

Sports

Dan O'Meara editor/591-2312



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Adams advances to final

By Jim Toth
staff writer

With one game left in the 1990 girls high school soccer campaign, Rochester Adams coach Steve Mastroglanis feels it's time to re-evaluate his team's goals.

"One of our goals at the beginning of the season was to get to the finals," explained the veteran Highlanders coach Wednesday evening after watching his squad post a 3-0 Class A state semifinal triumph over Farmington Mercy at Sterling Heights Stevenson's Phillip E. Runkel Field. "Now that we're here, we have to change our goals and go in and win the finals."

After turning in a solid 90 minutes of play against the Marlins, there is little reason to doubt Mastroglanis' troops can't meet yet another goal.

The win by the Highlanders means that only the Spartans of Livonia Stevenson (14-4-1), 4-1 winners last night over Kalamazoo Central, stand between them and the school's initial Class A state championship. Which team does lay claim to the coveted crown will be determined Saturday at 1 p.m. in finals competition at Plymouth Canton High School.

"WE'RE HAPPY to be there (in the finals) and now we're ready to take it to the next step," informed Mastroglanis. "We'll try and keep the girls relaxed and focused on the task at hand."

The Highlanders, 16-2 overall, kept their sights squarely set on the back of the Marlins goal for much of the final 60 minutes of play. During that period, Adams pushed across all three of its goals, two of which came off the foot of senior forward Stephanie Kane.

The school's all-time leading goal scorer, Kane ran her season's total to 19 with a pair of second-half tallies. The first came at the 13:38 mark when she took a pass from sophomore Molly Burke and blasted a shot past Mercy goalkeeper Renee Laracell. She notched her second with less than three minutes remaining after being set up beautifully by freshman Kara Nance.

"Molly set me up perfectly on that first one, all I had to do was flip it over the keeper, and then Kara gave me a great pass on the second one," said Kane of her two goals. "We know pretty much where everybody is going to be."

With Adams' freshman Tracy Steele holding her own and regis-



SHARON LEMIEUX/staff photographer

Mercy's Courtney Lyons loses her balance while attempting a header on a throw-in in the first half. The Highlanders also won the game 3-0.

tering the team's 12th shutout of the season between the pipes, Nance scored what proved to be the winning goal with 11:02 to play in the first half. Burke again had a foot in the scoring, threading a perfect pass to Nance for her 12th goal of the season.

"WE WERE playing our game," Mastroglanis said. "We had the

support and we were getting to the balls a lot quicker. All of them dug a little deeper in the second half to get this win."

Mastroglanis had special praise for defenders Marjia Neubauer, Becky Byrne, Molly Sigelman and Alayna Held.

"Adams is one of the top teams we've played all year," said Mercy

coach Henry Klimas, who watched his team finish with a 13-2-4 mark. "I expected a little more offense from our team, but Adams played well and never let us get going."

"We were on our heels in the first half, and I told the girls at halftime, we were lucky to be down only 1-0," Klimas added. "We've been down before, but this time it just wasn't meant to be."

Farmington student state cycling champ

By Dan O'Meara
staff writer

Farmington Hills cyclist Alex Stechekine faced uphill struggles of the figurative and literal kind Saturday.

He won both battles and today is the United States Cycling Federation's (17-18) state champion.

The 16-year-old junior at Farmington High School overcame a pair of veteran opponents and one last hill to win his first title in three years of amateur racing.

Stechekine pulled away from Wolverine Sports Club teammate Steve Ward of Trenton and Scott Zoet of Spring Lake at the close of the 62-mile race at Sugar Loaf Resort in Cedar, Mich.

"I was really intimidated by them," said Stechekine, who competed in the older age group because he'll be 17 before the end of the year.

"THEY'RE A year older than me, and it's their last year in junior competition. I thought they wanted it more than me, and I was prepared to let them have it. But when the chances comes you go for it."

That chance came near the end of the race, at the start of a half-mile, uphill climb to the finish line. Stechekine's coach was at the bottom of the final hill, exhorting his protégé.

Stechekine, Ward and Zoet were bunched together at that point, but Stechekine made a decisive move with the help of a verbal push from his coach.

"He said to go for it," Stechekine said. "I jumped out of my seat and pedaled really quick for another 20 meters and opened up a 10-meter lead. I was off and they couldn't catch me."

"Without my coach at the bottom of the hill, I wouldn't have done it and would have settled for third place."

Stechekine, who does most of his training in Hines Parks, is no stranger to hilly terrain and enjoys racing on that kind of course. The Sugar Loaf course was 12-plus miles long and each cyclist did five laps.

"I SPECIALIZE in hills," he said. "I can compete with everybody else (on flat surfaces), but I excel at hills."



Alex Stechekine

"It was a really hilly course. It worked out pretty well for me. You'd have a few flat places, to straight downhill, to real steep uphill. Since it was a lap course, you'd go around and think 'Oh, no, here it comes again.'"

Ward jumped in front early and had a two-minute lead, but he probably extended himself too soon as Stechekine and Zoet caught up with three laps to go.

"I don't know why he did that," Stechekine said, "but if Scott and I hadn't chased him he would have taken it."

Stechekine didn't anticipate winning the race and was surprised when he ended up the state champion. His goal was to finish among the top four and qualify for the national championships in San Diego this summer. He'll be there for sure now.

"It came to me as a surprise, because I just wanted to place," Stechekine said. "All I wanted to do was get in the top four, but I ended up winning. That was, really shocking."

"LAST YEAR I was second in 15-16, and the year before I just finished because it was my first year and it was tough."

Stechekine will try to add an indoor sprint championship this weekend in Detroit, and he leaves next week for

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Falcons in regional tourney

By Dan O'Meara
staff writer

The first round of the Wyandotte Roosevelt regional tournament holds no surprises for either the Farmington or Plymouth Salem baseball teams.

The Western Lakes Activities Association rivals are well versed in what to expect from their opponent, having played each other twice during the regular season.

Following the Taylor Center-Deaborn Edsel Ford game at 10 a.m., the WLA members will play at approximately 12:30 p.m. The final is slated for 3 p.m., with the winner advancing to the Class A semifinals on Friday, June 15.

Farmington won both previous meetings with the Rocks, 8-5 and 4-3, en route to the WLA championship and a 21-3 record to date. Salem is 17-10 after winning its third district title in four years.

The Falcons are regional qual-

baseball

ifiers for the first time after rallying from a 7-1 deficit to eliminate Redford Catholic Central in the Southfield district final, 8-7.

"IT REINFORCES some of our beliefs," Farmington coach Kevin Kansman said. "The more times you can come back the more you believe you have that ability."

The Falcons, a veteran team of which much was expected entering the season, have done well by staying focused on their goals, and the comeback win to keep the season alive is proof of that.

"This is where we wanted to be and it's a great feeling," Kansman said. "We celebrated a little bit, but we have to go on and work on our goals. I think some of (the emotion)

had been held back. Hopefully, the pressure on these guys is off, and we can just play baseball."

Winning 13 of its last 17 games, Salem is on a roll itself, but the Rocks have their work cut out for them, according to coach John Gravelin.

"Kansman does a great job with that group," he said. "They play with a lot of confidence and don't make many mistakes. They're the conference champs, and this is not a push-over conference. If we come to play, it should be a dandy."

The Rocks are always at their best in June, but they'll be trying to reach the regional final for the first time since 1983. Salem was eliminated by WLA teams in its most recent regional appearances — Livonia Franklin in 1987 and Westland John Glenn in 1988.

DESPITE STARTING the season

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Kiel runner-up in 'A' meet



Farmington senior Jennifer Kiel concluded an outstanding high school running career Saturday with a second-place finish at the girls Class A track and field championships.

Kiel was runner-up in the 3,200-meter run at the state finals in Midland, turning in an 11:22.8 time in her final race for the Falcons.

"This is a fitting ending to a great high school career," Farmington coach Bruce Brown said.

"Jennifer is one of the most dedicated and focused athletes I have ever had the privilege of working with. She is an outstanding student-athlete and person. I'll miss her."

Other athletes from Farmington schools fared well in their season-ending performances, too.

LAUREN HOOD of Farmington Hills Mercy placed fourth in the girls Class A 800 run (2:19.6), and teammate Heather Noll finished fifth in the 3,200 run (11:35).

In the boys Class A finals, Farmington's Jason Gutting secured fifth place in the shot with a 51.7 effort, and teammate Ben Goba, the Oakland County champion in the 3,200 run, was sixth in that event (9:43).

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