

SPORTS

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THURSDAY, DECEMBER 26, 1996

FARMINGTON — FARMINGTON HILLS SPORTS SCENE

Rubin is top gymnast

Farmington's Brook Rubin captured all-around honors to lead the team in a gymnastics tri-meet Dec. 18 with Birmingham Seaholm and Grosse Pointe North.

Rubin won three events and compiled a total score of 34.00. She received an 8.5 on vault, 8.4 on bars and 8.75 on floor exercise. Rubin tied with teammate Deanna Vacca for second place on beam with 8.35.

Farmington's Marie Law was second (33.10) in all-around, Kelly Barenie fourth (31.45), Vacca fifth (31.40) and Anna Clark sixth (30.45).

Law captured first place on beam (8.5) and was second on bars (8.2), third on vault (8.15) and fourth on floor (8.25).

Barenie tied for fourth on vault (8.05) and floor. Vacca tied Rubin for second place on beam and was third on floor (8.35). Clark was fifth on beam (7.85).

Farmington, a combined team of gymnasts from all three high schools, returns to competition Monday, Jan. 6, at Westland John Glenn.

North drops tourney game

A slow start was costly for North Farmington as the Raiders lost to host Northville in the consolation game of a holiday basketball tournament Monday, 74-66.

The Mustangs had a 9-0 run to start the game and never trailed.

They also benefited from a huge advantage at the free-throw line. Northville shot 50 free throws and made 37; North was 13-of-24.

Ray Lousia scored 17 points, which included five three-point baskets, to lead the Raiders (1-3). Brad Rivers and Carter Campbell added nine apiece. Kirk Moundros had 10 rebounds.

Kelly Bingley also led the Mustangs with 17 points. Dave Terabejus, who was 10-of-10 shooting free throws, tossed in 15 and Luis Gundardo 10.

Northville led 21-10 after one quarter, 36-25 at halftime and 54-38 at the end of three periods.

In the first round Saturday, the Raiders faced a hot-shooting Novi team and lost 65-42. The Wildcats made 33 of 50 field goals for 66 percent. North made 18 of 46 shots and also committed 23 turnovers.

"We were in the giving spirit," North coach Brian Swinehart said. "We're not talented enough that we can turn the ball over a lot and still miss shots."

Rivers scored 12 points and Scott Gold six. Novi's Pat Lyskawa netted 13 points and Kyle Kearney 12.

Kershaw stars at invite

Junior Jon Kershaw of Farmington Hills (North Farmington) swam a lifetime best of 45.59 to place third in the 100 freestyle at the Husky Swim Invitational Dec. 5-8 in Seattle, Wash.

Competing for the University of Wyoming, Kershaw also placed 15th in the 50 freestyle (21.91) and 28th in the 100 butterfly (53.95). The latter time was a lifetime best, too.

Kershaw was on the 400 freestyle relay team that placed first with a time of 3:05.91. His split time of 45.62 for 100 meters was the fastest of the four.

In the relay prelims, Kershaw swam 45.59 to put him in fourth place on Wyoming's all-time best list for that event.

"Jon is having his best start ever at Wyoming," coach Mark Miller said. "He is swimming with confidence and should have a good year for the Cowboys."

Memorial tennis tourney

The Sports Club of West Bloomfield and The Tennis Company are hosting the second annual Nick Pishvanov Memorial Doubles Tournament on Saturday, Jan. 4.

Proceeds from the event will benefit leukemia research at Washington University School of Medicine.

The double-elimination format tournament runs 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. Divisions of competition include Open, and USTA rankings of 7.0, 8.0 and 9.0 in both men's and women's divisions.

A pre-tournament dinner and silent auction begins at 7 p.m. Friday, Jan. 3.

An exhibition match between ATP touring pro Steve Hellemea of Bloomfield Hills and Ed Nagy of West Bloomfield, will also be held.

Nicholas A. Pishvanov, Jr., died of leukemia in 1995 at the age of 39. He is survived by his wife, Ellen and three children, Nicholas, 17; Kim, 12; and Kristin, 8.

Last year the event raised \$13,000. The minimum donation per entry, which includes the Friday night dinner and exhibition, is \$35 per player.

To register or obtain more information call The Sports Club at (810) 626-9880.

Hills players pace Cubs

A pair of Farmington Hills players helped the University of Detroit-Jacout defeat Dearborn Divine Child in boys basketball last week, 50-44.

Junior guard Joe Clinton and junior forward Jon Respiarski scored 11 points apiece to lead the Cubs to their first victory in three games.

Eric Gehmenek also scored 11 points to pace Divine Child.

Shamrocks remain unbeaten



Catholic Central added rival Brother Rice to its list of hockey opponents who have fallen prey to Shamrocks, who are 7-0. Nick Kaleniecki paced winners with a pair of goals in the 5-1 victory.

Detroit Catholic Central hockey coach Gordie St. John loved the surroundings and the results weren't bad either.

The Shamrocks beat rival Birmingham Brother Rice, 5-1, on Friday night at the Warriors' new home — the six-month old Computware Ice Arena in Plymouth Township.

CC led 1-0 after one period and 4-1 after two. The Shamrocks outshot the Warriors, 19-9.

All that was missing was a big CC following. With the CC hockey team

playing at the same time at home, the crowd wasn't as large as hoped.

"Computware is beautiful, a fabulous facility," St. John said. "We play them again and I'm sure they'll give us a run the next time. I hope we pack them in when we play at our place."

The win improved the Shamrocks to 7-0 overall, 4-0 in the Metro Hockey League. They are 3-0 against West Division opponents.

As much as the Shamrocks dominated statistically, it's surprising

the Warriors scored their only goal while short-handed.

Four players scored goals for CC, led by Nick Kaleniecki with a pair.

Senior forward Eric Bratcher opened the scoring with a goal assisted by Brett Murphy and Ian Devlin at 3:00 of the first period.

The Warriors tied the score with a short-handed goal by Mike Swistak assisted by Joe Kustrin at 4:02 of the second period.

Johnston pulled away, however, scoring three goals in the final four minutes of the second period.

Devlin's goal, assisted by Scott Curtin and Bratcher, came at 11:23. The Shamrocks took a 3-1 lead with a goal by Curtin assisted by Curtin at 12:57. Kaleniecki's goal, assisted by Murphy and Devlin, came 16 sec-

onds later to build the lead to 4-1.

Kaleniecki finished the scoring at 1:50 of the third period. Nick Lowman picked up the lone assist.

CC junior Ricky Marron earned the victory in net.

Rice used two goalies: Aaron Jones and Paul Lamarre.

The Shamrocks are idle until Saturday, Jan. 4 when they host Allen Park Cabrini.

"The boys are doing a good job," St. John said. "We have to work on staying out of the penalty box, opening up lanes."

"Any time you've got a physical team, you tend to put them (penalties) away more often. We're trying to work on technique so our elbows, arms and sticks are down. So they don't get caught."

Track athletes hope to get out of blocks faster

BY WILLIAM COUTANT
STAFF WRITER

Sometimes a quick start can make all of the difference in the world, as in world record.

With that in mind, Allen Johnson, the 1996 Olympic champion hurdler took part in one of his more unusual workouts.

Johnson, his coach and several high school athletes worked on their starts using a special computerized starting block at Botsford General Hospital's Total Rehabilitation and Athletic Conditioning Center on Grand River in Novi Nov. 23-24.

"The start can mean two hundredths of a second," said Johnson, the Olympic and world champion who trains in South Carolina. "Everything matters in a race, so I work on every aspect."

Johnson's coach, Curtis Frye, said his athlete's success at remaining No. 1 is due in part because he has started well in big races.

"Allen stays in great condition, and he does not make many mistakes," Frye said. "But, if you come out too low on a start, it takes a lot of energy to make up for that. And at some point in the race it will hurt you."

And shaving milliseconds off his time is what brought Johnson and his coach to Michigan last month.

They and several high school students were the guests of TRACC and professor Doug Briggs of Eastern Michigan University.

Briggs, 54, has been working with elite athletes over the past few years on their starts in an attempt to develop a better starting block and to find a more scientific method of determining whether an athlete has false started.

"I started in sprints," said the University of Leeds graduate who left his native England 17 years ago to do post-graduate work in the United States.

Briggs studied sports medicine and engineering at the University of Oregon and Indiana University after winning the silver medal in the

1,500 meters at the 1964 Olympic Games in Tokyo.

He has convinced world-class athletes that perfecting a starting block system can cut down on false starts while improving the starts of athletes at every level.

"What we're trying to do is develop a new block that allows them to get out faster to the 10-meter mark," said Briggs.

He said Johnson, who has run just .01 seconds slower than the world record, could cut about .0345 seconds off his start.

Chip Bridges, Farmington High School track coach, was invited to bring two of his athletes, freshman Dustin Greas and junior Monique Bush, to try the new blocks.

"It's a good way to get them thinking about their start," Bridges said. "And it's good to see someone like Allen Johnson with the kind of class doing this sort of thing. It's pretty classy of him."

Bush said she had some difficulty adjusting to the higher blocks but wanted to improve her start.

"I was pretty nervous," she said after trying the new blocks. "But I was glad to get a chance to work on my start."

Harrison High junior Keith Battle, Mercy High sophomore Angka Morris, Novi senior Jason Witherspoon, Novi junior Wesley VanLandeschoot and Novi senior Scott Keys also took part in the experiment.

In addition to helping athletes come out of the blocks in better position, training on them actually improves an athlete's starting technique, Briggs said.

"We tried Allen (Johnson) on the regular blocks in the afternoon and saw an improvement after he'd used the high starting blocks," he said. "They don't alter the mechanics."

Another improvement Briggs hopes the new technology will bring is a fairer treatment of false starts. During the Olympics, 1992 Olympic 100-meter champion Lynford Christie false started out of the

See BLOCKS, C4



New technology: U.S. Olympic hurdler Allen Johnson tests the new starting blocks that are being developed at Botsford General Hospital's Total Rehabilitation and Athletic Conditioning Center in Farmington Hills.

BY DAN O'MEARA
STAFF WRITER

Matt Gordon saved his best for last.

The senior wide receiver concluded his collegiate football career with his best season playing for Alma College this year.

A graduate of Farmington Harrison High School, Gordon caught 66 passes for 723 yards and four touchdowns in 1996. He was ranked fourth among Division III receivers and 18th in the nation. Gordon is eighth on the Alma career list for receptions and 10th for receiving yards.

"I knew it was going to come eventually; I just didn't know when," he said. "I started as a sophomore until I broke my collarbone, and my junior year I only had 25 catches. My senior year I guess was my year to step up."

Gordon benefited from the run-and-shoot offense and the play of senior quarterback Bill Nietzko, who set all kinds of records while completing 248 passes for 3,197 yards and 28 touchdowns.

"He should have started the last two years,"

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Gordon said. "We're good friends and it was kinda cool that we hooked up as seniors."

"The other guy ran the ball more. He ran around and tried to do things himself. Nietzko could stay in the pocket and read defenses better. He knew what to do."

Gordon was the team's leading receiver but one of four who started in the Alma offense. Three of the top six receivers in the Michigan Intercollegiate Athletic Association this year played for the Scots.

"I was more of a possession receiver this year than a deep man," said the 5-foot-8, 165-pound Gordon. "I was more of a hands-on type of guy."

"I think I dropped one pass all year; anything close to me I caught. On third down, I was the go-to guy."

Despite the great passing stats and an offense averaging close to 40 points a game, Alma finished with a 4-5 record.

Gordon, who had 79 career receptions for 1,002 yards, accomplished a great deal for someone who

didn't think he would ever play football again when he graduated from high school in 1992.

He played on Harrison's Class BB state championship team in 1991 but was in the shadow of all-league receiver Duante Anderson.

Gordon went to Oakland Community College and was out of football in 1992, but he said Alma coach Jim Cole encouraged him to try playing for the Scots.

He missed all but the last three games of his sophomore year due to the injury but was a regular in the lineup the last two seasons.

"I grew stronger and got a better feel for the game," said Gordon of his college experience. "At Harrison, I was surrounded by lot of great players and was given more of a chance (at Alma). Even though I played at Harrison, I didn't get the ball like I did at Alma."

"I got a great education along with being able to play football. That's why I knew it was a great opportunity for me."

Gordon, who majored in communications and minored in business, graduated earlier this month and is currently looking to put his education to use in the job market.