

Sports

Dan O'Meara editor/953-2139 night line: 953-2104

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(F18)

Baseball teams must develop pitchers

Harrison will count on Pesci

By Dan O'Meara
staff writer

Mike Pesci figures to play a big role for the Farmington Hills Harrison baseball team, but coach John Herrington hopes it's no more than one player can reasonably do.

Pesci is a quality pitcher — one of the best in the area — but the Hawks have no other established varsity hurlers to back him up.

"Everything depends on our second-line pitching," Herrington said. "When he pitches, we'll be good, and when he doesn't we hope we'll be good."

"Once we get by Pesci, we have to have good performances out of our second and third pitchers."

The situation is similar to the one Harrison faced in 1989 when it had few veteran players returning and Craig Murray as its only known pitching quantity.

THE HAWKS got to the regional final that year before losing to Harper Wood Bishop Gallagher, but Harrison will be competing in Class A this time.

"Craig Murray was the only real pitcher we had and he was enough," Herrington said. "I think this team could be that good."

Herrington would be content to ride the arm of Pesci, a senior who was 3-3 with an impressive 0.99 earned run average. Only former all-star Gary Devine pitched more innings — 55 compared to 42½.

"I think Mike will be a real line pitcher this year," Herrington said, adding Pesci, an all-state linebacker in football, put college offers in that sport on hold and is waiting to see what comes his way in baseball.

"He did well last year and he's bigger and stronger this year. He has more velocity and more pitches. He had one bad outing against Canton, but he was solid every other time."

The Hawks, who were 14-10 and second in the Western Division of the Western Lakes Activities Association, will look to seniors Chris Krizanek and Dan Hight and juniors Keye Smith, Jeff Csiso, Matt Woolf and Jack Doolin for pitching support.

"We'll have to pitch tight and keep the ball down so the infield can do its

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SHARON LAMIEUX/staff photographer

Play ball!

Farmington High senior Steve Fenner delivers a pitch toward home plate Tuesday when the Falcons played Livonia Claronoville in a scrimmage game. Fenner is one of three veteran pitchers on the Farmington

baseball team. The Falcons, who won the Western Lakes Activities Association title two years ago, hope to improve on last year's 4-10 record. See Page 2B for a preview on the Farmington team.

Temple top hurler for North ballclub

By Dan O'Meara
staff writer

With five returning starters in the field and the potential to be a good hitting team, North Farmington is focusing on the need for depth in its pitching staff.

The Raiders have one pitcher with proven varsity ability in senior Mark Temple, who was 3-1 with a 1.74 earned run average and a favorable 3-to-1 ratio of strikeouts to walks in 40 innings.

"He's the one who boat (Class A champion Plymouth) Salem, and I think he's going to be one of the best in the area," North coach Irv Horwitz said.

But the Raiders will be minus former pitchers Andrew Margolick, who got a scholarship to USC, Chris White, Mike Powers, who was 4-1 and helped Temple carry the load while Margolick was out with a back ailment last year, and Brian Gonterman.

"WE'LL THROW some people out there and see if they can pitch," Horwitz said. "Except for that, I think we're going to have some pretty good hitting and fielding. If we can stay up there (with other teams) and keep the score down, I think we'll do OK."

North returns nine players from a team that was 15-10 and won its first district championship in 12 years.

The Raiders were third in the Lakes Division of the Western Lakes Activities Association, but they got Margolick back late in the season, and beat Novi and Lakeland in the district tournament before losing to Davison in the regional.

Among the other pitching prospects are seniors Jeff Barany, whose family moved back to Michigan after several years in Tennessee; varsity veteran and back-up catcher Adam Chalmers and Josh Tobias, who gained experience on the JV team.

"(Chalmers) pitched one game last year and didn't do bad, so we're going to try him," Horwitz said. "(Tobias) is somebody who can get the ball over the plate."

Senior Mike Hamill returns to play catcher, senior Mike Jehle is an all-division second baseman and Temple will start at third base again when he's not pitching.

Jehle was hitting .415 and had 21

stolen bases, plus a .618 on-base percentage, going into the regional tournament. Temple was hitting .333 with one game remaining.

SENIOR JON Sturtz was a reserve outfielder and will move to first base this year, though he has never played the position.

"We have a pretty good outfield, and we were hurting at first when Gonterman and Andrew left," Horwitz said.

Barany will move into the starting slot at shortstop in place of all-area infielder White, and utility infielder Adam Stein will take Temple's place at third when the latter pitches.

"I haven't seen Jeff Barany play since he was a little kid, but he's looking real good in practice," Horwitz said.

The Raiders have one of their best outfielders "just because of the experience out there and the number of years playing the game," Horwitz said.

Senior Jason Horwitz, a co-captain with Temple, is a three-year starter who moves from right to center field this year in place of Dave Rankin. Senior Brian Lee returns in left, and senior Jack Wilks takes over in right.

Five juniors and former JV regulars who provide depth are outfielder Alex Bittoff, infielder Brett Blanchard and pitchers Ryan Moore, Jason Danielewicz and Aaron Shepherd.

THE RAIDERS had a down year at the plate last season, according to Horwitz, and were batting .284 collectively after the district tournament. Players who saw their averages drop are better than they showed in 1991, he said.

"We didn't have real good hitting stats last year. We won key games because of the pitching by Margolick and Temple. This year we hope the bats come alive, and we can score some runs."

The Raiders could be in trouble later this month when the majority of the players leave town for a week during spring break.

"On the Monday we get back from vacation, we play (defending WLAAC champ Westland) John Glenn, and we'll still have some starters gone," Horwitz said. "So we're hoping for rain."

Mercy hopes to achieve repeat as league champ

By Ray Setlock
staff writer

If the Farmington Hills Mercy girls track team is going to repeat its undefeated performance of last season, the Marlins will need a solid season from senior Heather Noll.

Noll was a second-team, all-area selection last year, posting a time of 11:54 in the 3,200-meter run. She was also among the area best in the 1,600.

"Heather is a leader on this team and is accepting the role well," Mercy coach Gary Servais said. "She should have a good season."

The Marlins, 5-0 in dual meets, will be strong in the long distance events. Junior Sharmila Prasad and sophomores Amy Freund and Hillary Noll give Mercy depth.

Hillary Noll, Heather's sister, was third-team, all-area in the 3,200. Freund won the 3,200 race in the 64-team Huron Relays at Eastern Michigan University on March 21 with a 12:47 time.

"We're pretty loaded in the long distance events," Servais said. "I think we'll score well there."

Sophomore Refee Arceo will help fill a void in the throwing events created when Laure DeMatia, who was third-team, all-area in the shot put, decided not to compete this year.

Junior Dana Wade will participate in the discus, shot put and high jump this season.

"She's a good all-round athlete," Servais said. "Her best event is the discus. Dana has improved quite a bit."

Junior Stephanie Johnson also will be busy, competing in the long jump, middle distance and relay events. Junior Jodi Plopan, sophomore Jennifer Worth and freshman Amy



SHARON LAMIEUX/staff photographer

Jenny Weh is a veteran distance runner at North.

Dinges will run the 100 and 300 hurdles.

Senior Kathy Cook, along with juniors Dawn DiPonio and Nicole Pryor will run sprints and relays. DiPonio was a member of the first-team, all-area 1,600 relay unit.

Servais says the competition will be formidable but thinks Mercy can

girls track

win a third Catholic League crown.

"A lot of the teams have more people and they will be tougher," Servais said. "We're looking to get better as we go along."

NORTH FARMINGTON

The Raiders took their share of lumps last season, going 0-5 in dual meets, but coach Bill Pinnell said North will be a much better team in 1992.

"I know we can improve on that record," he said. "We have some returning athletes and plenty of solid new additions."

The Raiders return junior Emily Shively, who was first-team, all-area in the 1,600 run.

"I know Emily is going to be solid," Pinnell said. "She's proven that and is the most accomplished of our returning people. All of our distance events will be tough."

Seniors Jenny Weh and Lisa Wantuck, along with sophomore Keegan Keefe, will handle middle distance and some long distance events.

"Which is in the best shape she's ever been in," Pinnell said. "Jenny qualified for state in the 1,600 last season."

Sophomores Allecia Crossland and Amy Roberts will also participate in distance events.

The Raiders return an experienced shot put and discus thrower in senior Cathy Benson.

"Cathy has been in the program

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