

Sports

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(F)19

Elsley finishes year with win

By Marty Budner staff writer

Terry Elsley was looking for a nice, hard race to end the last official day of summer on Sunday. And the veteran road runner from Farmington Hills got exactly what he wanted at the 13th annual Birmingham Run for the Blind.



SHARON LEMIEUX/staff photographer

Intra-city rivalry

Marcus Geiger (left) uses a hip to direct the ball Monday in the North Farmington-Farmington soccer game. Mark Moffat (right) and his Farmington teammates won the game. See story on Page 4B.

Raiders take 3rd overall

The North Farmington girls cross country team finished third overall in the Walled Lake Invitational, but finished first in the junior-senior race Saturday.

Walled Lake Western's Jennifer Ray broke the Willis Park course record and ran 19:24 to lead the Warriors to the championship.

Western finished with 33 points, and Walled Lake Central nipped the Raiders for second place 65-66.

However, the invitational was broken up into a junior-senior division and a freshman-sophomore race division. When the final results were announced, it was North edging Western 74-76 for the junior-senior race championship.

"It was a big surprise," North coach Bill Pinnell Jr. said. "The announcer was reading the scores real fast and he said we won by two."

"Walled Lake Western and Central both looked very good, and I didn't know how we could beat them. I told the girls if we could get five runners in the top 20, we'd have a good shot at winning."

Pinnell's strategy proved correct as five of the Raiders finished in the top 20 and North finished first. Junior Emily Shively's 20:06 paced the Raiders and was good for second place behind Ray.

"Emily hung with Ray for two miles, but Jennifer took off in the final mile," Pinnell said. "Emily's 20:06 is still a good time, though."

Senior Jenny Weh (23:49) finished 16th overall with junior Erin Janssen (24:01) following in 17th place. Senior Carolyn Alto (24:31) and junior Lisa Blederman (24:36) finished 18th and 20th, respectively.

North's Keegan Keefeover won the freshman-sophomore race in 21:45, and teammate Alicia Crossland finished third in 22:36. Amy Roberts

Cross country

came in seventh for the Raiders (23:27), but North ran only four girls and couldn't outscore Western.

"It was a pretty good race for Keegan," Pinnell said. "She looked strong throughout the whole race, but I think her time would have been better in the 11-12 mile race with more competition."

FARMINGTON HILLS Mercy improved its record to 3-0 in the Catholic League by defeating Harper Woods Regina 24-31 in girls cross country Tuesday at Cass Benton Woods.

Mercy's Sharmila Prasad finished first with a time of 20:08. Teammate Heather Noll (20:37) took second and Amy Freund (20:47) third. Cara McDonough (22:19) and Stephanie Johnson (23:16) finished eighth and 10th, respectively.

Amy Carroll paced Regina with a fourth-place finish (21:30). The Saddlelites are 2-1 in the league.

On Saturday, Mercy tied Livonia Stevenson for second place in the Shrine-Shamrock Invitational at Marshbank Park. Both teams had 99 points. Mount Clemens Chippewa Valley (93) won the meet.

Prasad finished fifth (20:33) to lead Mercy. Freund (21:07) and Noll (21:11) took 11th and 13th, respectively. Also competing for the Marlins were McDonough (22:20), 33rd; Johnson (22:35), 37th; Mary Theues (22:50), 60th; and Eileen O'Connell (24:01), 63rd.

Defending champ North comes up 5th in relays

By Dan O'Meara staff writer

With its best girls swim team in five years, Livonia Stevenson hopes 1991 is the year it returns to the top in the Western Lakes Activities Association.

If the annual WLAA Relays are still a valid indicator, that could happen for the Spartans, who won the meet Saturday for the first time since 1986.

Stevenson had competition from the Plymouth-Canton schools but managed to overcome host Salem 241-224. Canton was third followed by Northville, defending WLAA champ North Farmington and Livonia Churchill in the top six.

"I would have been happy with second or third, but we swam well," Stevenson coach Greg Phill said. "The relays happened to be put in the right places and it worked out for us."

"It looks like we have pretty good depth. We've got a nice team this

swimming

Relay slate, Page 5B

year, and a lot of girls are contributing. Now we're hoping to go back on top for a while."

SINCE THE WLAA was organized nearly a decade ago, the Spartans dominated in girls swimming, winning the relays and league meet every year through 1986. Their success spawned a theory that claimed the relays winner would end up as league champion, too.

North Farmington won both in 1987 and 1988, however, dual victories haven't always occurred. Canton won the relays in 1988 and 1990, but Northville and North Farmington won the WLAA title those years.

"I don't think the relay meet con-

firms anything," Phill said. "North is the defending champ and we beat Plymouth Salem by less than 20 points."

"We haven't beaten either one of those teams in five years at the league meet. The winner of the relay meet hasn't won the league the last couple years. There's no doubt about it, we have a nice team, but so do others."

The Spartans have the most talent since their last championship team but have a younger squad than in '86, Phill said. They demonstrated their ability Saturday, using quality depth to regain the title.

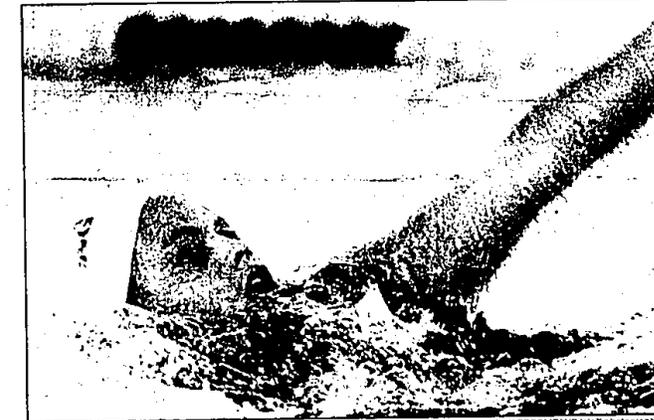
Stevenson won only two of the nine swimming events but finished no lower than fifth. And the Spartans had only one fifth place, all the rest resulted in seconds and thirds.

"(THE WLAA has other good teams), but they are very tough," Salem coach Chuck Olson said. "When

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JOHN STORIMZANO/staff photographer

Jill Hawkins competes for Farmington in the 400-yard medley Saturday in the WLAA Relays. The Falcons were sixth in that event. See Page 5B for meet statistics.