

FARMINGTON —
FARMINGTON HILLS
SPORTS
SCENE

Bryant leaves Ohio State

The Columbus (Ohio) Dispatch reported Thursday former Farmington Harrison all-state wide receiver Ricky Bryant is transferring from Ohio State to Division I-AA Hofstra University in Hempstead, N.Y.

In a story written by Tim May of the Dispatch sports staff, Bryant, who is the all-time leader in pass receptions at Harrison, planned to start classes Monday at Hofstra.

"You've got to do what you've got to do," Bryant told the Dispatch. "My dad always told me, 'I know you don't want to pick up and leave your friends and start all over. But if your goal is to get to the next level, you've got to get on film.'"

"If I stay here, I'm not going to get on film. I'm just trying to do what I think is best for me at this point."

Bryant will be able to play next season at Hofstra and will have two years of eligibility remaining.

Ohio State coach Jim Tressel released Bryant from his scholarship and reportedly assisted him in finding a new school.

"Coach Tressel made calls for me," Bryant said in the Dispatch article. "It was real surprised. He was very helpful. I was thankful he was like that."

Bryant supposedly chose Hofstra because of its emphasis on the passing game. One of its former players is New York Jets receiver Wayne Chrebet.

"Their top five receivers from last year are all seniors, so I should get a good look — and they always have a good quarterback," Bryant was quoted as saying in the Columbus paper. "I'm looking forward to it."

Bryant, who helped the Hawks win state titles in 1997 and 1998, is the third OSU player to transfer, joining linebacker Jamal Muhammad (George Washington) and quarterback Rick McFadden (Akron).

As a four-year starter at Harrison, Bryant set school records with 132 pass receptions, 2,665 receiving yards and 33 receiving touchdowns during his prep career.

North girls No. 1 in state

North Farmington High School's girls cross country team will be recognized and honored for its academic success Tuesday night at the Farmington school board meeting.

The Raiders achieved the No. 1 academic ranking among Division I girls teams in a statewide competition sponsored by the Michigan Interscholastic Track Coaches Association. The North girls not only had the highest grade-point average of any team in their division, but they are one of just two teams in the state to have perfect 4.0 GPAs. The other is the Harper Woods Notre Dame boys squad.

To be eligible for the award, a team must have competed in the state meet.

The seven members of the North team who ran in that event and contributed to the team's 3.77 GPA are seniors Kelly Kuo, Nicole Moundros, Kriston Stambouljan and Anne Lieberman, juniors Susan Barrows and Amy Miller and sophomore Katie Milan.

Barrows was named to the individual all-state academic team, too.

"I think it's a great honor for the kids to be academic all-state, because they do excel both in the classroom and on the athletic field," North coach Bill Pinnell said. "I'm just fortunate to be able to coach such an outstanding group of young ladies."

There will be a reception for the North girls at 7:15 p.m. Tuesday, and the meeting will begin at 7:30 p.m. in the board office on Shinarump.

The Farmington High girls were 11th in Division I with a 3.77 GPA. Redford Catholic Central was first (3.943) among Division I boys, Birmingham Brother Rice second (3.847) and the University of Detroit-Jesuit third (3.838).

Four boys from Farmington Hills — seniors Dave Mazur, Jim Hegemann and Greg Haapala and junior Chris Jordan — are members of the U-D team.

Cobras need more players

The 16-year-old NFWB Cobras managed by Rick Burkhardt are looking for two to three more basketball players for the 2002 summer season. To inquire about the positions, call Burkhardt at (248) 761-7043.

Flyers whip Warriors in 10-2 rout



BY DAN O'MEARA
STAFF WRITER
domeara@oe.homecomm.net

Farmington Unified had a big game offensively Friday, overwhelming host Walled Lake Western for a 10-2 victory in a Western Lakes Activities Association hockey game.

Senior Brandon Lazkowski overcame "a nagging ankle injury," according to coach Mike Harris, to record a hat trick and lead the Flyers.

Junior Keith Hay notched two goals and two assists. Senior Brad Heraghty and juniors Chris Frayne, Jeff Tosolan, Marc Rauth and Matt Kjolhed had one goal and one assist apiece.

Junior Mike Hand chipped in three assists, and junior Brett Ramsey, junior Louie Powell and sophomore Brett Laird contributed two assists each.

"It was our only game of the week, and we had four good days of practice," Harris said. "Obviously, it showed with the offensive explosion that we had with 10 goals."

"It was a fun game to watch. The kids had a great

HOCKEY

time, but we have a tough week with Walled Lake Central Thursday and Northville Saturday.

"We have to keep this offensive machine going. It seems everyone is starting to contribute now, and that always makes for a happy locker room."

Hay started the scoring at 13:03 in the first period with assists from Heraghty and Ramsey. Heraghty (Hay) at 6:22 and Lazkowski (Powell and Hand) at 5:34 gave the Flyers a 3-0 lead before the Warriors got on the board with a goal by Brian Norville (Steve Lomakin) at 5:09.

Lazkowski's second goal, again from Powell and Hand, came at 9:26 of the second period. Lomakin (Greg Hay and Dan Mandoville) made it 4-2 before Farmington finished with two quick scores.

Goals by Tosolan (Ramsey and Hay) and eight seconds later by Hay (Tosolan and Frayne) gave the Flyers a 6-2 advantage.

Lazkowski, who hadn't scored a goal until Friday,

picked up the hat trick at 12:23 of the third with a third assist from Hand.

"Mike Hand was in on all three of them, so hats off to Mike for getting the playmaker award, too," Harris said.

The Flyers (10-6-1) finished with goals by Kjolhed (Rauth and Laird), Rauth (Laird) and Mike Colombo (Kjolhed and Frayne).

Junior R.J. Ulrich, who is usually the backup to Aaron Allor, was in goal the entire game, made some outstanding saves and played extremely well, according to Harris.

Farmington is 8-3 in the WLA and still in contention for second place with Livonia Stevenson and Livonia Churchill — two teams the Flyers have to play a second time.

"It's a dogfight for second place, and we expect to be right there at the end," Harris said.

REDFORD CO 5, TRENTON 1: In what is deemed one of the most intense rivalries in the state, Redford Catholic Central

Please see FLYERS, C5

Farmington Unified readies for big finish

BY DAN O'MEARA
STAFF WRITER
domeara@oe.homecomm.net

Coach Jeff Dwyer is confident his Farmington Unified gymnastics team is where it needs to be heading into the final month of the season.

Farmington had a successful first half, winning nine dual meets without a loss, but the biggest and most important competitions lay ahead.

The gymnasts are 4-0 in the Western Lakes Activities Association; however, they still have to face league heavyweights Plymouth Salem, Hartland and Brighton in the next three weeks.

"We had the first invite of the year (Jan. 19 at Hartland), and the season is starting to turn up a notch now," Dwyer said. "The girls recognize what it takes. They're still going after the tricks that will give them bonus points."

"We're looking stronger, so I think we have a chance to beat almost any team on any night. It's fun; it's good competition."

Farmington posted a 144.10 team score without two of its top gymnasts Thursday to win a WLA meet over visiting Walled Lake Unified, which had a 133.50 total.



Top gymnast: Farmington's Clara Seymour won two events and had the highest all-around score in the dual meet Thursday.

GYMNASTICS

The team was minus Sarah Houchins and Kristin Ulewicz, both of whom were sick and didn't compete, but "I had some other girls step up tonight," Dwyer said.

Clara Seymour and Chelsea Keesling were sharp as usual, finishing one-two in the all-around. Natalie Oleksko, Samantha Sherry and Dayna Warheit also posted solid scores to finish third, fourth and fifth, respectively.

"I was thinking around 140 to 142," Dwyer said, "and two points over that is quite a bit. When you have that depth, it definitely helps in any meet but especially the regional where you can compete everyone who qualifies."

"I'll have eight strong girls in each event. In some events, I'll have 10 girls who can score 8 or higher. I feel like Scotty Bowman; I have a lot of players."

"I've been shuffling girls between the A- and B-teams. There's an opportunity there each night for different girls. They understand our goal is to get qualified."

Seymour was first on vault and bars, and she had the top all-around score at 36.75. Keesling was best on beam and floor, but a fall on vault put her out of the top five in that event. However, she was still second in all-around with a 36.50 score.

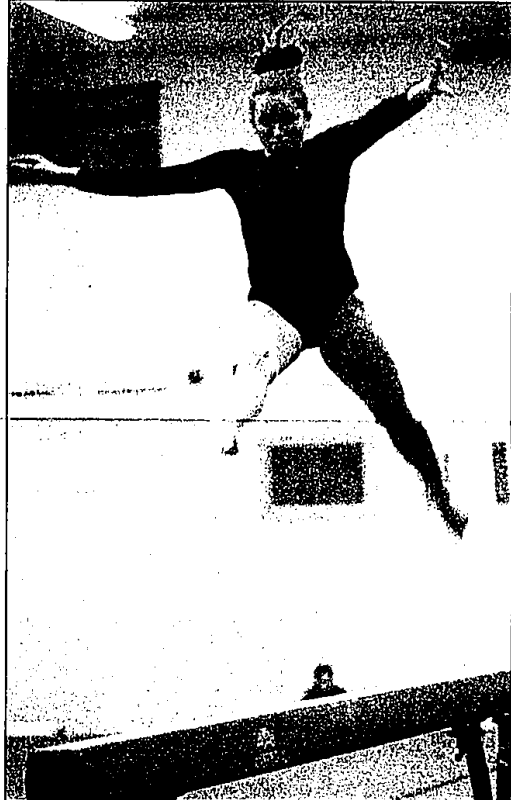
"That's still a pretty high all-around," Dwyer said. "That was her first event, so she came back pretty tough."

Oleksko scored 34.60 overall. Sherry 34.40 and Warheit 34.30, and Lindsay Smith "also had an incredible meet," according to Dwyer. Smith averaged nine-plus and finished second in three events. Senior captain Anne Lieberman is another key gymnast as far as Farmington's depth.

"Sometimes these five get overshadowed along with others on the team," Dwyer said. "I was real happy to see what they did tonight."

"Chelsea, Clara and Sara are the top three girls on the A team, but I've been shuffling other girls back

Please see UNIFIED, C2



Event winner: Farmington Unified senior Chelsea Keesling had the top score on the balance beam Thursday with a 9.5.

STAFF PHOTOS BY BILL DEPLER

Falcons salute former varsity coach

BY DAN O'MEARA
STAFF WRITER
domeara@oe.homecomm.net

After 32 years of coaching basketball — nearly all of those with Farmington Public Schools, Denny Mikel decided late last year it was time to retire.

Mikel was recognized and honored for his years of service Tuesday in a pre-game ceremony prior to the Farmington-Harrison boys basketball contest.

He spent the past 10 seasons coaching the Farmington High boys varsity and finished as the winningest coach in school history with 127 victories.

"To have that accomplishment makes me feel pretty good for myself and the boys," Mikel said, recalling the day he interviewed for the job with then-Principal Jim Myers and former FPS Athletic Director Ron Holland.

"They asked me, 'Why should we hire you to be the varsity coach at Farmington?' I told them, 'I think I can make a difference and get the program turned around.'"

"When I left, I thought it was in better shape than when I got it. When I look back, I feel good about some of the things we accomplished."

Mikel's Farmington teams had a 127-95 record and won two district championships, four city titles and one Lakes Division crown.

The Falcons also were runners-up in the Western Lakes Activities Association tournament once and won the consolation title once. They also appeared in six district finals.

BASKETBALL

"All the recognition is a tribute to the kids who played for me," Mikel said. "It hasn't been all the coaching. That's just part of the picture."

"I had the opportunity to work with some young men who made a commitment to the program, and that's why we did succeed."

Mikel, 58, spent his first eight years coaching at Farmington Junior High. He was the JV coach at Redford Thurston for two seasons and spent the next 12 coaching the North Farmington JV before taking the Farmington job.

He had planned to return for the 2001-02 season but decided to step aside in November. Steve Korpusik replaced Mikel, who remains connected to the program as co-coach of the freshman team with Mark Azox.

"I didn't feel like I had the enthusiasm and willingness to put in all the work that is required of the head coach," Mikel said.

"The games are always the fun part. It's everything else you have to do to get ready for the games — the practice planning, scouting and watching game tape."

"I thought about it over the summer; I thought, 'I can do this; I still enjoy coaching.' I took the team for the first week of tryouts, and when we got into practice that's when I found out I didn't have the 100-percent commitment that you need to make to the pro-

gram.

"I had to be honest for myself and the kids, too. I didn't want to cheat anybody and not give it the best effort I could. That's when I had a discussion with Steve. Being young and eager, he was willing to be the varsity coach."

Another factor in Mikel's decision was a desire to follow the college career of his son, Matt, who is a freshman on the Concordia University basketball team.

Matt Mikel played for his father at Farmington and was a four-year starter at point guard.

"With him being over at Concordia, we've been able to follow him in most of his games," Mikel said. "Maybe that in itself has filled a void for my wife and me. We still feel like we're involved in basketball."

During the Tuesday ceremony, FHS Principal John Barrett praised Mikel, who is also a guidance counselor at the school, for his commitment and dedication to the program and student-athletes, and Farmington Athletics Coordinator Greg Michaels presented Mikel with a plaque to mark the occasion.

"I was really pleased with what they did," Mikel said. "It caught me a little by surprise, although I knew there was going to be some type of ceremony. But I had no idea it would be as nice as this was."

"John Barrett really said some nice things, and it was a chance for me to say a few thanks. That part I really appreciated, because I didn't get a chance to thank everybody who has supported Farmington basketball."