

Champions:
Farmington
Hills Mercy
softball
players and
coaches pose
for a team
photo after
winning the
Catholic
League title
Wednesday
by defeating
Livonia
Ladywood in
a five-inning
mercy, 10-0.



Vellucci from page B1

manager/coach of the Compuware Ambassadors in 1993. In his seven seasons in that capacity, the Ambassadors won four North American Hockey League titles and two national championships. Twice he was named the NAHL Executive of the Year ('94 and '96) and was NAHL Coach of the Year once ('98).

His regular-season record in those seven seasons was an impressive 241-82-27, a .689 winning percentage. For six straight seasons, Vellucci guided the Ambassadors into the Gold Cup National Jr. 'A' Championship Tournament, winning it in 1994 and 1999.

In a statement to the media, Karmanos said: "We are very pleased to be able to fill this position with someone as qualified as Mike. Mike has proven he knows what it takes to be successful, having won two national championships."

"We are fortunate to have a person within our organization with his experience. The fact he already knows the players and the staff should allow for a smooth transition for everybody involved."

Vellucci said he did not expect to be in this position, although he always hoped to be. "I'd like to thank Peter for giving me this opportunity to coach," he said. "It's been a lifelong dream."

"To be honest with you, when I was promoted last year to president I pretty much gave up any

idea of coaching. I thought Pete DeBoer would be here a long time.

"I figured I'd concentrate on the administration end of it." DeBoer's abrupt departure altered all that. It's hoped his sudden exodus won't change anything else with the Whalers, which ranks as one of the OHL's premier organizations.

Vellucci is well-acquainted with many of the Whalers, both past and present. While with the Ambassadors, he coached future Whaler stars such as David Legwand (now playing with Nashville in the NHL), Justin Williams (playing for Philadelphia) and Brent Johnson (now with St. Louis).

He's also coached current standouts such as Damian Surma, Jared Newman, Nate Kiser, Andre Robichaud and James Wisniewski (from Canton).

"Not many things will change this year," Vellucci said. "And as far as coaching, not too much will change."

"I'm an emotional coach. Players will know where they stand with me. My door's always open to them."

It won't be easy following in DeBoer's footsteps. The former coach guided the Whalers to the brink of the last two OHL Championships.

Now it's Vellucci's turn, to see if he can take them to the summit.

Hawks defeat Spartans

In an effort to stay sharp between weekend baseball games Wednesday, Farmington Harrison defeated Livonia Stevenson, 4-1.

The Hawks, who won the Western Lakes Activities Association championship May 26, were hosts for a Division II district tournament Saturday.

Senior Matt Zatkun (7-0) pitched the fourth inning and got the win when Harrison scored two runs in the top of the fifth inning to break a scoreless tie.

Senior Tim Doig pitched the first two innings and threw just 20 pitches, two over the minimum, and struck out four.

He threw nine strikes and two balls in the first inning and struck out the side on nine pitches in the second.

Sophomore Andy Wingert worked the third inning for Harrison (21-5), sophomore Mike Sacha the fifth and junior Rob Whipple the final two innings.

Drew Stanton and Nick Vitanis had two hits apiece to lead the Hawks offensively. Doig and Stanton had two RBI each.

Four players had one hit apiece for the Spartans. Pete Pinto doubled and scored the Stevenson run on Gary Zielke's RBI single.



Start Photo by Tom Havel

Scoring play: Mercy's Rachel Del Corvo (6) signals to Anna Schneider she doesn't have to slide at home plate, but coach Nancy Malinowski seems less certain of that.

walks. Schneider hit a two-run single; O'Malley and Shina knocked in one run each with base hits, and Lindsey Fediuk had an RBI on a fielder's choice.

"We did bobble the ball a little bit early," Lulek said. "You can't do that against them. If we make those plays, it might have been 0-0 going into the fourth."

"Defensively, we're usually very sound. If we make one error in a game, that's the max. That's not to take anything away from Mercy. They hit the ball and made us field it."

Both coaches agreed the score is not indicative of the quality team Ladywood has; Lulek added the Blazers still have the state tournament ahead for them, as do the Marlins.

"I told the kids to hold their heads up," Lulek said, adding the Blazers play Dearborn Divine Child in a Division II district game. "If we hold our heads down, they'll clobber us like Mercy did."

Falvo said the championship for Mercy is the result of dedicated efforts by a lot of people involved with the program.

"For the JV and freshman coaches and the dads who take the summer program, it's a reflection on them more than me," Falvo said, "as well as the parents who support the program conscientiously and consistently."

KETTERING 4, N. FARMINGTON 0: Jessica Brubaker earned softball bragging rights at the Brubaker household Wednesday.

She pitched her Waterford Kettering team to a 4-0 victory over host North Farmington, which is coached by her father, Dave Brubaker.

The younger Brubaker, a senior who will play for her dad at Madonna Uni-

sity next year, allowed four hits and struck out five.

The win was Brubaker's 133rd of her career against 15 losses and puts her in second place on the list for all-time prep victories.

Beth Danielewicz started for North but left the game after being hit on her pitching hand while battling in the bottom of the first inning.

Christina Colombo finished the game for the Raiders, allowing 10 of 11 hits while striking out three and walking one.

Lindsey Taub, Colombo, Staci Russell and Jehan Hinds had one hit apiece for North (23-11).

HIGH SCHOOL

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(Left to Right) Paul W. Smith, Rachel Andersen, and Frank Bockmann

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