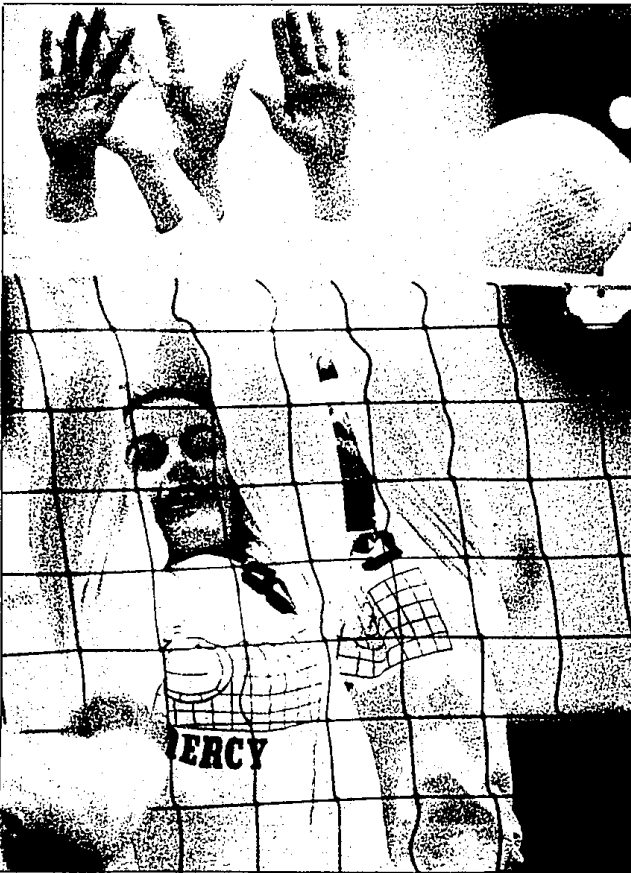


Thursday, January 10, 1991 O&F

(F110)



SHARON LEMIEUX/staff photographer

Mercy's Jill Eveleth (front) and Laure DeMattia attempt to block a Marian attack Monday night in the Catholic League opener. The Marlins

won the match in three games. See Page 4D for details.

No. 4-rated Marlins win 2nd tournament

By Dan O'Meara
staff writer

It would appear Farmington Hills Mercy is a volleyball team without a worry in the world, having begun the season as champion of two tournaments.

But appearances can be deceiving, according to coach Tim DeBello. The Marlins are undefeated (10-0) and ranked No. 4 in the state, but DeBello doesn't want anyone getting carried away because of the team's sudden success.

DeBello is concerned about Mercy's defense and believes the Marlins, who won the West Bloomfield tournament Saturday, are overrated at this early stage in the 1991 season.

"To be honest, I was disappointed in the way we handled situations, even though the scores make it sound like we won handily," he said.

"Maybe it's because the teams we've played lacked the one player to keep hitting the ball at us solidly. You can take easy hits and free balls and do things with those, but if we play a team that hits the ball all the way around we're going to have trouble."

MERCY MADE an impression with its tournament triumphs and, coming off a 55-5 season, has achieved immediate credibility in the Class A rankings.

But the Marlins face another difficult schedule in the always-competitive Catholic League against teams like Birmingham Marian (which Mercy defeated Monday in its first dual meet), No. 7 Livonia Ladywood and Harper Woods Regina.

"I'm being critical because, even though we've won two tournaments, it doesn't mean we're a good volleyball team," DeBello said. "It just means we're a little better than the teams we're playing. Looking down the road, consistency is what I'm talking about."

"If you win two tournaments, I guess you're going to get ranked that high. The teams we've been playing are not at the level you have to beat to be a top-ranked team."

OK, so it wasn't the Final Four of the state tournament, but the Marlins showed they were the dominant

team Saturday.

After rallying to beat the host team 15-9 in the first game of the championship match, Mercy cruised in the second 15-4. Mercy traded 5-3 in the opener but scored four straight points to take the lead.

"THE LAST 4-5 points may have come easy, but the first part was a real tough game," DeBello said. "They made a lot of hitting errors in the second game, so it wasn't so much what we did to them as it was them committing a lot of their own mistakes."

The Marlins coasted to a 15-2, 15-3 semifinal victory over Dearborn Fordson while West Bloomfield needed three games to eliminate Troy.

"Fordson was a small team, physically, their biggest kid was 5-8, 5-7," DeBello said. "They were a scrappy defensive team, but I thought our hitting was a little too much for them at the net."

"We served well and caused some passing problems for them. If we serve well, we tend to get some easy points. They were sending free balls over the net and, if that's the case you, should attack fairly well."

The Marlins also dominated in pool play and had only one game that resembled a close contest. Mercy whipped Southfield-Lathrup (15-1, 15-3), Bloomfield Hills Lahser (15-3, 15-3), Millford Lakeland (15-9, 15-3) and Berkley (15-1, 15-3).

"In pool play, we played the best we have in two tournaments," DeBello said. "We were able to take Mercy and we did what we should have done — attack hard and force them into defensive errors."

In the process, the Marlins chalked up some impressive hitting stats. From a total of 77 attacks, senior Maureen Paulin had 42 kills and only three errors for an incredible hitting percentage of .506.

JUNIOR KAREN Pinkerton had 27 kills and seven errors in 50 attacks (400) and senior Gail Murie 17 kills and eight errors in 39 attacks (230). Junior Laure DeMattia had only 13 hitting attempts but scored a kill on each one and had no errors,

finishing an amazing 1.000.

The Marlins lost standout hitters Andrea Velthoven, Jennifer Goff and Lee Al'recht from last year's team, but they apparently didn't miss a beat in the transition.

DeBello also has juniors Karin Kivela, Marcia Gryn and Wendy Wolski on the bench to use as substitute hitters. Wolski, a transfer from Walled Lake Central, becomes eligible Jan. 21.

Mercy also is adjusting to the loss of two-time, all-area setter Nikki Burns and is running a simpler offense this year, using two setters.

"With two new setters, we want to make it as simple as possible and develop our hitters," DeBello said. "Because we're not running the same offense doesn't mean we're not a good volleyball team. It just means we have different personnel."

Senior returnee Suzie Atchinson and junior Jill Eveleth are the setters, and both are doing well in their first year either playing the position or starting on the varsity, DeBello said.

"WE'RE GOING to be one of those teams that relies on defense and the setters to get the ball to the hitters in three easy spots," he said. "I'd rather put the pressure on the hitters at this point in time."

DeBello's plan means the Marlins will need improved defense. He also has senior Nora Hand, a returning varsity player like Paulin, Murie and Atchinson, and junior Shannon Goff to play in the back row.

"Volleyball is no different from what other teams were giving us, and we did what we should have done — attack hard and force them into defensive errors."

"That's one area where we're weak. It can come around. It's not that we don't have the talent to play the defense. It's understanding concepts. They have to keep working on it until it's clearly understood, and then they'll be able to react and use their athletic ability."

The Marlins should be a good serving team, too. They recorded 45 serves from a total of 260 serves Saturday. Murie graded 1,000 with no errors (four aces) in 50 serves. Pinkerton led the team with 14 aces, and Hand served another 11.

Krygiers make hockey family event at U-Conn.

By C.J. Risaak
staff writer

A name can be a difficult burden to bear.

Particularly when one of the clan has reached near-legendary proportions. That is what has happened with the name Krygier in hockey circles in Connecticut.

Todd, the eldest of three brothers, "really got the ball rolling," according to current University of Connecticut coach Bruce Marshall. Todd, who graduated from U-Conn in 1988, holds virtually every school scoring record: Total points in a career (200) and a season (71), most goals in a career (89), most assists in a career (101) and in a season (39).

If that isn't legendary enough, add this: Todd currently is playing in the National Hockey League — for the Hartford Whalers no less. Through last week, he had seven goals and 12 assists.

Which means a 30-minute drive is all that separates Todd and his younger brothers, Bryan and Michael, who have followed in his footsteps at U-Conn.

OR IS it that short a trip?

It's a long, arduous trek from college to pro hockey, one filled with pitfalls. Bryan and Michael know it. They know it may be a path they never travel.

Others, though, may have different ideas. They see the name. They make comparisons.

"I think others have higher expectations of me because Todd's in the NHL," said Bryan. "But I don't necessarily."

Added Michael: "I definitely don't get any breaks. I'll get some words on the ice (from opponents), trying to intimidate me."

Todd graduated from St. Francis of Assisi in Buffalo, N.Y. The family moved to Northville and Bryan and Michael both graduated from Farmington High School. The Krygiers now live in Bloomfield Hills.

MARSHALL, WHO played a season and was an assistant coach for a year with Todd, is grateful for the two younger Krygiers. "The best way to describe Todd is he had great determination," said Marshall. "He was one guy who could change the outcome of a game."

"Bryan has some of the scoring technique Todd has. He's the same going into the corners, but he doesn't have the same speed. Bryan's fast, just not as fast. He's a very good puck handler, he doesn't need a whole lot of room. He can create a lot of things for us."

And Michael? "He's more of a grinder. He goes hard into the corners. He's much stronger on top, physically larger than Bryan. He's on our top penalty-killing unit."

Statistics reflect Marshall's appraisal. Through 14 games, Bryan had 11 goals and 20 assists; he led U-Conn in both last season, scoring 20 goals and assisting on 27

others. His 102 points rank him 13th on U-Conn's all-time scoring list. He could be as high as sixth by the end of the season.

MICHAEL HAS six goals and seven assists this season, giving him 41 career points. He'd like to have more. "I'm more of a rugged guy," the sophomore said. "I like to go into corners. I'm a playmaker, a hitting, aggressive type."

What he needs to develop is "more finesse, better stickhandling and puck skills. My speed is an asset."

Bryan's abilities are easy to spot, at least for U-Conn fans. At Illinois-Chicago, which Bryan attended for a year, they weren't. "They didn't give me a chance," he said of the season he spent there as a redshirt. "They didn't play me at all. They didn't know what they were looking for."

While he originally wanted to play for an NCAA Division I team (U-Conn is NCAA II, but could qualify for the NCAA I tournament if it upgraded its schedule), Bryan is happy he made the change. "I know I could have played Division I. I know I could have played at Illinois-Chicago."

Still, there's work to do. "I have to build up my upper body strength. And I have to improve every aspect of my game to make that next step up."

TO PRO hockey, perhaps?

"If an opportunity comes up in the (NHL's) supplemental draft, I'd take advantage of it," Bryan answered. "If not, maybe I'll play in Europe."

The name may benefit him as he searches for a pro career. At present, both Bryan and Michael deny feeling any pressure from playing in their brother's shadow.


"I don't think there's really any pressure," said Bryan. "I set my own goals and objectives, and don't worry about it."

Added Michael: "Right now, we're three different players. We're doing our own thing, playing our own style. My job is to go out there and hit, go into the corners, that kind of stuff. I'm trying to be more of a complete player, but I do what the coach tells me. If I do that and he wants me to do more, I'll do it."

And what about Todd? Do his younger brothers see him play often? Does Todd see them play? And does the oldest of the Krygier clan provide valuable insights into the game to his brothers?


"We try to get down there as much as we can, whenever there isn't a conflict," answered Bryan. As far as insights, Bryan said, "I tell (Todd) what he does wrong after the game and he listens. He tells me the same thing (after our games). It goes both ways."

It just might go three ways, if all three brothers make it to the pros.



Van Boven

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Fri. 9-8