

SPORTS

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THURSDAY, DECEMBER 23, 1993

Shocker: FHS rules WLAA pool



The Falcons figured to be in the thick of the chase Saturday at the Western Lakes Relays, but they certainly didn't expect to win it all. But they did, for the first time in the team's history, and raised eyebrows all across the area.

BY CHRIS MCCOSKY
STAFF WRITER

Toss Bandy was cold and his clothes were soaking wet. He didn't have anything to change into, and he could already feel the cold coming on. But he never felt better in his life. "This was the most thrilling moment of my coaching career," said Bandy, whose Farmington swimmers teamed up with the Plymouth Salem pool Saturday after they won the Western Lakes Relays for the first time ever. "We came in hoping to place in the top four. But to win it

like we did was quite a shock. It felt wonderful." Farmington won two events and placed second in three others to score 231 points. Plymouth Salem was second (223) and Plymouth Canton was third (194). "We have this in the right perspective," Bandy said. "I know North Farmington was without its two best kids (Karl Koricki and Jon Kershaw), and I know Salem was disqualified in one event and Northville didn't put a relay in the last event. But people opened the door for us and we tipped

toed on in." Farmington won the 400-yard medley relay with Scott Brown, Danny Belanger, Jon Reed and Don Boyer swimming a 3:54.1. Steven Scario, John Hawkins, Belanger and Reed teamed for a 4:04.38 to win the 400 individual medley relay. The Falcons took second in the 200 backstroke, 200 butterfly and 200 medley. "We knew Farmington had quite a few coming back, but we didn't know they were that deep," said Salem coach Chuck Olson. "But throughout the meet, they just kept on scoring." Salem took three firsts: 400 freestyle with Aaron Berlin, Ryan Petroskey, David Bracht and Fred Locke going 3:31.58; 200 medley, John McLenaghan, Andy Dettling, Mark Dettling, Matt Martin, 1:50.43; 200 freestyle, Locke, Marc Levitt, Pat

Morgan, Bracht, 1:33.57. "We gave quite a few upperclassmen a chance," Olson said. "We held some of our kids to one event because we have to find out what kind of team we have." Canton set a meet record with Anthony Ballis and Jason Fowler teaming for 485.5 points. North Farmington and Livonia Churchill also won a pair of events. For North, Ryan McKelvey, Paul Ryan, Phil Zald and Drew Sopha won the 200 breast stroke in 2:01.5. Jason Speer, Pat Duthie, Chris Dretler and Sopha won the 200 butterfly in 1:47.48. Churchill's Rob Grant, Rob Jones, Jon Carlson and Mark Campbell won the 200 backstroke (1:49.9). Greg Kasprzak, Grant, Carlson and Campbell won the 500 free in 4:27.08. See statistical summary on 2B.

Hoop shoot stars

Eight Farmington youths were crowned champions in the Elks Lodge Hoop Shoot competition. Kelli Schwagie hit 23 of 25 to win the girls 12-13 division and post the best score of the competition. Other winners were Anthony Faletti (boys 8-9), Gayle Terres (girls 10-11), Matt Derocher (boys 14), Raji Bedi (boys 10-11), Lindsey Abbott (girls 8-9), Colin Short (boys 12-13) and Amy Roble (girls 14). All but the 14-year-old winners will advance to regional competition at Livonia Churchill, Jan. 8. The runners-up were: Sarah Morrison (girls 8-9), Mike Faletti (boys 10-11), Ashley Cooley (girls 10-11), Shawn Louis (boys 12-13), Beth Joger (girls 12-13) and Michael Larges (boys 8-9).

FHS swim win

In the wake of its championship at the Western Lakes Relays (see story on this page), the Farmington swim team posted an impressive 116-65 dual meet victory against Livonia Churchill on Tuesday. The Falcons won the last four events to pull away. Scott Brown won the 100-yard backstroke (58.06), Danny Belanger won the 100 breast stroke (1:05.0), and Don Boyer won the 50 freestyle (23.78). Jon Reed, Steven Scario, Boyer and Brown teamed to win the 400 freestyle relay (3:35.88). Chris Frump, Matt Kurzer, Reed and Scario took the 200 free relay (1:39.02). Brown, Belanger, Rich Hammon and Boyer won the 200 medley relay (1:47.55).

C'ville spikers 1st

Tracy Sludz had 21 kills in 35 attacks Saturday, leading Livonia Clarenceville to the Southfield Christian volleyball tournament championship. Clarenceville beat the Dear Eagles in the finals, 15-2, 15-6, after downing Dearborn St. Alphonsus in the semifinals, 15-1, 15-0. The Trojans also scored preliminary round wins over Lutheran High Westland (15-1, 15-2), St. Alphonsus (15-1, 15-0) and Southfield Christian (15-7, 15-0). Jaime Zenke and Wendy Lyle had 17 and 14 kills, respectively, for the victorious Trojans. Chris Nunney served 13 aces and had 12 digs. Elizabeth Trybus added eight aces. Setter Kristina Przenzda collected 46 assists in 82 attempts.

Vardar beats Vardar

Vardar's under-16 boys soccer team took first place recently at a regional indoor competition held in Akron, Ohio. Vardar under-16 beat Vardar under-16 in the championship, 3-0. Both teams qualify for the national indoor tourney in March in Atlanta, Ga. Members of Vardar's under-16 squad include: Ben Upward, Chris Charbonneau, Andre Ware, Tim Castillo, Jon Schack, Marco Jovanovic, T.J. Lieckfeldt, Todd Smith, Nick Stockly, Ryan Wells, Larry Mercer, Chris Piazza, Scott Sersen, Jeremy Stillings and Steve Willford. Members of Vardar's under-15 team include: Jason Alexander, Chris Curry, All Curtis, Ryan Gibbs, Chris Gline, Kirk Hodges, Virgil Humphreys, John Mack, Pat Mahoney, Kyle Marshall, Tony Mousoulis, Matt Sarkeesian, Jeff Schlicht, Gary Shear, Wayne Thomas, Paul Van Huysen, Corey Woolfolk. The team is coached by Mark Christensen. Vardar's under-14 also qualified despite losing to the Internationals in the final, 3-1. Members of Vardar's under-14 team, coached by Matt Paukovits, include: Shawn Alexander, Marco Gracchola, Joe Gallagher, Brian Grastock, Nicholas Grandchamp, Drew Harris, Steve Howson, Ludy Leon, Vito Pampalona, Richard Perry, Sammy Piraine, Michael Riemma, Donald Sigler, Patrick Stranahan, Shawn Wilson and Paul Yeskey. Vardar's under-12 team, coached by Mike Lupence and Vito Pampalona, also reached the final before losing to Cleveland United, 2-1. Members of the under-12 Vardar team include: Vince Alexander, Chris Combs, Jeffrey Conner, Kevin Cooper, Kenneth Furphy, Andrew Hillings, Kellen Kalso, Harry Moreno, Connor, Trevor Pampalona, Kevin Robinson, Mike Robinson, Nick and Anthony Sanchez, Robert Turpin, Andrew Upward and Patrick Wilson.

Vardar victorious

Guess what? Vardar's under-13 boys team won its division with a 2-1 victory over Cleveland United to capture the second annual Soccer First Tournament, Nov. 26-28 in Columbus, Ohio. Members of Vardar III '91 include: Adam King, Nick Debrauw, Elliott Bolden, David Burnett, Yuri Burrell, Corey Cecchini, Marcus Chorvat, David Dwalby, Josh Epstein, Danny Ferrin, Victor Gordon, Steve Kleczynski, Steve Kolb, Tyler Mehl, Rajev Mehta, Tom Thompson, Stewart Yngst. The team is coached by Mark Christensen. Vardar under-15 topped Ohio Premier, 3-1, to win its division for the second straight year in Columbus.

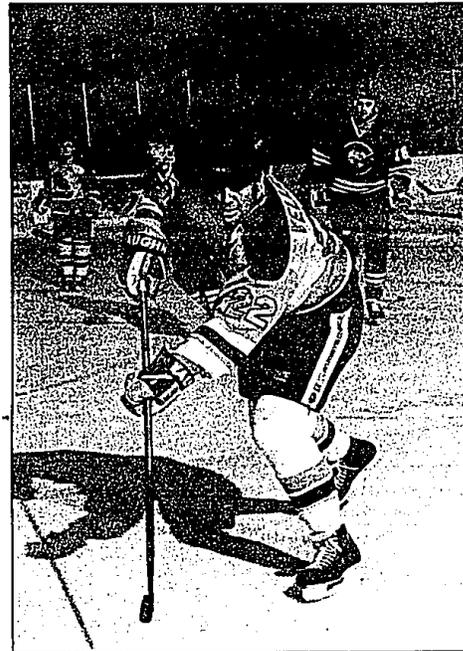
Getting serious

Vellucci yearning to turn promise into reality

BY CHRIS MCCOSKY
STAFF WRITER

The problem is, Mama Vellucci didn't raise no goon. "I always told him to be kind and careful," Judy Vellucci said. "What a fool I was, huh?" Not really. Her son, Mark, is kind, considerate, warm, friendly — all things a mother would want her son to be. But Mark Vellucci is 6-5, weighs 245 pounds and aspires to play hockey in the NHL. His coaches don't want him to be kind and considerate on the ice. "With his size, he's always going to be a prospect," said former NHLer Lou Franceschetti, Vellucci's coach and general manager of the Detroit Falcons in the Colonial Hockey League. "He needs to step up his aggressiveness and really put the fear in the other players. He needs to take the body on a more consistent basis." He needs, in short, a personality adjustment. "With my size, they expect physical play from me," said the 21-year-old Vellucci, who graduated from Farmington High School in 1990. "They don't really want me to be a goon, but they want me to be there when the rough stuff starts." "But I've never played that way before. When I played juniors for Compuware, we weren't allowed to fight. You'd get suspended. It's a style I have to adjust to." The other thing working against him is that, with his size, players aren't exactly lining up to fight him. "The players see me on the ice and they just assume I'm some kind of psycho," he said. "They give me a lot of space. It's kind of hard to mix it up when people are running away from me." The few times he did drop the gloves, he's handled himself quite well. In his first game with the Falcons, he took on Brantford's Jason Taylor, a guy who was kicked out of

the East Coast league for excessive fighting, and by all accounts whipped him. Later he fared well against St. Thomas' Darren Mielick, one of the league's toughest and now a member of the Falcons. "I think those fights showed them I could do some stuff," Vellucci said. Franceschetti agrees. "I think he's still a long ways from where he'd like to be," he said. "This is a big year for him as far as the transition goes. He needs to put himself in a position where he can do big things here next year." The long journey Before talking about where Vellucci's hockey career might be going, it's pertinent to look back on where it's been. As late as last summer, it looked like his dreams of playing professional hockey were over. It looked like his legacy to hockey would be as the brother of Mike Vellucci (who played four games with the Hartford Whalers in the 1988-89 season and is now rink manager at Compuware's Oak Park Arena) and as the guy who Eric Lindros lived with in 1990 and 1991 when they both played for Compuware. "I figured I was just going to go to community college full-time and try to figure out what I wanted to do," Vellucci said. "I looked into playing Division III college hockey in New York and took all the tests, but it fell through because of money. I figured it was time to hang up the skis." That would have been a premature conclusion to a career that had the P-word written on it from the time he was 10 years old — the word that Vellucci despises more than any other: Potential. From the first time he put on skates, Mark Vellucci was bigger and better than most of the kids he played against.



Gentle giant: Farmington High product Mark Vellucci is a nice, friendly, laid-back kind of guy and that's exactly what NHL scouts don't like about him. They do, he never, like his skills and his 6-5, 245-pound frame.

See VELLUCCI, 3B

OU has a record-fest at Madonna's expense

BY CHRIS MCCOSKY
STAFF WRITER

Here's why a first-year Division III basketball team should never, under any circumstances, schedule a game against an established Division II team: Madonna University scored 107 points Monday against Division II Oakland University — and lost by 82, 189-107. How bad was it? Check it out: Oakland scored 91 points in the first half, 98 in the second. It scored 85 on 124 possessions. And the team was playing without two of its top three scorers (Tom Eller, 23 points per game, and Ty McGregor, 13). Eight Pioneers had career-high scoring nights, three of them set their marks by halftime. Nine of the team's 11 players scored in double figures. Nine team records were set including: points in a game, points in a half, victory margin, field goals made (63), 3-pointers made (27) and rebounds (83).

How bad was it? With just four seconds remaining in the first half, Oakland was set to inbound the ball from underneath Madonna's basket. "The Madonna gym was silent. Coach Greg Kampe stood up and yelled, 'One to Buzza, one to Buzza.' Everybody in the gym knew the ball was going to No. 22, Dan Buzza. Everyone except the Crusaders. The ball was inbounded and fed inside to Buzza for an uncontested layup. That was basically the game story. Everything OU did went virtually uncontested. The Pioneers attempted 57 triples, yet throughout the game they were left free on the perimeter. No wonder they hit 27 of them. "I know a lot of people are going to wonder if we ran up the score," said Kampe, whose team stunned Division I Toledo by 21 points Saturday night. "But I don't think so. They scored 98 points in a half. That's something these kids are going to talk about the rest of their lives. They'll

be talking about it at their 50th reunion. I subbed as much as I could. The guys that were in there hadn't played much this year, but they work hard in practice. I can't tell them not to play. That wouldn't be fair to them." No, Kampe would have had to remove his team from the floor to keep the score down. The more relevant question would be, why? Why would Madonna schedule such an opponent in its own gym? Madonna coach Bill Sharpe would be the guy to answer that question, but he wasn't talking. "We got our butts kicked, and I don't have anything to say," he said. "I'm done, I'm not talking." Kampe said he accepted the game as a favor to Sharpe. "He's a friend of mine, and he was having trouble getting people to play him here," Kampe said. "We just worked it out where I'll play here, and he'll play in our tournament (Dec. 29-30)." Another question that ought to be

raised: Why did Madonna continue to play run-and-gun with the Pioneers? Why not try to slow the tempo and at least keep the game from becoming a "garbage" game? "That's their style and that's our style," Kampe said. "We're just a little better at it than they are." By the end of the game, OU was enjoying five-on-one, four-on-one and three-on-one breaks on just about every transition. Bryan Borchert scored 36 points to lead OU (7-1). Kevin Kovach scored 24, Andy Brodt 22, Chris Wasik 18, Ken Cram 18, Jeff Plank 15, Matt Stuck 12 and Jason Burkholder 12. Dan Buzza scored 19 points and tied a school record with six blocked shots. For Madonna (1-12), Jay Dimes scored 29 points and Mike Sloan had 22 with six triples. As if the 82-point drubbing wasn't enough for the Crusaders, it happened on the night they had planned their team Christmas Party. Merry Christmas.