

Sports

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Raiders, Falcons optimistic about '92

By Dan O'Meara
and Steve Kowalski
staff writers

North Farmington is enjoying a fine start to the boys swim season and looking forward to even better things down the road.

The Raiders are 4-0 in dual meets following a pair of victories Tuesday over West Bloomfield (48-45) and Farmington Harrison (69-24) in a triangular contest at North.

North returns a number of talented swimmers, and coach Sue Gendron believes this team could be the best in her five years at the school.

The Raiders were fifth in the Western Lakes Activities Association, and Gendron is optimistic they can challenge defending champion Livonia Stevenson for the title this year.

"I think we're in contention," she said. "It's going to be a real interesting league meet. Stevenson is loaded, but we have a good championship team. I think we can finish in the top six in the state."

North returns a solid nucleus of seniors Mike Drelles, Chris Knoche, Keith Lee and Peter Gutenberg. Knoche and Drelles were first-team members of the All-Observer team.

In the WLAAC meet last year, Knoche was second in the 200 freestyle and third in the 500, and Gutenberg was seventh and eighth, respectively. Drelles finished second in the butterfly and third in the backstroke, and Lee was fifth in the butterfly and sixth in the 50 freestyle.

The junior class is led by Adam Kammer, Hal Zohar and Steve Bockneck. Kammer was eighth in the 50 freestyle and 10th in the breaststroke at the WLAAC meet. Zohar swims the individual medley and breaststroke, and Bockneck is a sprint freestyler.

Jonathan Kershaw and Brian Darold are the leading sophomores. The Raiders will be helped by the addition of sophomore Karl Kozicki when he becomes eligible Jan. 18 after transferring from the highly successful Redford Catholic Central program.

Kershaw and Kozicki, who is best in the 500 freestyle and butterfly, can swim any event, and Darold concentrates on distance races.

Gendron has nine freshmen, all of whom have experience in competitive swimming. Drew Sopha and Charlie Jacobs are among the top up-and-coming prospects.

Knoche, Kershaw, Drelles and Lee comprised one of Observerland's best 400 freestyle relay teams last year. The Raiders already have

swimming

qualified for state in that event and are close in the others, according to Gendron, who intends to point North toward the top of the WLAAC.

"It would be a nice way to end the year because it's gone well so far," she said. "We could do it if we have a night. Since I've been here, it's the best team I've had. It's a great group of kids."

The Raiders resume competition Tuesday when they will be host to Dearborn at 7 p.m.

FARMINGTON HIGH

The Falcons are already encouraged about the upcoming season, having started with a win in the Warren Woods-Tower Invitational prior to the holiday break.

The title was the first in Ross Bandy's eight years as coach. With 15 letter winners returning, including seniors Scott Frump, Mark Scario and Jeff James, the Falcons have more than just a tournament title to be excited about.

Farmington was 3-7 overall a year ago and lost seventh in the Western Lakes Activities Association meet, but Bandy has higher goals this winter.

The Falcons already took a step forward in December when they placed fourth in the WLAAC Relays, the best finish among the Farmington schools.

"We seem to improve daily," Bandy said. "This is the most balanced team I've had in eight years and they're going to be outstanding. I really look forward to the league meet and, in the end, I know they'll come through and finish in the top four of the league."

"We compete in one of the toughest leagues around and if we accomplish our goals that will make me very happy."

Frump's return helps ease the loss of the graduated Tom Bonner. Also lost were Rob Stauffer and Kevin Murphy, a pair of underclassmen who chose to concentrate more on academics than come out for the team, Bandy said.

Frump, who was 10th in the backstroke at the WLAAC meet, has recorded a best time of 23.8 seconds in the 50 freestyle and 1:00.8 in the backstroke, and he also contributes on the 200 medley and 200 freestyle relays. Kevin Yoder, Steven Scario and David Kandi also swim on the

medley relay, while Scott Brown, Kandi and Mark Scario swim on the 200 freestyle relay.

The 400 freestyle relay is being manned by Don Boyer, Brown, Kandi and Mark Scario. "There's a few things we have to polish up with Scott to get him there (to the state meet), but he's the hardest worker I have and he's a leader, along with Yoder and James," Bandy said.

Yoder, who finished 11th in the WLAAC, and James each have timed 1:08 in the breaststroke, which is the Falcons' best race, according to Bandy.

The Falcons have an impressive freshman crop, led perhaps by John Reed, who is one of their best 200 freestylers (along with Boyer) and the team's best 500 freestyle swimmer (2:19).

The Scario brothers will compete in the butterfly and individual medley, while Boyer anchors the 100 freestyle event.

The Falcons figure to challenge in the diving competition at the WLAAC meet with a solid tandem of Brandon Richardson and Chris Marting. Richardson was fifth in the WLAAC and consistently scores in the 250-point range, Bandy said.

Farmington has its first dual meet

Tuesday when it competes at Livonia Churchill.

HARRISON HIGH

The Hawks, who have only 17 athletes, are a young team with one senior, tri-captain and distance freestyler Todd Farabee.

Harrison also moves up to Class A this year and will be trying to meet different and more difficult qualifying standards.

"A lot of teams we'll be going against are big (in terms of numbers), and that is going to hurt us because we'll have a hard time filling all the lanes," second-year Harrison coach Lisa Collins said.

"The transition to Class A is going to be hard. It will help in the long run, but the boys are used to being Class B. They see the difference in qualifying times, and it kinda discourages them."

The Hawks were 3-6 in dual meets and finished eighth in the 12-team WLAAC last year. Harrison was ninth in the WLAAC Relays last month.

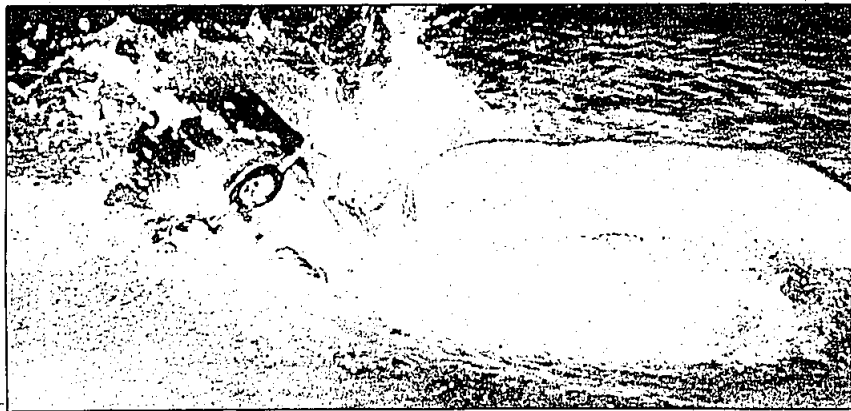
"Our goal is to do the best we can," Collins said. "If they give their best, that's all you can ask."

Harrison lost all-area diver and

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Mario Nordini is one of the veterans on the Farmington swim team.



Jonathan Kershaw is a sophomore with plenty of experience as a member of the North swim team, which hopes to contend for the WLAAC title.

By Dan O'Meara
staff writer

With seconds left in the basketball game, Tony Stojov sat on the Livonia Stevenson bench Friday night yelling "We're for real, we're for real."

Farmington Hills Harrison learned not only are the host Spartans for real, but Stojov, too.

The 6-foot-4 senior scored a career-high 22 points, which included six three-point field goals, as Stevenson defeated the Hawks 57-52 in the Western Lakes Activities Association opener between teams expected to be title contenders.

"Coming into the game, Harrison had a lot of press," Stojov said. "We're focused and ready this year. We picked off a real good team; hopefully, this is the first step."

The Spartans are 4-1 overall and 1-0 in the WLAAC. Harrison, winless in two games this year, slipped to 3-2 and 0-1.

"WE DON'T scare a lot of people coming off the bus, but that's not where the game is played," Stevenson

coach Jim McIntyre said.

"As long as the kids can get their act together on the court, so be it. They worked hard to prepare for this game, and they walked in believing they could win one."

With the score tied at 46 midway in the fourth quarter, Stojov scored his last three-pointer and added a finger-roll layup for a five-point lead. He eventually fouled out with 2:18 remaining and Stevenson up 54-48.

"I always have the green light to shoot the three-pointer, so I thought I might try it (in the first quarter)," Stojov said. "If I'm on, I'm on. If not, somebody else will pick up the slack."

Forward Colin Stockton also had a hot hand early in the game, scoring 10 of his 15 points in the first half. Guards Ryan Purkas and Matt Grodzicki added 10 and seven points, respectively.

But it was Stojov who had the biggest impact, shooting 80 percent from the field and making 80 percent of his field goals from beyond the three-point line.

"YOU DON'T expect their center to be the outside shooter," Harrison coach Alkie Teachman said, adding the Hawks played him incorrectly.

"Why would we drop off him to help inside when that's not their game? I don't understand that. But you have to give him credit. He hit the threes when he was open."

Stojov, who acknowledged point guard Grodzicki for being a "great distributor" of the ball, upheld a Stevenson tradition for playing an uninhibited offensive style.

"The kids realize that somebody is going to be hot every time we take the floor," McIntyre said. "We tell them 'If two people are open, get the ball to the closest man. If you're the closest and there's nobody in your face, shoot the ball.'"

The Spartans played that way early and grabbed a 12-5 lead, but they also showed remarkable patience and demonstrated good team play in the half-court game.

Most people think of Stevenson as an "up-and-down, scramble ball" club," McIntyre said. "But even when we're running the break we're

so structured that everyone knows if someone is out of place — even if someone is up there (in the stands) says 'What are they doing?'"

CENTER ANDY Fitzpatrick and forward Dante Anderson scored 11 points apiece for the Hawks, who outscored Stevenson 11-3 to end the first quarter and led 22-16. Forward Paul Gividyis added 19 points and guard Jeremy Teachman seven. The Spartans trimmed the Harrison lead to 32-29 at halftime.

"Actually, I was surprised it was as low scoring as it was," Teachman said, referring to Stevenson's half-court effort. "They slowed down the game themselves by sometimes passing 11 times."

"They played awfully well together as a team, because they would run the offense for a long time to get (Stojov) that shot. Grodzicki did a nice job running the offense, handling the ball and getting it to the right people."

While playing a solid zone defense,

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North starts fast, defeats Churchill

A big first quarter carried North Farmington to a 64-52 victory over visiting Livonia Churchill in a Western Lakes Activities Association boys basketball game Friday.

The host Raiders jumped out to a 22-10, first-quarter advantage and never looked back. The scoring was even over the next three quarters at 42 apiece.

North is 2-3 overall and 1-0 in the WLAAC, the Chargers 1-4 and 0-1.

Jon Sturtz tallied seven of his team-high 22 points in the first quarter for North. Mark Temple and Dean Pennala added 13 and 11, respectively.

"We had a great first quarter, and that carried us throughout the game," North coach Tom Negoshian said. "We got a little sluggish in the second half, but to Churchill's credit they came after us."

Senior center Keith Gullian, who has notched double figures in all five Churchill starts, scored a game-high 23 for the Chargers. Senior guard Marcus Sarnovsky added 14.

WESTERN 69, FARMINGTON

54: Walled Lake Western's Brent Machnowiak scored 38 points Friday night to lead the visiting Warriors in their 69-54 victory over Farmington in boys basketball.

The 6-foot-3 junior made seven three-point field goals and four dunks, and he sank nine of 10 free throws. Matt Enguit added 10 points for Western.

Both teams are 2-3 overall following the first night of Western Lakes Activities Association play. "Everything they threw up went in. They were on fire," Farmington coach Denny Mikel said. "Maybe we were a step slow and not ready to play."

Senior center Jay Jensen led the Falcons with 14 points, and senior forwards Brian Afterbaugh and Steve Gallagher added 11 and 10, respectively.

Western had a 28-point first quarter and led by 13, but the Falcons took their turn in the second period, outscoring the Warriors 17-8 and cutting the difference to four at halftime, 36-32.

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Falcons defeat Glenn on mats

Farmington achieved a successful start to the Western Lakes Activities Association wrestling campaign Thursday with a 32-22 victory over perennial power Westland John Glenn.

The Falcons, 2-1 overall, rallied from a 22-13 deficit by winning the last four bouts.

Mike Palle pulled Farmington within three points (22-19) when he pinned Andy Boguszewski (3:51) at 160 pounds. Ryan Adams edged Ken Renard 6-5 at 171 and overthrew the team score.

Rob Cavagnoli overwhelmed John Shank 16-6 in the 189 division, and heavyweight Matt Skelley clinched the win with a pin over Mark Benicis in 2:57.

The Falcons trailed early after Glenn won the

first three bouts. Tom Pace (103) defeated John Economy 13-2, Mike Mancini (112) defeated Chris Darrell 15-4 and Mike Henry (119) defeated John Lane 12-7.

Farmington picked up three straight wins to gain the lead. Jon Duff (125) blanked Aaron Teague 12-0, Steve Lemieux (130) won a 7-1 decision over Matt Graca and Matt Smith (135) pinned John Craver in 5:41.

But the Rocks, continuing a trend in the meet, won the next three — all on decisions — and reclaimed the lead, 22-13. Jerry Simonneau (140) won 6-1 over Mike Prough, Shane Hall (145) defeated David Link 9-3 and Mike Reeves (152) overcame Dave Monge 10-1.

IN OTHER MEETS, Livonia Churchill defeated Farmington Hills Harrison 54-15 and Walled Lake Central downed North Farmington 53-21.

Harrison's winners were Dave Prusinski (130), Dave Gietzner (171). Prusinski decided Craig Shepley 7-1, and Gietzner pinned Al Hawlawi at 2:41.

The North winners included Dan Cassidy (112), Marcus Brown (145), Jared Lawrence (171) and heavyweight Bob Chika.

Cassidy edged Jay Davenport 10-8, Brown pinned Mike Bouchard (217), Lawrence pinned Tom McBride (1:15) and Chika pinned Dan Krause (0:36).