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(F10)



BILL BRESLER/staff photographer

Rich Bagdesarian returns for his senior season of track and field with the Raiders and will be their best entry in the long jump.

Falcons stay strong, though star is gone

By Dan O'Meara
staff writer

Farmington High appears to have enough holdover talent to anticipate another successful year in girls track and field despite the loss of all-star Jennifer Kiel.

Kiel was chosen the top female track athlete in Observerland last year, leading the Falcons to a fourth-place finish — the best among the three city schools — in the Western Lakes Activities Association.

The quality of Farmington's returning athletes is such the Falcons

should remain the top public school team in the district.

North Farmington was seventh in the 12-team WLAA but, while the Raiders have one of the best middle and distance running crews in the area, lacks the balance needed to contend in track. Harrison tied for ninth place in the league but is young and faces a situation similar to that of North.

Farmington Hills Mercy is the defending Catholic League champion, but the Marlins will find it difficult to repeat since a number of veteran athletes, most of them seniors, chose

not to compete this year.

FARMINGTON

Coach Bruce Brown is counting on a group of nine seniors to provide the nucleus for a successful team.

Leading the list is senior Shelli Gaul, who was third in the 100-meter hurdles and fifth in the high jump at the WLAA meet. She was among the area's best in the hurdles with a 15.3 time.

The other seniors are Gretchen Clappison, Susan Davidson, Kristi Bodary, Cheryl Casaroli, Deanna Curcio, Kerri Owezarak, Jennifer Derwinski and Kristin Urevig.

"They certainly are the kids we have to depend on," Brown said, adding Farmington has other returnees who will have key roles, too. "We really pride ourselves on keeping these kids around. Senior leadership is a cliché, but it's really important to our program."

The Falcons also have a solid junior class that includes Allison Davis, Susan Gibson, Becky Washnock, Jodi Van Ord, Rebekah King, Carrie Walter, Sheri Vitale and Kelly Cameron.

Sophomore Tammy Allen is another key returnee, and Brown believes freshmen Sarah Urevig, Kay Rodgers, Erin Phelps and Elizabeth Quenneville will contribute, too.

The Falcons have most of the field events covered. Allen, who was sixth in the WLAA, and Clappison will support Gaul in the high jump. Gibson is an accomplished long jumper who had a season best of 15-6 1/4.

Owezarak, Curcio and Washnock are veteran throwers, and Phelps and King provide depth in those events. Owezarak was sixth in the discus and eighth in the shot put at the league meet, and Washnock was seventh in the shot. Gaul and Davidson give Farmington a pair of solid hurdlers.

The Falcons lost sprinters Carrie Maier and Amy Trunk, both of whom split time between track and soccer, to graduation and will be short in those events. Allen, Bodary and Rodgers are the best hopes.

"Where we're probably the weak-

Please turn to Page 4

Farmington teams set goal to improve

By Dan O'Meara
staff writer

The primary goal for Farmington's boys track/field teams is improvement after all three finished in the second division of the Western Lakes Activities Association last year.

Farmington was seventh in the 12-team league. North Farmington eighth and Farmington Hills Harrison 11th.

How much the teams improve, as far as their WLAA standing, could be determined as much by their opponents. Defending champ Westland John Glenn and the Livonia and Plymouth-Canton teams, which combined to take the top six places, are expected to field strong squads again.

To help the Farmington schools obtain their objective, however, are a number of individual standouts: Harrison's Tony Shaieb and Blazo Sarcevic, Farmington's Ron Goba, Joe Miller and Chris Marting, North's Todd Pawlowski and Tony Catchings.

A preview of each Farmington team follows in the succeeding paragraphs.

FARMINGTON

Goba, a senior and All-Midwest runner in cross country, tops the list of returning trackmen in Farmington/Farmington Hills.

He is the defending WLAA and Oakland County champion in the 3,200-meter run and finished sixth in the Class A meet.

Goba also was fifth in the league over 1,600 meters. His best times last year were 9:37.3 and 4:31.9.

"He should be one of the best in the area, if not the best," veteran Farmington coach Jerry Young said. Supporting Goba in the distance

boys track

runs are junior Dave Clinard, also a state qualifier in cross country, junior Mario Nordini and freshman Kevin Afflerbaugh. Nordini is sidelined with a knee injury, but Young is hopeful he can recover and help the Falcons.

Farmington suffered losses in the middle-distance runs when Matt Langdon and Don Sweeney graduated and Dave Link gave baseball a try instead, but it still returns a number of prospects.

Senior Steve Walter and juniors Ryan Adams, Eric Kirwin and Kevin Koshowsky have experience. Walter competed as a sophomore but not last year.

One of the Falcons' strong suits will be the hurdles. Miller was seventh in the WLAA in the high hurdles, and Young believes he will be among the best in Observerland this year, too.

Miller also was fourth in the regional meet and had a good indoor season, finishing fifth in the state indoor championships earlier this month. Senior hurdler Todd Wight placed in a number of dual meets, and junior Dale Worthington had a good first year in 1990, according to Young.

The sprints could be a different story. Farmington lost Dave Winey, who was sixth in the league in the 200 and also placed in the regional. The Falcons will pin their hopes on seniors Eric Meyer and Charles Starkey and sophomore Corby Lavery.

"You're always hoping some speed demon comes out of the bushes, but (the sprints are) not one of our strong points," Young said.

Meyer and Miller are the team's top long jumpers, and junior Jason Tucker returns in the high jump and could be ready for a big year after reaching 6-0.

Marting was fourth among pole vaulters in the WLAA and had a season best of 11-4. Young believes it should be a solid event for Farmington with junior B.J. Richardson backing up Marting.

The Falcons lost an all-area athlete in the shot put with the graduation of Jason Gutting, the WLAA and regional champ, and Derek Mehraban, who was eighth in the WLAA. Senior Jeff Findley is the top returnee in the shot put, senior Parth Gandhi in the discus.

Farmington's 3,200 relay of Eric Crawford, Don Sweeney, Matt Langdon and Link went to state last year, but everybody is gone from that team. Without a lot of speed, the Falcons could find it difficult being competitive in the relays. Young thinks the mile relay could be the best and adds "Some of the hurdlers are going to have to run and help us."

"We'd like to get into the upper echelon (of the WLAA), but the last couple of years that's been a problem," Young said. "We should be solid in the field events, hurdles and distance runs."

NORTH FARMINGTON

Pawlowski returns after winning a Class A regional title in the discus last year with a toss of 130-5. He was second in the shot put at that meet with a 46-11 1/2 effort.

Pawlowski, who earlier accepted a football scholarship to Northwestern, had a season best of 142-9 in the discus and 48-11 in the shot. He was fourth in both events at the WLAA meet.

Please turn to Page 4

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Observer photo

Heather Noll of Mercy is the defending Catholic League champion in the 1,600- and 3,200-meter races.