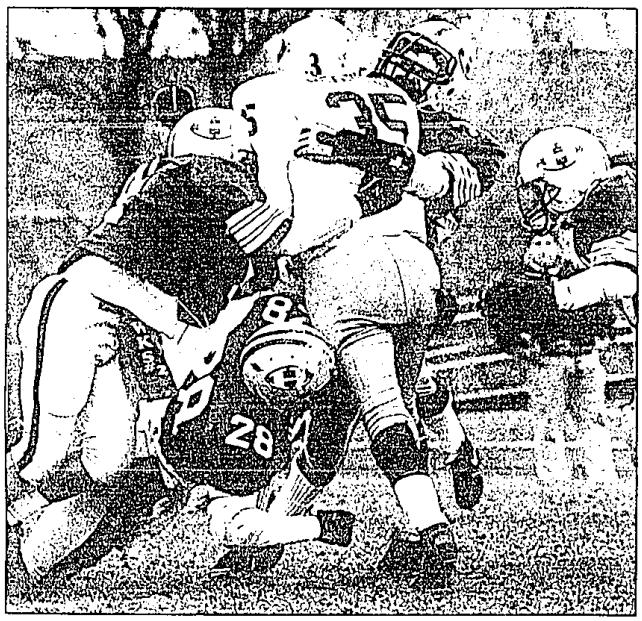

RANDY BORST/staff photographer

Harrison's defense has been as big a factor as the offense in the team's success this season. Defenders Roy Granger, Scott Ratsos (28), Blazo Sarcevich (75) and Gary Devine converge on Riverview running back Kevin Jenkins in playoff action Saturday.

Allen Park must hold on to Hawks' 'Houdini'

By Dan O'Meara
staff writer

Halloween was last month, but the Allen Park football team continues to be haunted by elusive beings with supposedly magical powers.

Its defense chased the Phantom in the first round of the Class B playoffs last week, and the Jaguars will try to solve the mysteries of Houdini this week.

Houdini will be wearing No. 6 and will be listed in your program as Mill Coleman, quarterback of the undefeated Farmington Hills Harrison team.

The Hawks, 10-0 and favored to repeat as state champs, will face Allen Park for the second time in three years in post-season play at 1:30 p.m. Saturday at Allen Park.

The Jaguars (9-1) couldn't stop Milan running back Jesse Walker last Friday but managed to win a 33-26 shootout and advance to the regional final.

ALLEN PARK coach Ed Bellas labeled Walker the Phantom after he rushed for 211 yards and scored three touchdowns Friday. He also called Walker, who gained more than 2,100 yards this year, the best high school running back he's ever seen.

And now the Jaguars will be challenged by Coleman, who has led Harrison to 23 straight victories and passed for more than 6,000 yards in his career.

"He's the best quarterback I've ever seen," said Bellas, who remembers too well what Coleman, then a sophomore, did two years ago when the Hawks pounded host Allen Park 29-6 in the first round.

"He made us look silly," he said. "Mill Coleman made Allen Park look silly!

"We had him trapped I don't know how many times in the backfield. I don't know how he got out of there. But, like a Houdini, he'd run 25 yards for a touchdown."

So the Jaguars face a great running back and a great quarterback in successive games. That's scary stuff. And the show Coleman puts on could be more frightening than Walker's disappearing act.

"And he's a runner, too — a real Houdini," said Bellas, who thinks Harrison coach John Herrington makes broken plays a part of his regular offense. "On a broken play, he'll score. If you have him trapped, he'll break away and he's gone."

ALLEN PARK was able to keep a handle on Walker for a half, long enough to take an 18-6 lead. But the Phantom was — well, untouchable — in the second half, and the Jaguars ended up winning with offensive fireworks of their own.

Allen Park also has a big-play threat in quarterback Gordon Miller (6-1, 195), who rushed for 78 yards and two TDs and was 9-of-16 passing for 173 yards and one TD in the Milan game.

Miller, who will be matched against the most prolific passer in Michigan high school history Saturday, has rushed for 577 yards and 12 scores, and he has passed for 747 yards and 10 touchdowns.

"I've been looking forward to it since my sophomore year," Miller said. "(Coleman) has always had a lot of press, and whoever plays against him feels he has to play up to his level.

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football

FARMINGTON HARRISON		
34	Saginaw Arthur Hill	18
56	Walled Lake Central	0
48	Livonia Churchill	7
51	Northville	10
31	Livonia Franklin	0
35	Walled Lake Western	7
28	Plymouth Canton	7
23	Westland John Glenn	15
55	Farmington	0
CLASS B PLAYOFFS		
23	Riverview	7
384	10-0-0	71
ALLEN PARK		
14	Grosse Ile	8
28	Melvindale	12
40	Dearborn H. Crestwood	0
11	Taylor Kennedy	9
20	Taylor Truman	21
29	Redford Thurston	0
36	Taylor Center	18
41	Dearborn H. Annapolis	0
32	Monroe Jefferson	16
CLASS B PLAYOFFS		
33	Milan	26
284	9-1-0	109

Rives rolls to win; Falcons finish 5th

By Dan O'Meara
staff writer

North Farmington's Lisa Rives won the Class A individual race and Farmington finished fifth in the team race Saturday to highlight Observerland's showing in the girls state cross country championships.

Walled Lake Western, Lutheran Westland and Redford Bishop Borgess runners also turned in fine performances.

The Western duo of Jennifer Ray and Wendy Proos captured second and ninth, respectively, in the Class A individual event, and junior Jennifer Gerlach, runner-up in the Class D team race, led Lutheran Westland to a second-place finish.

Rives had the second-best time among all Class A runners. Her time of 18:45.31 was second only to Ann Arbor Pioneer's Bridget Mann, a freshman who won the team race in 18:12.17.

Senior Jennifer Kiel paced the Farmington girls in the team race, taking third place at 19:03.75 and finishing behind Tera Furst, a teammate of Mann who ran 18:55.99.

"LISA RAN to her potential today," North coach Bill Pinnell said. "I told her at the beginning of the year she could run under 19 minutes.

"This is one meet she had been gunning for all year. I had been talking to her all week about her high school career coming to an end, and this was an excellent way to finish it."

Rives, running on a windy day at Flint Brookwood/IMA Golf Course, stayed behind a pack of runners for the first mile and drafted off them. She made a move at that point and opened up a comfortable lead, according to Pinnell.

"I told her to get a 10- to 12-yard lead, so nobody was drafting off her and to make sure they were working as hard as she was," he said.

"She knew she had to stay focused on the race and open up a lead, because the last 200 yards were uphill and into the wind.

"She had a 20- to 30-yard lead, so it would have been hard for anybody to run her down," Pinnell added.

Farmington had its best finish in the state meet, having been sixth in 1986 and 12th in 1987. West Bloomfield won the girls race and defending champ Pioneer was second.

KIEL TURNED in a school-record time, and all of the Falcons had personal bests. Scoring for Farmington were sophomore Allison Davis (39th), 20:17; junior Cheryl Casaroll (54th), 20:29; junior Jennifer Derwinski (57th), 20:30; and senior Margaret Martin (64th), 20:37.

"Everybody was up for the race," Farmington coach John Barrett said. "They wanted to beat that 1986 record. We went up Friday night, and I think everybody was psychologically up for it."

Barrett added Kiel had hoped to break 19 minutes, too, but was "satisfied with her performance since it was her best time. Everyone ran well. They were elated. The whole team was on Cloud Nine."

Western's Ray, only a freshman, came very close to breaking 19 minutes, finishing second to Rives in 19:00.86.

The Warriors didn't have enough runners to have a team this year, but they had one of the best combinations around, as evidenced by sophomore Proos' ninth-place time of 19:39.82.

Lutheran Westland was runner-up to Fowler in the Class D team race, finishing 10 points behind the (Eagles), 42-52.

Gerlach completed the race at Frankenmuth High School in 20:53. Mary Latinga of Battle Creek St. Philip was first in 19:32. Others placing among the top 15 from the Westland school were Ellen Anderson, fifth, 21:07; Renee Ruth, 11th, 22:43; Lisa Afer, 12th, 22:48.

BORGESS FRESHMAN Erica Shepard, the Catholic League champion, was 14th in the Class B individual race at Tyrone Hills Golf Course in Fenton, running 20:02. Tecumseh's Nicole Randolph won the race in 18:56.

Plymouth Canton, runner-up to Farmington in the Western Lakes Activities Association, was 12th in the Class A team race after finishing ninth last year.

"A lot had to do with the weather, but our team ran a lot faster than it did last year," Canton coach George Przygodski said.

"It's a credit to our team that we came back to the state meet with five new kids (of the seven who ran Saturday) and were able to finish let alone be in the top half."

The Chiefs were led by sophomore Amy Smith, who was 17th in 19:49.62. Sophomore Kim Gudeth was 51st (20:28.10), senior Adrienne Garrow 93rd (20:57.57), senior Missy Jasnowski 153rd (21:08.91) and senior Kim Rice 109th (21:16.95).

"Kim Gudeth started the year as a basketball player and kept getting better all year long," Przygodski said. "Kim Rice was one of the kids who plugged along the last two years, and as a senior she blossomed and had a great year for us."

REDFORD UNION sophomore Tracey James and Farmington Hills Mercy senior Brigitte Dery also fared well in the Class A individual

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RANDY BORST/staff photographer

Lisa Rives of North Farmington won the Class A individual race.

girls cross country

Boys cross country, 4D

Canton crushes North

By Brad Emons
staff writer

Plymouth Canton will be making another appearance in the Western Lakes Activities Association girls basketball final.

The Chiefs, thanks to a convincing 61-34 victory Tuesday at North Farmington, will play for the coveted title for the fifth straight year.

The defending WLAA champions, who increased their overall record to 16-3, will meet rival Plymouth Salem (12-7) in Saturday's WLAA championship. (Game time is 8 p.m.) Salem advanced in the other semifinal with a 52-48 win over Livonia Franklin.

Leading by only three at the half, 20-17, Canton broke open a close first-half battle by outscoring the Raiders 25-4 in the third quarter.

Stacey Thompson, a senior forward, scored 11 of her game-high 27 points during the surge.

"Stacey is the kind of player who can score inside, from the perimeter and she's a good passer to boot," said Canton coach Bob Blohm. "She's the kind of player who gets better each time out.

"But it was a solid team effort all the way around. I'm really pleased for them."

NORTH TOOK CANTON to overtime earlier this season before losing.

But in the rematch, Canton controlled the tempo by playing tough man-to-man defense.

The Chiefs, converting off North misses, scored the first 15 points of the third quarter before North guard Eve Claar broke the drought when she converted a free throw with 2:21 remaining in the period.

"The third quarter was just outstanding for us," Blohm said. "We got a lot of transition baskets because they were jamming the ball up, and we were getting the ball out.

"Holding them to 17 points at halftime was right were we wanted to be. I thought we played solid first-half defense."

North, which slipped to 15-4 overall, had only three players score: Claar (26), Vikki Seamons (5) and Kim Gurecki (2).

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