goal and an assist, and Billy Jaker scored the other goal for the Rocks.

Salem co-captain Matt Tudor slipped the Brighton attack in goal as he recorded the shutout.

"Matt played real well for us," Salem coach Ken Johnson said. "But you have to give our defense a lot of credit. They played real well against a physical Brighton team."

The physical play of Brighton caused two of its players to be ejected from the game, leaving the Bulldogs with just nine players to finish the contest.

"I am sure the shortage of players hurt them down the stretch," Johnson said.

FARMINGTON J. W. BLOOMFIELD 6: Scott Doles scored the game's only goal for life Farmington to the victory. Mike Sheehy recorded the shutout in goal for the Falcons, 1-0.

REDFORD UNION 3, HARRISON 2: Steve Novak's two goals helped lift Redford Union to its victory over Farmington Harrison.

"Steve played really well for us," said Panther Coach Al Burnham.

"Eric Shaltis' goal with 10 minutes left in a 2-2 game sealed the victory. Derek Shuk got the win in goal. He made 20 saves."

Vince Berg and Mark Liebowitz scored for the Hawks, 0-1. The halftime score was 1-1.

"The three goals they scored were mistakes we made that I thought a young team would make," Harrison coach Glenn Bruchan said. "They were a pretty aggressive team. We're small and were a little intimidated."

Marlins' Transou eyes a state title

By Steve Kowalski
staff writer

Nicole Transou, a Class A No. 1 singles finalist in 1988, returns for her senior year at Farmington Hills Harrison.

And if you're a Marin fan, there's even better news: Midland High's Meredith McGrath, who beat Transou in the state final last year, graduated.

Transou is one of the favorites to win the individual crown, and she's a good reason Mercy has a chance to repeat as Class A regional champion. Transou has kept busy this summer, playing in several United States Tennis Association tournaments.

"I think Nicole has improved over last year," Mercy coach Jim Kerwin said. "She's put her game together more. She had a good serve and volley last year and now she's getting to the net more often."

"She's looking forward to seeing how well she can do. This is her senior year and she has motivation because she'd like to play college tennis."

Along with Transou, eight other letter winners return to a team that was 6-2 and finished second in the Catholic League.

Four seniors graduated, including No. 4 singles player Cyndi Vail, but Kerwin is excited about this year's group. Mercy has been to the state tourney three of the five years under Kerwin, and he believes the Marlins have a legitimate chance to make it this year.

"We will have a good team," Kerwin said. "A winning season is expected. We all enjoy tennis and each other's friendship. As for goals, we'd like to win the league championship and qualify for the state tournament."

"If we're lucky enough to have to battle only one or two of the top teams in regional play, we have a good chance."

Transou, a three-year letter winner, finished her junior campaign with a 17-3 record. She'll be followed in the Marin lineup by No. 2 performer Shannon Fitzpatrick, who was 14-8, and No. 3 Sue Strong, 12-9. This is also the fourth varsity year for Fitzpatrick and Strong.

With Vail vacating the No. 4 spot, Allison West and Robin Baker are battling to be the heir apparent.

The Marlins are experienced at No. 1 doubles where Sue Broughton returns for her third year and will play next to Tricia Holm. There is some uncertainty at No. 2 and 3 doubles, with Melinda Campbell, Elizabeth Lamb, Cindy Koel, Sharon Bajwa, Susan Sarafa and Allison Gabry vying for the spots.

Koel, Bajwa and Campbell are seniors. Holm, Sarafa, Lamb and Gabry, meanwhile, are newcomers to the varsity after spending last fall on the junior varsity.

FARMINGTON HILLS HARRISON

The Hawks have quite a cross-section of players.

Returning for her junior year is last year's MVP, Kori Davidson, a runner-up the last two years at No. 1 singles in Class B.

Coach Bernie Goldstein, however, still might be having difficulty identifying the rest of the Hawks. Five freshmen are new to the team, and Goldstein is giving each a chance to shine in the early going.

No. 4 singles player Julie Heist has been the most impressive, winning her first two matches of the year without a loss. The Hawks are 1-1 in non-conference dual meets, beating Waterford Kettering 7-0 Wednesday at home and losing Thursday 3-4 at West Bloomfield.

Freshman Lisa Tomle has secured the No. 2 singles spot, winning one match and losing the other.

"If all the youngsters play to their potential, we can have a very good, fun year," Goldstein said. "If not, then it is a rebuilding year, and we will be looking toward the future."

Davidson headlines the list of returnees. Ranked in the top five among girls-16 players, Davidson is a good bet to return to the Class B No. 1 singles final.

Tomle will line up at No. 2 and the No. 3 singles player is Merrylin Onisko, who did not play last year.

In doubles play, Jodie Whitehead returns as one of the No. 1 players and her teammate is Jill Barringer. The No. 2 slot belongs to Christa Cornwell and Melissa Prendergast, and the No. 3 players are Julie Gibbs and Jill Rosenthal. All three teams are 1-1 after the first two meets.

NORTH FARMINGTON

North faces a rebuilding year after graduation took 12 players from a team that finished second at a Class A regional and first at the Western Lakes Activities Association meet.

The Raiders were 12-2 in dual meets.

Gone are the Nos. 1, 3 and 4 singles players and all the double partners. The Raiders' second doubles unit finished the year at 22-1, losing only to the eventual state champions at the Class A tournament.

No lineup has been secured, and the only returning senior is Amy Bordinan. Back for their junior years are Lisa Anderson, Julie Berman, Jennifer Low and Lisa Mueller. Sophomores Jana Bokkrath, Jennifer Kristall and Hadley Thurmon also are expected to contribute.

FARMINGTON HIGH

First-year coach Dierdre Bobby

has a good feeling about her team because most of the Falcons are returning letter winners.

Only one senior graduated from a team that was 7-8 in dual meets and ninth at the WLAA meet.

This year's top senior is Kristi Koss, a four-year performer who will play No. 1 singles. The No. 2 singles performer is junior Lisa Taylor, a three-year varsity player.

Last year, Koss and Taylor were juggled at the No. 1 position. The No. 3 player this fall will be junior Jayne Lee.

Bobby has considered playing Stacie Cornwall at No. 4 singles, but Cornwall also is a candidate to play either No. 1, 2 or 3 doubles.

Positioning of the doubles teams is undecided, but the combinations will be Shannon Adams and Carrie Miller, Sara Stevens and Cornwall, Amanda Brockhurst and Lee and Jennifer Bommarito and Jennifer Herman.

With four new courts at Farmington not being available until next spring, the Falcons again will play their home matches at City Park. Bobby is looking forward to the Falcons' future.

"We are very excited about the new addition," she said. "We hope to beat last year's record and have more wins in a season than any of the last eight years."

tennis

WEST BLOOMFIELD 4 FARMINGTON HILLS HARRISON 3 Thursday at W. Bloomfield

No. 1 singles: Kori Davidson (FH) def. Kathy Warnock, 6-1, 6-2
No. 2: Erin Enborn (WB) def. Lisa Tomle, 6-1, 6-0
No. 3: Merrylin Onisko (FH) def. Kristin Koonen, 3-6, 6-2, 6-1
No. 4: Julie Heist (FH) def. Elissa Fischer, 7-6, 6-3

No. 1 doubles: Stacy Koprine and Stephanie Patterson (WB) def. Jill Barringer and Jodie Whitehead, 6-3, 7-6
No. 2: Melanie Lwin and Jennifer Bryson (WB) def. Christa Cornwell and Melissa Prendergast, 7-5, 6-1
No. 3: Shayna Jerns and Stacy Ingber (WB) def. Julie Gibbs and Jill Rosenthal, 6-0, 6-2

FARMINGTON HILLS HARRISON 7 WATERFORD KETTERING 0 Wednesday at Harrison

No. 1 singles: Kori Davidson (FH) def. Kiki Beyn, 6-0, 6-0
No. 2: Lisa Tomle (FH) def. Bianca Gasley, 6-1, 6-1
No. 3: Merrylin Onisko (FH) def. Kelly Baker, 6-1, 6-2
No. 4: Julie Heist (FH) def. Renee Greenberg, 6-0, 6-0
No. 1 doubles: Jill Barringer and Jodie Whitehead def. Gina Castanize and Liz Fuller, 6-0, 6-0
No. 2: Christa Cornwell and Melissa Prendergast def. Allison Alston and Heather Radcliffe, 6-0, 6-0
No. 3: Julie Gibbs and Jill Rosenthal (FH) def. Stephanie Alery and Molly Mudge, 6-1, 6-1

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