

FARMINGTON —
FARMINGTON HILLS
SPORTS
SCENE

Sorrows In CYO final

Farmington Our Lady of Sorrows' seventh- and eighth-grade blue team will play for the Catholic Youth Organization baseball championship today after a 6-3, come-from-behind win over St. Linus of Dearborn Heights in the Westside semifinal.

Playing in Canton Wednesday, the Saints trailed St. Linus, 3-0, in the bottom of the third inning when the comeback started on a single by Jonathan Castine, scoring Steve Kish and Andy Harris.

In the fifth, Jeff Petry singled; stole second and scored the tying run on a single by Matt Rejo. Rejo then stole second and Craig Bergeron delivered the game-winning RBI with a pinch-hit single.

In the sixth, Castine tripled home Tim Nagrocki and Harris with two insurance runs for winning pitcher Kish, who gave up two hits and two walks while striking out 12 in seven innings.

The Saints reached the semifinal, winning the Downriver District June 1 by beating St. Francis Cabrini of Allen Park in eight innings, 2-2, and St. Thomas Aquinas of Detroit, 8-3.

Kish got the win over Cabrini, going the distance, giving up three hits, walking six and striking out 15. Petry won the district final on a six-hitter, striking out 11 and walking six.

The Saints entered the 16-team, post-season tournament by winning the West Suburban Division title with a 9-1 record.

The other Sorrows players contributing to that record are Scott Malinowski, Thomas Whiting, Jon Conover, Nick Martz, Zack Crawford and Nick Carroll.

The Saints will play for the CYO title 5 today at Massey Field in Plymouth (Plymouth and Haggerty roads) against Eastside champion Grosse Pointe Farms St. Paul.

Farmington girls earn area honors

Churchill's Graham
named Coach of YearBY BRAD EMONS
STAFF WRITER

It was a breakthrough season for the Livonia Churchill girls track and field team and coach Kelly Graham.

The Chargers captured their first regional title in over 20 years, the Division I title May 16 at Dearborn Heights and went undefeated with a 5-0 dual meet record in the Western Division of the Western Lakes Activities Association.

Churchill also won the Ann Arbor Huron River Rat Relays, the Livonia City meet title and took third place in the WLA meet.

Two Churchill competitors, Michelle Phillips and Nia Henderson, scored points in the Division I state meet.

For her efforts, Graham has been selected Observerland Coach of the Year. She is assisted by throws coach Joe George and distance coach Susan Tsipian.

She is a former three-sport standout and All-America prep hurdler at Westland John Glenn High School who later competed for Indiana University where she was a Big Ten champion.

Graham also coaches physical education and is the varsity girls volleyball coach at Livonia Stevenson.

Farmington schools are well represented on the all-area team with seven first-team members.

Mercy High School has three girls on the team — juniors Anne Roosevelt, Alexandria Marshall and Whitney Johnson. They are joined by Harrison senior Christine Metry, North Farmington junior Susan Barrows, Harrison sophomore Krystal Wade and Farmington freshman Bettie Wade.

Eight girls are repeat all-area selections: Roosevelt, Alexis Noel, Karen

TRACK & FIELD

FIRST TEAM

Nia Henderson, shot put, Churchill: One of a few record-setters for the Chargers this season, sophomore Nia Henderson has not only a bright future, but has been pretty darn good in the present as well.

Henderson wrapped up a terrific season with a seventh-place finish in the Division I state track meet with a shot put of 39 feet, 1 inch, breaking a 23-year-old school record. She led the team with 143 points scored and was the city champion and regional runner-up.

"I am very proud of Nia this season," said Churchill coach Kelly Graham. "She worked very hard this season and her performances paid off from all that hard work."

Anne Roosevelt, discus, Mercy: Roosevelt is the Catholic League, Oakland County and regional champion in the discus. She had the area's season-best throw at 128-7, which is five inches shy of Judy Telford's school record. She also was second in Observerland in the shot put (35-7) and fifth at the regional.

"She had an outstanding year and, hopefully, she'll still have the fire lit to do something at state next year," coach Gary Servalis said. "Until the state meet, she had an incredible season. She's a junior and, hopefully, will get a chance to get back there and (place)."

"To repeat as regional champion with the same throw (as last year) in those (cold and wet) conditions was one of the most remarkable performances I've ever seen."

Karen Abramczyk, high jump, Lutheran Westland: After an outstanding junior campaign, Lutheran Westland senior Karen

Please see ALL-AREA, C3



FILE PHOTO BY BILL DEERLEA

All-Observer runner: North Farmington junior Susan Barrows earned a place on the all-area team for the second year in a row.

MHSA's Plan B more like comedy show



BRAD EMONS

Backed into a corner by a U.S. District Court judge in Kalamazoo, the Michigan High School Athletic Association recently submitted a plan that would change the scheduling for its tournaments in three sports.

The MHSA also has submitted a plan to start four new post-season girls tournaments before adding any more for boys.

Gender equity and the alignment of current sports seasons — namely girls volleyball and basketball — have put the MHSA in a pickle.

But it just doesn't boil down to switching seasons for girls and boys golf, tennis and swimming.

It comes down to the old cigarette commercial: "Wouldn't you rather fight than switch."

The MHSA's plan to add four more post-season tournaments for girls is curious, even laughable.

Somebody up in the MHSA office in Lansing may have been in a back room gagging with laughter when they came up with this plan to appease the K'zoo judge.

Of course, the MHSA is banking on a favorable decision down the road by the Sixth Circuit of the U.S. Court of Appeals, which delayed the District Court's ruling that seasons be realigned in 2003-04.

If the MHSA wins this case, it's business as usual.

Or is it?

Two new tournaments would be initiated each year for two years with the MHSA choosing the four sports that best serves its membership from the following list of 12 sports: bowling, crew, equestrian, field hockey, figure skating, ice hockey, indoor track and field, lacrosse, powerlifting, synchronized swimming, water polo and wrestling.

Which sports have the best chance of advancing in the field of 12?

I thought I'd give Jack Roberts and his staff some odds.

It's time to handicap their chances.

Bowling (2-2 to 1): Despite beer advertisements on cigarette smoke, most schools could come up with a squad and gain access to plenty of lanes, especially during the day.

Ice hockey (5-2 to 2): Most suburban school districts could put a unified squad on the ice. The sport is growing in popularity among girls following the last two Olympic Games. Doesn't Title IX stipulate if they allow checking for boys, shouldn't they do the same for girls?

Field hockey (8-2 to 1): Popular among private and prep schools. It's been a traditional sport for women. The big question: Do you play it in the fall or the spring?

Lacrosse (10-2 to 1): An east coast sport that appears to be more popular among boys than girls, although they do have a team at Livonia Ladywood.

Water polo (12-2 to 1): Another sport the Ann Arbor, Birmingham and Grosse Pointe schools could dominate.

Wrestling (20-2 to 1): I thought the girls enjoyed competing against the guys?

Crew (30-2 to 1): The Detroit River is

a great place to start a league. Hines Parkway could also be considered if the average rainfall is up.

Equestrian (40-2 to 1): Not exactly a cheap sport, unlike bowling. What about liability? Who grooms the horses? What does the coach do?

Powerlifting (60-2 to 1): All we need are more Ken Caminiti and Jose Canseco female-types.

Indoor track and field (60-2 to 1): Don't tear Cobo Hall down just yet.

Synchronized swimming (80-2 to 1): Sure we have the pools, but do we have enough noseplugs and swim caps? Who selects the music?

Figure skating (100-2 to 1): Crooked French judges, Tonya Harding vs. Nancy Kerrigan. It's almost as frightening as competitive cheer. What about competitive pom pom?

It's WLA's realignment

It's official, the Western Lakes Activities Association Board of Directors approved a new league configuration in the 2004-05 school year.

With the departure of the three

Please see MHSA, C2

Blues sing happy tune after winning title

The South Farmington Blues 13-and-under travel baseball team used its best hitting attack this season to sweep four straight games and win the USSSA Iver James Memorial Tournament championship in Canton June 1-2.

The Blues hit .609 as a team in sweeping the Windsor Titans, 16-1, Southfield Jaguars, 15-3, Novi Expos, 14-8, and Birmingham Red Sox, 6-1, in the title game.

Josh Rebandt pitched a four-hitter against the

BASEBALL

Red Sox, striking out two with no walks in going the distance.

Jeff Gorecki got the win over Windsor while Stephen Doty registered two wins, as the starting pitcher over Southfield and in relief over Novi.

Brendan Clarke and Brooks Tuyn led the hitting, both going 7-for-11.

The rest of the hitters registered from three to seven hits each, including Jonathan Castine, Chase Delne, Andy Harris, Matt Paul and Tom Spisich.

The Blues, shorthanded with Akhenaton Thomas out of town on a school field trip, were back to full strength for the South Farmington Baseball Tournament this weekend at Founders Park in Farmington Hills.

The Blues raised their 2002 tourney record to 13-2 overall, winning two titles and placing second in the other.



Champions: The South Farmington Blues — (front row from left) Stephen Doty, Andy Harris, Brooks Tuyn, Chase Delne and Brendan Clarke; (standing from left) Jonathan Castine, coach John Castine, Matt Paul, Tom Spisich, coach Rick Tuyn, Jeff Gorecki, Josh Rebandt, coach Steve Gorecki and general manager Larry Miller. Not pictured is Akhenaton Thomas — show off their trophy.

Ault contributes for CMU

Central Michigan University junior Ari Ault of Farmington Hills (Harrison) helped the Chippewas win the Mid-American Conference softball championship this year.

Ault played in 38 games with 26 starts, primarily at third base. She batted .239 going 16-for-67 with two doubles, eight RBI and 10 runs scored.

CMU was 39-16 overall with a 23-1 record in the MAC. The Chippewas won the MAC regular-season and tournament titles, setting a conference record with a .958 winning percentage.

The Chippewas closed the season in the NCAA regional tournament in Ann Arbor. CMU was 1-2, losing to a pair of nationally-ranked teams — No. 20 Ohio State, 7-0, and No. Washington, 4-1. The Chippewas defeated Oakland University, 2-1.

Hawks name new coach

Clayton Burch has been named boys varsity basketball coach at Harrison High School. He replaces Dave Turnquist, who coached the Hawks the last three seasons and was the JV coach for 10.

Burch will be a special education teacher at Harrison, too. The University of Toledo graduate played basketball for the Rockets, starting 69 consecutive games at point guard (1996-99). He was an assistant coach at Toledo for two years (1999-01).

Summer hockey tryouts

The Farmington Flyers varsity hockey team will have summer tryouts 6-7:30 p.m. Friday, June 14, and 3-4:30 p.m. Saturday, June 15, at Suburban Training Center.

The fee is \$10 per skate. The tryouts are open to any Farmington Public Schools students in the ninth through 12th grades. For more information call coach Mark Vellucci at (248) 730-2233.

Adults play 4-on-4 hockey

The Rise and Shine 4-on-4 Adult Hockey League will start Tuesday, July 16, at Suburban Training Center.

Games will be played 7-8 a.m. on Tuesdays and Thursdays through Sept. 5. Teams consisting of 13 players and one goaltender will play an eight-game schedule.

Participants will receive a membership to the STC Fitness Club for the eight weeks of league play. To register call (248) 883-1400 or visit www.suburbanhockey.com. Individual sign-ups are not accepted.