

SPORTS

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THURSDAY, DECEMBER 22, 1994

FARMINGTON HILLS SPORTS SCENE

Michalski county champ

Needless to say, the 1994 Oakland County wrestling tournament won't soon be forgotten.

The annual event, held Saturday at Orionville Brandon High School, nearly concluded over into Sunday before all the matches were concluded and there are still no official winners and losers. Clarkston will come out the winner and Farmington's Matt Michalski was definitely champion at 106 pounds. However, all team results were unofficial and weren't available at press time. They could be released later this week.

"It was a long day," Troy coach Gary Harlan said. "It was a bad situation from a time standpoint and no one could do anything about it. I really feel for the kids, though."

This year's event was highlighted by a different format and a change of venues. Friday's preliminary rounds were conducted at four county high schools and Saturday's final rounds, which this year included an additional bracket of wrestlers, were to be staged at Brandon.

But problems making the transition forced Saturday's 10 a.m. start to be delayed almost two hours and an unfortunate computer malfunction turned the tournament into a very unusual and often confusing spectacle.

The technical glitch reached a disaster point when the computer began spitting out incorrect matchups. After another delay, officials decided to run the semifinals at 4:15 p.m. and then tackle the rest of the consolation matches. The championship matches, which were scheduled for 5 p.m., began at approximately 8:30 p.m. and were held on adjoining mats to save time. The remaining two consolation rounds started midway through the finals and finished at 10:45 p.m. Champions received their medals shortly after 11 p.m.

Unofficially, Clarkston easily finished ahead of the runner-up Troy. The Wolves, who likely captured their fourth title in five years, placed seven in the finals.

Michalski, who is 9-0 on the season, scored a 2-0 decision over Walled Lake Western's Andy Anderson in the championship at 106. It was his third consecutive shutout. He beat Lake Orion's Brian Thomas in the semifinals (2-0) and Hazel Park's Bruce Wallace (3-0) in the quarterfinals. Freshman Saven Sahner (8-1 on the year) placed third.



Falcon flipper: Senior Steven Scanio was a state qualifier in the breast stroke for Farmington last year. He may be asked to swim distance free-style this season to boost the thin Falcons.

Tankers hope to do more with less



Here's something you don't hear very often: The talent pool in Observerland boys swimming is rather shallow this year. But, with a promising crop of underclassmen, it shouldn't stay down long.

BY CHRIS MCCOSKY
STAFF WRITER

High school sports operate, for the most part, on a cyclical basis. Aside from Farmington Harrison football, most programs go through up years and down years.

And, if early scouting reports are any indication, Observerland boys swimming is entering into a down cycle. The Western Lakes Activities Association, long one of the top leagues in the state, is down. Livonia Stevenson, long a perennial state power, is down.

Farmington public school teams? Down.

"No, we aren't where we were last year, but the rest of the league is down," said Coach Dan Knipper, whose North Farmington team was

sixth in the state last season. "We hope to capitalize on the weakness of the league."

Farmington, coming off its best season ever (8-2, second in the WLAA), lost seven top swimmers to graduation and two others who decided not to return to the team.

"We might not have another team like last year for quite a while," said Coach Rosa Bandy. "But we can be competitive."

Over at Harrison, Lisa Collins' building process continues — slow but sure.

"Hey, we already won our first dual meet (last week)," she said.

Truth is, though this may not be a banner season in these parts, there is an exciting crop of freshmen and sophomores that could alter the cycle

rather quickly.

Here's a look at the three area teams.

North Farmington

Karl Kozicki and Jon Kershaw are gone. That alone greatly reduces the Raiders chances of scoring big at the state meet.

But don't count them out of the Western Lakes picture.

"We really should be strong enough to finish second in the league," said Knipper, in his second season. "We don't have a big team (18 swimmers) but they are well-rounded swimmers. We got kids ready to go in every event."

The top point-producers are expected to be seniors Drew Sopha (individual medley and breaststroke), Charlie Jacobs (backstroke, distance freestyle), Ryan McKelley (breaststroke) and Senior Jason Speer (sprint freestyle). Sopha and Speer were state qualifiers a year ago.

Knipper is also expecting big things from two freshmen. Danny Gabriel will swim the backstroke, free-

■ North Farmington and Farmington boys swim teams placed second and third, respectively, in the annual Western Lakes Relays Saturday. Host Plymouth Salem won the meet. Details are on 3C.

style and IM and Chris Randa will go in the butterfly and sprint free. "I would be surprised if we didn't finish at least in the top three in our conference," Knipper said.

Farmington

It was bad enough that Don Boyer, Mark Kurzer, Chris Frump, Mike Emberg and Kevin Yoder graduated. But when Bandy found out that Jon Reed and Mike Langdon opted to concentrate on academics and forego

See 3W28, 3C

Road block: Farmington's Simon Juncos (33) is stopped in his tracks by West Bloomfield's Jarrett Alford Tuesday night. The Falcons fell in OT.



ANN HALEY/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

0-for-1994

1st win eludes Falcons, Hawks

Moral victories really don't count for much. Certainly they don't offer much in the way of consolation to the 0-4 Farmington Falcons.

But score a moral victory nevertheless for the young Falcons Tuesday. They battled a tough and experienced West Bloomfield team into overtime before bowing 66-65.

"We played a great game," said Coach Dennis Mikal. "West Bloomfield is a very good team, and we played them tough. We just didn't hit our free-throw shots."

And that was critical. Farmington, leading by two with 17 seconds left, had a chance to seal the win but missed on a one-and-one free-throw attempt. West Bloomfield sent the game into overtime when Jeff Wilson tipped in a missed shot with three seconds left.

BASKETBALL

"We played good defense on an in-bounds play," Mikal said. "The ball was batted around and Wilson just got the last hand on it."

The free-throw woes buried the Falcons in overtime. They hit 4-of-9. West Bloomfield hit 8-9 and outscored them 17-6. On the night, the Falcons were 14 of 28 from the line.

"We hit some nice shots from the field, but we just didn't knock down the free throws," Mikal said. "The guys shooting them were fresh, we weren't worn down physically. We just didn't hit them."

Charles Mondo led the Lakers (4-1) with 20 points. Wilson had 14 and Tim Donkai added 11. For Farmington, John Stashy scored 17 and Simon Juncos 16.

Jason Jager contributed 11. "We're done for 1994," Mikal said. "We aren't going to think too much about the last part of '94. The first part was OK, though."

■ West. Matt 77, Harrison 72: Painful lessons are being learned at Farmington Harrison these days.

When your most experienced player is a sophomore and your rotation features three freshmen and two other underclassmen, mistakes will be made and games will be lost.

"It's a learning process and these kids understand that," said Coach Mike Tschman, after his Hawks lost their fifth straight game Tuesday. "These kids realize that, with the exception of the Rochester game (last Saturday), they have been in every game."

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