

Atherton tops Clarenceville spikers in regional

BY STEVE KOWALSKI STAFF WRITER

Four of Burton-Atherton's girls volleyball players will play next year for Tim Bearden at Flint Mott Community College.

Until then, they have some unfinished business playing high school volleyball for Bearden, who doubles as Atherton's coach.

The defending Class C state champion Wolverines eliminated stubborn Livonia Clarenceville,

15-9, 16-14, in Saturday's regional championship at Goodrich High School.

The four seniors who will be attending Mott, Christine Skinner, Melissa Pale, Natalie Hatch and Laura Hummel, look like they'll give Schoolcraft College coach Tom Teeters something to worry about as competition in the future.

Clarenceville, 28-6-6 overall, has been eliminated by Atherton

in the regional the last two years.

"They're well coached and a good team. I can't take anything from them," Clarenceville coach Allaha Lovo said. "On the whole, we didn't beat ourselves. They had the advantage of depth. I don't have that yet, but I will next year."

The Trojans, who advanced to the final with a 15-4, 15-6 victory over Grosse Pointe University-Liggett in the semifinals, had trou-

ble matching up with Atherton in the first game.

Atherton took control after scoring six straight points to break a 6-6 tie.

But the Trojans regrouped behind the serving of senior Jamie Zemke, who scored seven straight points for an 8-4 lead in Game 2. Clarenceville led 13-11 after senior Joanna Galuszka served five straight points, but the Wolverines scored five of the last six

points.

Atherton's only losses this year have come to Class A powers Livonia Ladywood and Temperance-Bedford.

"At Atherton, volleyball is the sport," Bearden said. "We get more fans than the basketball games."

Zemke, one of five Clarenceville players playing their last high school game, had eight kills, eight solo blocks and 20 digs for the

day. Juniors Wendy Roy and Tracy Sledz were strong at the net with 16 and 16 kills, respectively.

Roy had 19 digs and Sledz 20 digs and six serving aces.

Senior Joanna Galuszka had seven kills and 20 digs and setter Kristen Przegzenda had 40 assists. Chris Nunnoy, recently returned from a back injury, had three aces and 30 digs.

"I loved the senior class, it was a beautiful group," Love said.

Mercy

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the right side even though she's a great passer on the left side. She's found a home.

"We've done well all season defensively, but our offense has let us down."

It was a downer, meanwhile, for Salem, which bowed out with a 39-7-6 overall record.

Paula Dombrowski had 10 kills in the losing cause, while Karen Gundry and Jamey Vluu added six and five, respectively.

"We beat them at Schoolcraft (Invitational), but it seemed to day we couldn't get a break," Salem co-coach Brian Gilles said. "We never really got into the flow. We never really got that big block all day."

Mercy also frustrated Salem with several key digs.

"They did things other teams couldn't do against us," Salem coach Allie Sufley said. "Serve reception gave us trouble and we passed balls out. We got too excited and our back row overplayed some balls."

"But the kids played well and we're happy with the season."

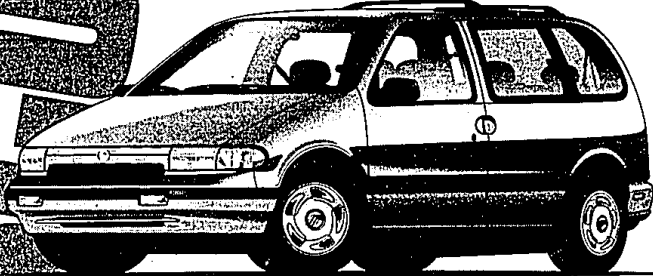
Riding a wave of momentum, underdog Mercy appeared to mean business during the early stages of the championship match against Ladywood.

But the tide quickly turned.

"We've been having some inner team turmoil early in the season and thought we had it taken care of by the end of the season," Spengler said. "But all the sudden it reared its ugly head again. And when it happens, we're just not the kind of team we should be. A lot of it has to do with our confidence level. We can't have people getting on each other."

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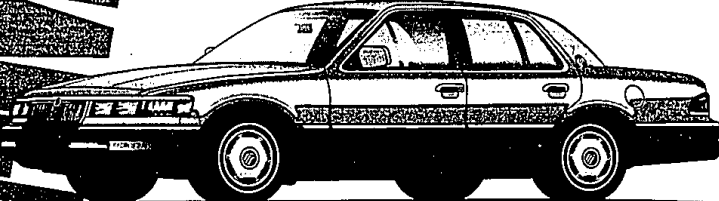
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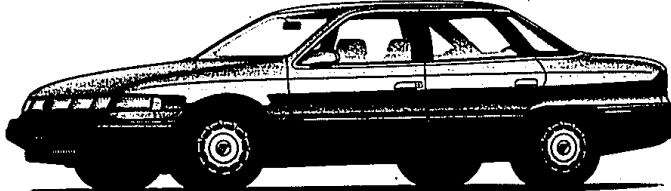
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