

Volley

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ble and Krista Snow. He is thrilled about the development of sophomore setter Abby Ault and junior hitter Sarah Rauch.

He even thinks this team can equal or surpass the Western Division championship credentials of last year's team.

But first he needs to find the group's intensity switch.

"We really need to get more aggressive at the net," he said. "I think this team has a tendency to be content with just keeping the ball in play. I want them to get after it more and put the ball down to the floor."

Shortt believes Snow and juniors Erika Greene and Jenny Myslinsky have the ability to be dominant attackers.

"They just need to start getting aggressive," he said. "And maybe that comes with confidence."

Losing such talented players as Amanda Ault, Maggie Chavez and Carrie Perkins, Shortt had a real concern about who would step up to fill those holes. Particularly the middle hitter spot. Meet Sarah Rauch.

"She played very little last year and I really didn't know how she would respond," Shortt said. "But she has really stepped in there. She's been a pleasant surprise."

In a 10-15, 15-8, 15-1 win at Novi Wednesday, Rauch was 17-for-17 hitting with seven kills. She was impressive at the Harrison Invitational last Saturday as well.

"Potentially, we can be just as good as last year," Shortt said. "We have to make sure we get our peaches down and get the hitters involved. We've been a little tentative on the attack. But I am happy with a lot of things right now."

Farmington

Team unity isn't the only thing the Falcons have going for them. There's a good bit of talent, as well.

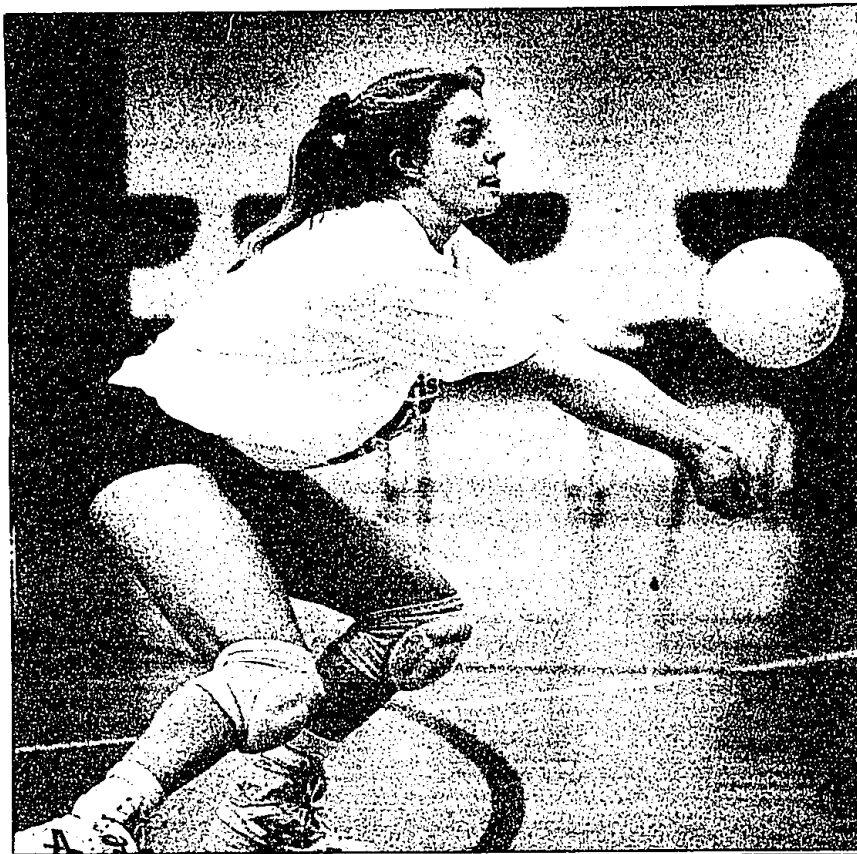
"I have nice players and they are all part of our regular rotation," said Julie Ingalls. "That's an indication of the level of athleticism we have. They are all good enough to play."

Farmington, as has been its way under Ingalls, will again play a scrappy back row. But the team should be more adept on the attack.

Senior Krissy Mahon, juniors Kim Washnock and Beth Wilson, as well as newcomers Brittany Dixon (sophomore), Amanda Porter (sophomore), Katie Lukasiak (junior) and Amanda Salyer (senior) will key the net play.

"I think I have had a tendency to concentrate too much on defense," Ingalls said. "I realize you can't win with defense. I want to focus more on what we have to offer, and that is our tall and athletic front-row players. We have to be able to use that talent on offense."

Senior Natalie Koczars and Porter will handle the setting duties.



Key players: Harrison's Krista Snow (above) and North Farmington's Heather Cornwell, both pictured in action last season, are being counted on to play significant roles this season. Snow is one of the area's premier hitters, and Cornwell will have responsibilities both in the front row and back row.

ties.

"This team, as far as experience, conditioning, athletic ability and attitude, has a chance to make a run (for the Western Lakes Division title)," Ingalls said. "Besides being good athletes, they are intelligent and have good court sense. They know what it takes to be competitive."

Farmington Hills Mercy

First the bad news. Junior Ebony Landrum, who was developing into one of the top players in the area, injured her knee and underwent major reconstructive surgery. She is out for the year.

"That really hurt," Spengler said. "She had worked so hard all summer and she was really looking good. But her surgery went well and doctors believe she will be back at full strength for next year."

The good news is that, even without Landrum, Mercy is talented and experienced enough to contend in the tough Catholic

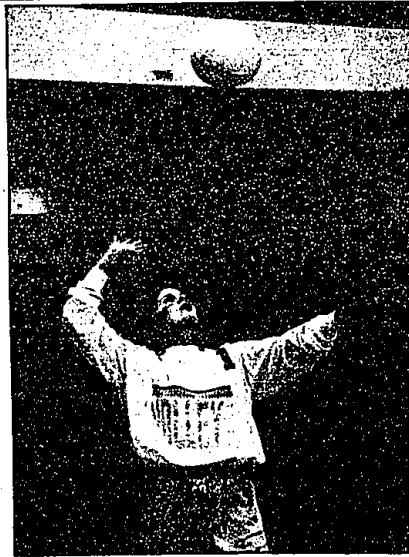
League Central Division.

"It's going to be exciting to see how we do," Spengler said. "I think this is a very aggressive group with a lot of ability. And, off the court, the girls get along very well."

Senior Mitzi Ruddock will be the team's leader. She's a three-year standout who excels both in the back row and at the net. Junior Jamesa Emerson and seniors Holly Taylor, Lis France and Amy Schulkins will provide the offense at the net. Also, look for junior Beth Jones to develop into a strong hitter.

Junior Sheyanne Mooter, who Spengler calls the most aggressive player on the team, returns to the setter position. Senior Kim Sanders will also be a back-row force.

"Our serve and defense should be very good," Spengler said. "Our blocking game is good, as well. We still need to improve our hitting. But we have height and athletic ability. We should be in good shape."



Harrison wakes up in time to knock Novi

It took a game or so, but the Farmington Harrison volleyball team flashed an offensive intensity Wednesday night that Coach Ron Shortt had been waiting for and hopes will increase throughout the season.

"I'm used to our team really

getting to the net and putting the ball down," said Shortt, after his team rallied for a 10-15, 10-8 and 15-1 victory at Novi. "It's taking this team a little longer to get after it. They were content to just keep the ball in play."

Middle hitter Sarah Rauch

paced the Hawks with 17 successful hits and seven kills. Erika Greene and Krista Snow also heated up in the second game and combined on seven blocks and seven kills.

Jenny Myslinsky triggered the rally with her booming serves.

She had six service aces, five in the last two games.

"The serving really kept Novi off balance," Shortt said. "We had four missed serves in the first game and only one the rest of the match."

VOLLEYBALL

NORTH FARMINGTON

Coach: Sandy Lubieniecki, 18th season at North.

League: Western Lakes.

Last year: 8-19.

Notable losses to graduation: Keegan Keefover, Carrie Reje.

Key returnees: Seniors All Long (outside hitter), Christine Grogan (outside hitter), juniors Cooker Perkins (setter), Amy Finkel (setter), Heather Cornwell (setter), Lee Nelson (front row), Laura Nelson (front row), Emily Apfelmann (front row), Natalie Reje (back row), Renee Quioletta (serving specialist).

Promising newcomers: No freshmen or sophomores.

Coach's outlook: "I haven't had a group with this much enthusiasm since Patu Kozicki and Don Konjarevich were here (1985)."

FARMINGTON HARRISON

Coach: Ron Shortt, 11th season at Harrison (18th overall).

League: Western Lakes.

Last year: 28-9-9, Western Lakes Western Division champions.

Notable losses to graduation: Amanda Ault (All-Area, all-state), Maggie Chavez, Carrie Perkins.

Key returnees: Seniors Lori Hubble (all-around), Krista Snow (hitter), Jenny Myslinsky (hitter), Jodie Barringer (serve, back row), Sheryl Wolf (back row), juniors Erika Greene (hitter), Sarah Rauch (hitter).

Promising newcomers: Sophomores Abby Ault (setter), juniors Kristin Kozlars (setter), junior Krista Kelly (hitter), sophomore Sara Kloosterman (hitter).

Coach's outlook: "Potentially, we can be just as good as last year. I am happy with a lot of things right now."

FARMINGTON

Coach: Julie Ingalls, fifth season.

League: Western Lakes.

Last year: 8-16.

Notable losses to graduation: Maggie Frump, Erin Phelps.

Key returnees: Seniors Krissy Mahon (all-around), Natalie Koczars (setter), Jessica Guilford (back row and server), juniors Kim Washnock (hitter), Beth Wilson (hitter), Dina Aon (back row), Teresa Lindemuth (back row), Alina Hentink (setter), Erica Gwynn (front).

Promising newcomers: Sophomore Amanda Porter (setter-hitter), sophomore Brittany Dixon (hitter), junior Katie Lukasiak (hitter).

Coach's outlook: "This team, as far as experience, conditioning, athletic ability and attitude, has a chance to make a run (for the division title)."

FARMINGTON HILLS MERCY

Coach: Peggy Spengler, third season.

League: Catholic League Central Division.

Last year: Class A district champions.

Notable losses to graduation: Christiane Grant, Jill Higgins.

Key returnees: Seniors Mitzi Ruddock (hitter), Holly Taylor (hitter), Lis France (hitter), Amy Schulkins (hitter), Kim Sanders (defensive specialist), juniors Jamesa Emerson (setter/hitter), Sheyanne Mooter (setter), Ebony Landrum (injured, knee, out for season).

Promising newcomers: Juniors Beth Jones (hitter), Erin Moug (back row, serve), Heidi Wahl (hitter), Lindsay Moeller (setter).

Coach's outlook: "I am excited about this team. We lost some people, but others have stepped up to fill the holes. I really don't feel there are any holes or major problems."

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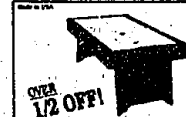
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