

FARMINGTON — FARMINGTON HILLS SPORTS SCENE

Whalers extend streak

The Plymouth Whalers utilized a suffocating defense in taking care of the Brampton (Ontario) Battalion, 4-1, Thursday in Brampton. The win was their 10th straight, pushing their lead in the Ontario Hockey League's West Division to seven points over the South St. Marie Greyhounds.

The Whalers are 36-17-4 overall, the second-best record in the OHL.

Stephen Weiss gave Plymouth a lead it would not relinquish, scoring on the power play 4:53 into the opening period. Shaun Fisher and Tomas Kurka assisted.

Two second-period goals clinched it for the Whalers. Damian Surma got his 31st of the season 42 seconds into the period, with assists from Justin Williams and Libor Ustrnul. James Ramsay increased Plymouth's lead to 3-0 with 6:09 elapsed in the period; assists went to Rob McBride and George Niatas.

The Battalion (21-29-7) got one back 9:19 into the third period when Jeff Bateman scored. But that was all Brampton could muster; Williams scored with 30 seconds remaining (Randy Fitzgerald assisting) to give the Whalers their final margin.

Rob Zepp stopped 22 of 23 shots in goal for Plymouth. Scott Della Vedova faced 35 shots for the Battalion.

Semi-pro grid tryouts

The Wayne County Twisters will conduct a pro-style combine as they search for players for the upcoming season. The Twisters are a semi-pro squad of mainly arena players.

The tryouts will be at 2 p.m. March 5 and 12 at the Wayne-Westland YMCA, located at 827 N. Wayne. Registration fee is \$20, payable at sign-in. Candidates must be high school graduates and at least 18 years old.

The combine will consist of a bench and standing press, vertical jump, 40-yard dash, quarter-mile run and shuttle and agility drills. Only serious applicants need apply.

Pistons/Shock Clinic

Members of the Detroit Pistons and Detroit Shock will put on a basketball clinic Saturday afternoon, March 18, at Ward Presbyterian Church, located at 40000 Six Mile (west of Haggerty) in Northville.

Boys and girls in third to eighth grades are encouraged to attend. The cost is \$15.

Session I (grades 3-5) will run from 2-3:15 p.m. Session II (grades 6-8) will run from 3:30-4:45 p.m. Arrive 15 minutes early to register or pre-register at the Ward Presbyterian Church by Friday, March 10.

Parents are invited to attend (no additional charge). The clinic includes five follow-up Saturdays of open basketball practice from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Fundamental basketball skills will be emphasized (ball handling, passing, shooting, defense and rebounding). For further information, call (248) 374-6937.

Lady Crusaders ousted

Another women's basketball season is in the books at Madonna University. The Lady Crusaders finished the season with a 12-15 record after losing Thursday to host Siena Heights in the first round of the Wolverine-Hoosier Athletic Conference playoffs, 87-84.

The Saints (15-17) had four players score in double figures led by Kelly Abdo's 18. Siena, the No. 4 seed, advanced to Saturday's WHAC semifinals to face No. 8 Tri-State (Ind.).

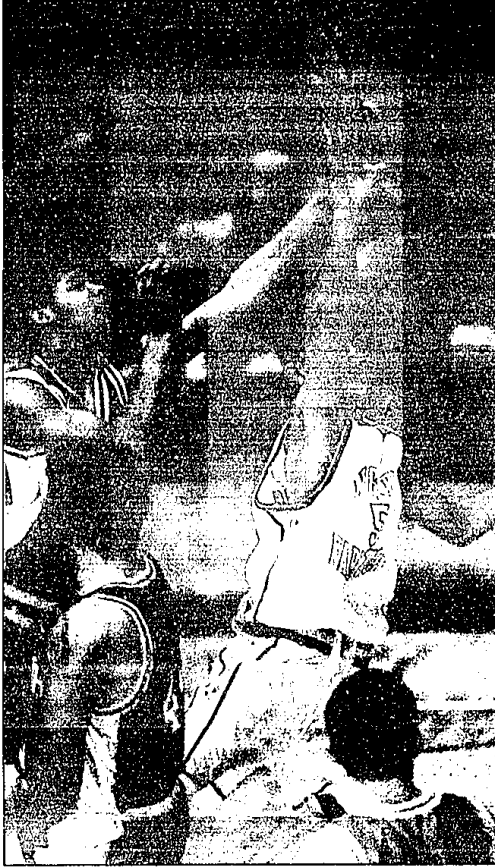
Madonna, down 48-38 at intermission, rallied in the second half by hitting 15 of 18 free throws.

Guard Chris Dietrich had 23 points and five assists to lead the Crusaders. Plymouth Canton grad Kristi Fiorenzi had 14 points and 12 rebounds.

Girls hockey team?

The mothers of student-athletes are seeking input to determine the level of interest in having a girls varsity hockey team in the Farmington Public Schools district.

Any high school girls or their parents who would like to have a school-sponsored team should call either Mary Stahl at 478-2343, Nora Escott at 477-0928 or Rosemary Shaw at 442-9730. The area code is 248 for all. Stahl said the group would like to put together a proposal and take it to the school board for its consideration.



Playoff action: North's Phil Watha drives to the basket past Canton's Kenny Nether and other onlookers. Watha scored 16 points.

Raiders headed to tourney final after 48-45 win



Despite the loss of Adrian Bridges to injury and a low-scoring game by Emir Medunjanin, North Farmington defeated Plymouth Canton in the Western Lakes Activities Association tournament semifinals in boys basketball.

BY DAN O'MEARA
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To use a baseball analogy, North Farmington had two strikes against it on the basketball court Friday but ended up hitting a home run.

The Raiders overcame setbacks that reduced their strength in the post to defeat visiting Plymouth Canton in a Western Lakes Activities Association semifinal game, 48-45.

North entered the contest without senior Adrian Bridges, their top rebounder who suffered a potential season-ending knee injury in a playoff opener Wednesday.

Furthermore, its leading scorer and best player, Emir Medunjanin, was in foul trouble and didn't score after the first quarter. He had six points.

Who would give the Raiders a chance to win under those circumstances? "Honestly, I think we might lose," said senior Phil Watha, who scored 13 of his 16 points in the second half to lead the North to victory.

"Without Emir and Adrian, other guys had to step up. Everyone steps up at certain times. I guess today was my day. I just go out there and try to do the best I can."

North (14-5) advances to the WLAA championship game for the second year in a row and will play Plymouth Salem at 7 p.m. Wednesday at Livonia Churchill.

North also had nine points from senior guard Brian Shulman; senior Mike Primeau filed a role in the post and contributed eight points, and

junior Mike Patterson added six points, too.

"We have a saying 'Parts are parts.' We plug in another one and, hopefully, we can be successful," North coach Tom Negoshian said.

"I told the kids that early in the year, they knew it after the Renaissance game (in which Medunjanin and Bridges didn't play)."

The Chiefs (9-10) had a game-high 17 points from senior Kenny Nether, who kept Canton in it with 10 in the second half.

Senior Jason Waidmann scored eight of his 10 points in the first half, and senior Dan McLean tossed in eight in a supporting role.

"(The Raiders) beat us by 15 the first time; it wasn't even close," Canton coach Danny Young said. "We were just trying to give ourselves a chance."

"I'm proud of my kids. They have to understand (after this game) they can play and beat anyone if they put their minds to it and play hard."

North had a 46-41 lead with a minute remaining, but Nether sank a three to make the outcome a toss-up.

Following three straight turnovers (two by North), Nether was fouled with six-plus seconds left; he missed the first but made the second for a one-point difference.

Watha was fouled on the inbound play and sank both free throws to clinch the win. A Canton player at the end was off target.

"(Watha) is a good, clutch player,"

Please see RAIDERS, B5

Warriors win 3rd period, edge Flyers

Pat Morrow scored a pair of power-play goals in the third period Friday to lift host Birmingham Brother Rice to a 5-3 hockey victory over Farmington.

After the Flyers had rallied to tie the score in the second period, Morrow broke the stalemate early in the third (14:08) and added an empty-net goal with 28 seconds remaining.

The Warriors took a 3-0 lead in the first period. Jason Tooles and Kyle Danaher scored less than a minute apart (7:30 and 8:42) to make it 3-0.

"The three goals were the result of mistakes we made," Farmington coach Glenn Breuhan said. "They were coverage mistakes and they capitalized."

HOCKEY

"But the kids showed a lot of poise by coming back and never giving up. In the first period, we hit the crossbar and had two or three quality scoring chances."

Ross Patterson put the Flyers on the scoreboard at Honeybaked Arena with assists from Matt Lee and Kevin Temerowski at 5:35 in the first period.

"They put a tough forecheck on us that we had a hard time breaking early on," Breuhan said. "They were taking away the boards on our breakouts."

"We were trying to hit the winger

with a pass. Their defensemen came down and played the man as soon as we got the puck, and they had another man trapping. They surrounded the puck with three players, so we couldn't get the puck out.

"That forces you to bring the puck up the middle, and the defensemen have to handle the puck more. We struggled with that."

Temerowski and Brad Heraghty scored power-play goals in the second period to tie, 3-3. Patterson and Heraghty assisted on the first goal, Preston Picard and Lee on the second.

Heraghty, who missed about half the season with a separated shoulder, is

still one of Farmington's leading scorers, trailing only Lee in points.

"It was a tough game for (Heraghty on Friday)," Breuhan said. "He had five penalties, but they were whacking him all game long."

"A lot of Rice kids played with Brad and knew what kind of player he is, and they were whacking and hacking, trying to get him off his game."

Farmington had a 25-22 edge in shots on goal. Logan McLean was in goal for the Flyers, Chris Eppert for the Warriors, who are only 5-13-5 but play in the rugged Michigan Inter-

Please see FLYERS, B3

Metro Flyers capture title

The Metro Flyers Pee Wee B team won a divisional championship in the 12th Annual Capitals Golden Blades Hockey Tournament Jan. 28-30.

The Golden Blades, which was played at the Ice Box in Brownstown Township and the Monroe Multi-Sports Complex, is the oldest girls and women's ice hockey tournament in Michigan.

In their first game, the Flyers blanked the Ann Arbor Bobcats, 3-0, but lost their next game to the Essex County (Ontario) Blues, 1-0.

The Flyers regrouped to score a 9-0 victory over the Canadians the next day. Catherine Shaw led the Flyers with four goals, and her sister, Adrienne, scored three goals. Nicole Stahl and Amanda Rowley added one goal each.

The championship game was a cliffhanger until the end, as the Flyers and the Blues played to a scoreless tie through three periods and one overtime session.

The Flyers won the game with a goal by Catherine Shaw and an assist from Adrienne Shaw in the second overtime.

Farmington/Farmington Hills residents on the Metro Flyers roster are Stahl, the Shaw sisters, Kourtney Spaulding and Kristen Bourgon.



Hockey champs: The members of the Metro Flyers hockey team are (front row, left to right) Adrienne Shaw, Catherine Shaw, Kourtney Spaulding, (second row) Laura Connor, Lauren O'Connell, Carol Soborowski, (third row) Jennifer Loomis, Amanda Rowley, Madison Smith, Nicole Stahl, Corrine Czekaj, (fourth row) Olivia Pennebaker, Amanda Perry, Kristen Bourgon, Danielle Lupu, (back row) assistant coach Jack Smith, manager Frank Lupu, head coach Joe Monardo and assistant coach Jim Connor.