

## FARMINGTON- FARMINGTON HILLS SPORTS SCENE

### Whalers win close one

One team was on top of the league. The other was at the bottom of the division.

Know what? It didn't matter. The Plymouth Whalers, ranked No. 1 in the Canadian Hockey League and sporting the best record in the Ontario Hockey League, had to battle all the way against West Division rival — and cellar-dweller — Windsor Thursday. In the end, it took an overtime goal by Nikos Tselios to win it for the Whalers, 4-3 in Windsor.

Plymouth improved to 50-11-4 with the win. The Spitfires fell to 21-38-6. Harold Druken led the Whalers, scoring his league-leading 55th goal of the season and assisting on two others — including the game-winner, which Tselios scored 3:43 into OT. It was his 20th of the season.

Randy Fitzgerald's 15th goal of the season had given Plymouth a 1-0 lead after one period. Jason Polak scored twice for the Spitfires in the second period, sandwiched around Druken's goal to twice tie it, at 1-1 and 2-2. David Legwand's 30th marker of the season, scored with 43 seconds left in the period gave Plymouth a 3-2 lead after two.

Windsor's Joey Sewell knotted it at 3-all with 4:26 left in the third period.

Rob Zepp made 27 saves in goal to get the win for Plymouth. Ron Vogel had 33 stops for Windsor.

The Whalers host Windsor at 6:30 p.m. tonight, then conclude their regular season at Brampton Friday.

### Race workers needed

More than 100 volunteers are needed for the 23rd Annual West Bloomfield Half-Marathon, scheduled for Sunday, April 18.

For the past 22 years volunteers have played an important role in the success of the annual race, which takes runners through the picturesque streets of West Bloomfield.

Volunteers are needed once again to help pass out t-shirts and race numbers at registration, to hand out water on the course, and to help cheer runners and walkers on the course. Volunteers will also assist runners as they make their way through the chute at the finish line.

Sponsored by West Bloomfield Parks and Recreation, Henry Ford Medical Center-West Bloomfield and Singh Development, the half-marathon and the 5K run/walk begin at West Bloomfield High School. The 13.1-mile half-marathon is slated to begin at 12:45 p.m. while the 5K (3.1 miles) run/walk begins at 10:30 a.m.

The annual Kids Run, sponsored by Henry Ford Health System's Maple-grove Center, begins at 11:30 a.m. on the track at West Bloomfield High School.

Early registration for the half-marathon is \$17 before April 9 and \$20 after that date. Early registration for the 5K is \$14 before April 9 and \$16 thereafter. Early registration for the Kids Run is \$10 before April 12 and \$12 after April 12.

For more information call West Bloomfield Parks and Recreation at (248) 738-2600 or visit the recreation department's web site at <http://metronet.lib.mi.us/WEST/FPAR/RSW/pbhome.html>.

### Prep coaches needed

Farmington Public Schools is looking for qualified applicants to fill a position for a JV girls soccer coach effective immediately. All interested applicants should contact Athletic Director Brian Swinehart at (248) 489-3352.

Birmingham Marian High School athletic officials are in desperate need of a junior varsity softball coach for the upcoming season.

Practices are slated to begin March 15. The season runs through May 31. Games are played weekdays beginning 4 p.m., and some Saturdays are involved.

For further information, call Birmingham Marian athletic director Jane Kudej at (248) 644-1954 Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Farmington Hills Mercy School is searching for a varsity pom-pom coach. If interested call Mercy Athletic Director Nancy Malinowski at (248) 476-2835.

(Readers can fax information for the Farmington Observer Sports Scene to Sports Editor Dan O'Meara at (734) 591-7279).

## Medunjanin leads North to title

Junior Emir Medunjanin had a big night offensively Friday while leading North Farmington to a district crown in boys basketball. North was a 58-45 winner over Farmington behind a 38-point effort by Medunjanin, a 6-foot-6 center.

BY DAN O'MEARA  
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Let's switch games for a moment from basketball to Jeopardy.

Answer: This player almost single-handedly carried North Farmington to a Class A district tournament title in boys basketball Friday.

Question: Who is Emir Medunjanin? Explaining this one is pretty simple: Medunjanin scored a career-high 38 points, and the Raiders defeated rival Farmington in the championship game at Bloomfield Hills Lahser, 58-45.

The junior center connected on 16 of 22 field goals, shooting an incredible 73 percent from the floor. At the free-throw line, Medunjanin was 6-of-11.

"I didn't want it to be our last game; I wanted to step up," Medunjanin said. "I wanted to come back in the gym on Sunday. I was just on; I wanted the ball."

Medunjanin, who was a pre-teen growing up in Europe when North last won a district, will face his old teammates Tuesday in a regional game. The Raiders (18-4) will play Southfield-Lathrup (20-3) at Birmingham Groves.

Medunjanin, who came to the United States in late 1996 from Bosnia via Germany, played his freshman year at Lathrup before transferring to North.

"It will be great to see those guys again," he said. "They're all guys I played with on JV."

Winning a district championship was a special accomplishment and a new experience for Medunjanin and his teammates.

"I never thought how it was over here — the district and all," he said. "Now that I've learned what the district is all about, it means a lot to me and the team, especially (senior) Albert (Doljosevic), because he never won a district."

"But the most important thing is we're going back to work and going to get ready for the regional."

Medunjanin missed his first shot attempt, but he made his next six in a row as the Raiders kept feeding him the ball in the low post. Until the final two minutes of the first quarter, he was the only North player to shoot at the basket.

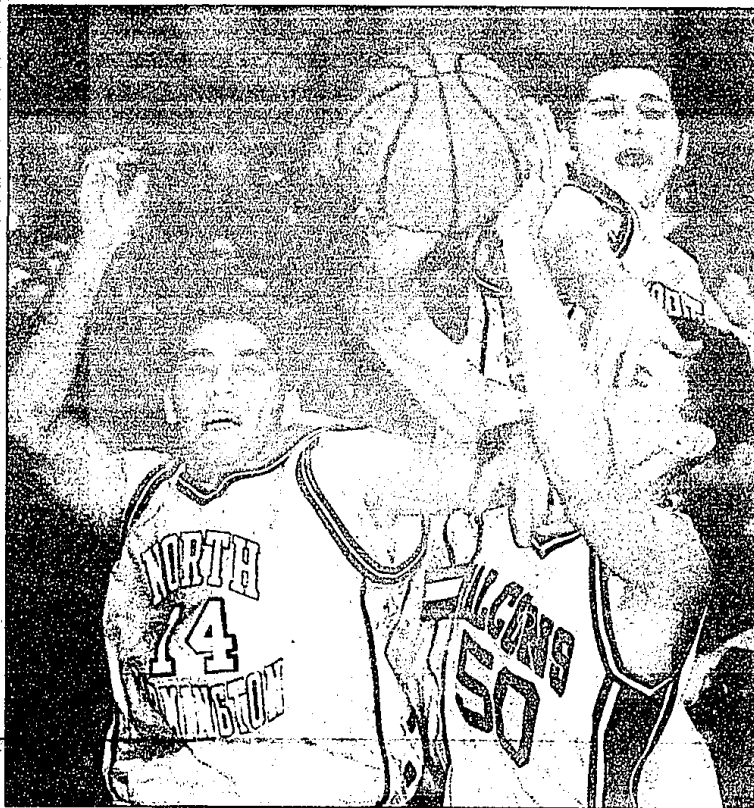
"Coach (Tom Negoshian) said 'Get him the ball. The other guys understand how we were going to play tonight,'" Medunjanin said. "Albert, Matt Kelmigian, Phil Watha and the other guys did a great job of getting me the ball inside."

North led 16-9 after one quarter with Medunjanin scoring 12. He was 4-of-4 in the second quarter and finished the first half with 21 points on 10-of-11 shooting. Not surprisingly then, North led at halftime, 25-16.

"He had one of those nights," Negoshian said. "There was no coaching involved. That was just a kid having a great night."

"To the kids' credit, they kept riding him. They knew he was doing well and kept going to him. There was no game plan or any of that."

The Falcons (9-13) put a double-team on Medunjanin to start the second half



'Now that's aggressive defense': Farmington junior Brian Davies gets hammered by North's Matt Kelmigian (left) and Mike Patterson attempting a layup Friday in the district championship game.

and forced him outside. He missed a pair of three-point attempts before moving back inside, making his last four shots and scoring 10 points in the third quarter.

"We tried everything we could to stop him," Farmington coach Denny Mikel said. "We played him one-on-one; we zoned him; we double-teamed him whenever he touched the ball. It seemed whatever we tried he found a way to get around our defensive scheme."

"The first time we played them we caught him on off night (seven points in a 45-35 North win). We did the same things we did that night, but he was better tonight. He was ready to play."

The Raiders led 40-23 following a three-point play by Medunjanin. The Falcons scored the next nine (seven by C.J. Whitfield) to get within 10 at the end of the third quarter, 42-32.

Whitfield, who led Farmington with 10 points, put the Falcons within eight again to start the fourth quarter, but North refused to give any more ground.

Medunjanin scored five of the next eight as the Raiders built a 50-36 lead

with two minutes remaining.

"We made a little bit of a run at them," Mikel said. "I don't know if we scared them or not, but we had some momentum going there. But they came back with a bucket and got back in the game."

"North has had a great season. We're up and down. We were up last night against Harrison and hoped to keep playing at that level, but we had too many turnovers."

"We're a young team; we'll work through it and hope to get back here next year."

Brian Shulman added eight points, Watha five and Adrian Bridges four for North, which shot 47 percent from the floor (20-of-43).

Farmington's Brian Davies had eight points, Garlin Gilchrist six, Justin Milus and Matt Mikel five each, Chad Seaborn and Charlie Avery four apiece. The Falcons were 16-of-49 (31 percent) from the field.

The Raiders made 18 of 31 free throws, zero of nine threes. The Falcons were 13-of-19 at the line and 2-of-13 behind the arc.



Top scorer: Emir Medunjanin scored 38 to lead the Raiders.

## Falcons roar past Hawks in semifinal

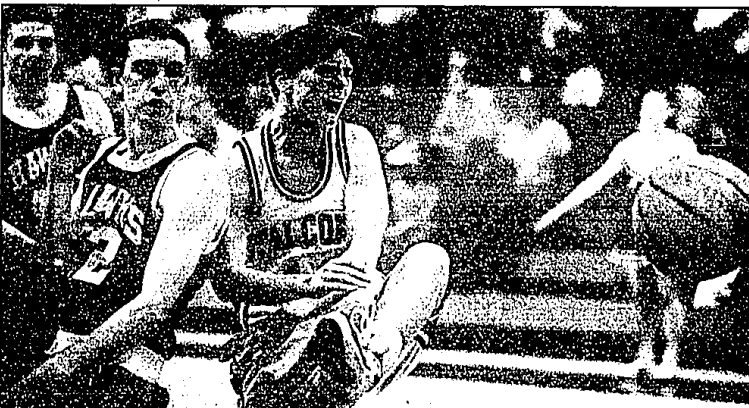
BY DAN O'MEARA  
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Led by hot-shooting junior Garlin Gilchrist, Farmington High became an offensive machine in the second half of a district tournament basketball game Thursday.

The Falcons shot an impressive 65 percent after halftime and charged past Farmington Harrison for a 56-45 victory in the semifinals at Bloomfield Hills Lahser.

It marked the second straight year Farmington has upset Harrison in the district.

The Falcons came from behind a year ago to beat the Hawks in the championship game, 43-41. Farmington also



Intra-city district duel: Farmington sophomore guard Matt Mikel (right) has the ball knocked away by Harrison senior Bobby Austin in a district game Thursday. Farmington upset Harrison, 56-45.