

FARMINGTON HILLS SPORTS SCENE

Kuykendall is All-America

Tessa Kuykendall of Farmington Hills Mercy High School was named an AAU All-America volleyball player following the junior national tournament in Orlando, Fla.



Tessa Kuykendall

AAU teammates Erin Poglit of West Bloomfield and Marian High School also was chosen for the 12-player All-America team.

Both are members of the Motor City Volleyball Club's 18-and-under team that won the state championship June 9 in Grand Rapids and placed seventh among 40 teams in the Junior National Championships June 18.

Kuykendall, a middle hitter who lives in Brighton, and Poglit, a setter, were the only juniors to be named to the All-American team.

"The others have graduated and are moving on to college to play on scholarship," Motor City coach Ed Ruhl said. "(Kuykendall and Poglit) are the only players ever selected from a Michigan team in the tournament's 29 years."

Motor City had the highest finish of the seven Michigan teams in the national tournament, and it was the highest finish for any Motor City team since the club's inception.

"I am so proud of these girls," Ruhl said. "To pull it together and beat some of the great teams we've seen in this tournament is quite a feat, not to mention getting two girls recognized as All-Americans."

Motor City Volleyball Club was established in 1997 and has grown to include 185 athletes, starting at the 12-and-under level and ending with the 18-and-under team. The club is based in Livonia and draws its players from the western suburbs.

Cobras have win streak

After losing their first two games in baseball league play, the 17-year-old NFWB Cobras have put together a four-game winning streak.

The last two wins were at the expense of Westland and Birmingham. In the game against Westland on June 24, Dan Graham picked up the win on the mound with relief help from Andy Wingert as the Cobras coasted to an 11-0 shutout.

Brendon Rosenbergh led the Cobra offense, going 3-for-4 with four RBI; Kevin Zerbo went 3-for-3, and Matt Petry was 2-for-4 with three RBI.

The Cobras defeated Birmingham on June 25, 6-4. Ben Darga got the win with Wingert again doing relief work in the late innings.

Nick Vitonis, Zerbo and Darga collected two hits apiece. Bryan Smith and Zerbo knocked in two runs each.

The Cobras compete in the Little Caesars Baseball Federation 18-and-under division.

Whalers draft import

The Plymouth Whalers added some insurance to their defense when they chose defenseman Martin Cizek with the 34th overall pick in the 2002 CHL Import Draft.

The Whalers moved up the board to draft Cizek when they traded defenseman Nathan Tennant to Saginaw for the Spirits' pick earlier in the day.

Cizek is a 6-2, 165-pound defenseman who was drafted by the Buffalo Sabres in the ninth round (271st overall) of the 2002 NHL Entry Draft. The Czech Republic native played for the juniors of HC Slavia Praha as an underage this past season.

"Martin will be a good addition to our defense," Whalers general manager-head coach Mike Vellucci said. "He has nice size and is a good skater with great vision on the ice."

Farmington soccer signup

Youth soccer players have until Monday, July 15, to sign up with the Farmington Soccer Club for the fall season. There are openings in all age groups.

Players should call the club registrar at (248) 426-7146 to sign up. Girls age 15 and under are needed to fill an under-16 select team. Call the same number if interested.

(Readers can submit items for Farmington Sports Scene by sending a fax to Sports Editor Dan O'Meara at 734-591-7279. No phone calls please.)

NHL draft pick eyes pro future

Walsh's immediate plan to enroll at Notre Dame

BY DAN O'MEARA
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HOCKEY

Mike Walsh achieved a lifelong goal, the ultimate objective of any athlete to be drafted by a professional sports team.

The 19-year-old Walsh was selected by the New York Rangers in the fifth round of the National Hockey League Entry Draft June 23.



Mike Walsh

Walsh, a longtime Farmington Hills resident, who recently moved to Northville, was in Toronto for the occasion with his family.

He was actually the fourth pick of the Rangers, who didn't have a first-round choice, and was the 143rd player taken over all.

"Who would have ever thought, when I started playing hockey, something like this would happen?" Walsh said.

"I never would have thought it would happen to me. All the hard work that has gone into it, makes everything worth it."

Walsh, who had a picture of himself in a Rangers jersey posted on the club website last week, grew up a Detroit Red Wings fan, but he was pleased to be drafted by New York.

"I couldn't be more happy to go to an organization like that," he said. "It's part of the original six and is compared with the great franchises in all of pro sports. Hopefully, it will be a great place to play."

Despite the excitement surrounding the NHL draft, Walsh won't be rushing off to the Big Apple right away. It appears the start of his professional

career will be delayed four years.

Walsh, who has played left wing for the Computware Ambassadors at the Junior A Tier II level the last two years, plans to attend the University of Notre Dame on a hockey scholarship.

He believes he'll have a chance to play right away for the Fighting Irish, who compete in the Central Collegiate Hockey Association with Michigan State and Michigan.

"I'll still have to earn my keep there," Walsh said, adding there are three other forwards in the incoming class at Notre Dame.

Walsh, who graduated in 2001 from Detroit Catholic Central High School in Redford, took classes at Oakland Community College and the University of Michigan-Dearborn in the last year.

"I could have gone to school last year," he said. "I felt, as far as my game and person, it would help to sit out a year and mature instead of rushing into something."

"For the most part, it takes kids at least two years. There are still kids who are 21 playing in the (North American Hockey League) trying to get a scholarship."

"I had a chance to further develop my game, and I think I'm very happy with the outcome."

While in high school, Walsh was neither tempted nor persuaded to play for the Shamrocks, who have won four consecutive Division I state championships.

"I was focused on what I was doing as far as playing AAA hockey," he said. "Maintaining that focus is what got me to where I am right now."

A lot of other colleges were interested in Walsh, too. He said he could have gone to Harvard, Yale or Michigan to



Pro pick: Mike Walsh, formerly of Farmington Hills and Catholic Central High School, was drafted by the New York Rangers.

Please see WALSH, C5

Olympics open to athletes of all ages

BY CHRISTINE BRODA
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JUNIOR OLYMPICS

Moms and dads - do you ever watch your son or daughter tearing around the backyard in the summer and think he or she has the energy of a track star?

Would you like to see your kids burn off a little of that steam while having fun and playing sports?

Do you think you, too, might have the ability to run, jump and throw with the best of them?

Well it's time to test out these queries because the "Olympics" are coming to Redford.

Redford Township's 44th Annual Junior Olympics and 20th Annual Senior Olympics will take place Thursday, July 11, at Hilbert Junior High. Athletes, and those aspiring to athleticism, are invited for a

day of fun and competition in events that run the track gamut.

Registration begins at 9 a.m. for the Junior Olympics, which are open to anyone age 12 and under. Events run from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., and there is no cost to participate.

Registration for the Senior Olympics is at 5 p.m. and events are held 6 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. The Senior Olympics, which are run more like an actual track meet, are open to anyone age 13 and older. The cost is \$3 for adults, \$2 for students.

The Olympics aren't limited to Redford residents. Anyone is welcome to participate in the events. In the past, people have come from as close as Farmington, Livonia and Plymouth and as far as Dearborn Heights and Oak Park to showcase their talents and see how they compare with other athletes.

From field events that include long jump, high jump and shot put (softball throw for the young ones) to running events that range from a 35-meter dash to a 3,200-meter run (for the more "well-winded" runner), there is a little something for everyone at the Redford Olympics.

But whatever an athlete's forte, he or she is in for a day of fun and - if the tradition continues - sun.

Please see OLYMPICS, C4

Farmington foursome named all-area

Coach of Year honor goes to Spartans' Weingarden

BY BRAD EXONS
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BASEBALL

No doubt about it, this was the best baseball season in school history for Livonia Stevenson, highlighted by several come-from-behind victories.

The Spartans had a magical year, finishing 23-11 and reaching the Division I state quarterfinals before losing to Warren Mott, 6-4.

Coach Harv Weingarden, named Observer-Examiner Coach of the Year, guided Stevenson to its first regional title in school history after upsetting state-ranked Redford Catholic Central for the second time this season in a district tournament.



Harv Weingarden
Stevenson coach

The formula for this year's success on the diamond?

"The team's total desire to win and their never-give-up attitude," said Weingarden, who is 87-58 in five varsity seasons with the Spartans. "There

was never a time when this team felt it would lose a game, even if they were behind and it was late.

"They played as a team and different players picked us up at different times."

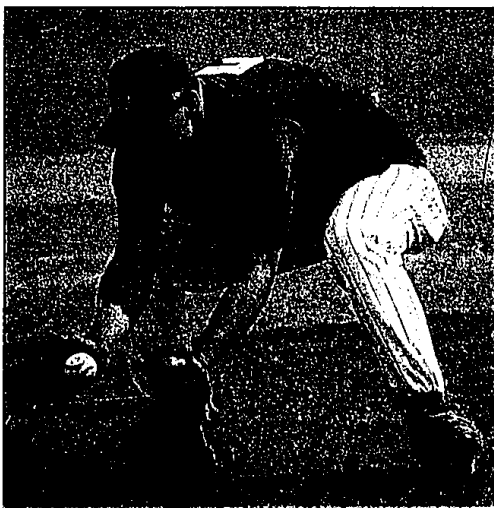
The 46-year-old Weingarden spent three years as an assistant at Stevenson under Mike Keller before taking over the varsity squad in 1998.

Weingarden also served two years as an assistant at West Bloomfield with the Lakers winning the state Class A crown in 1983.

An attorney, Weingarden also has an extensive coaching background in the sandlot ranks, having coached Official Sports, Walter's Appliance and the Lake Michigan Area Rams.

A law partner with MacAloon, Feldman & Feldman of Bloomfield, Weingarden holds a B.A. in Economics from the University of Michigan and is a Juris Doctor/Cum Laude from the Detroit College of Law.

"It's a honor to get the award knowing what kind of job Tom Wakefield did



STAFF PHOTO BY BILL DEMLER

All-time great: Harrison coach John Herrington considers senior Drew Stanton (above) the best baseball player in school history.

Please see ALL AREA, C5

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