

Staff sports writers
make their weekly prep
football predictions. D5

Sidelines

■ Vikings win title

The NWB Vikings varsity football team defeated the Madison Heights Wolverines in overtime Sunday, 12-6, to win the Oakland-Macomb Youth Football Association's Super Bowl championship.

The Wolverines won the coin toss and chose to play defense first in overtime at Birmingham Seaholm High School.

The league uses the same overtime system as high school teams - four downs to score from the 10-yard line. On fourth-and-5, Jonathan Kirkland scored the winning touchdown for the Vikings (11-0) on a sweep around right end. The two-point kick attempt was no good.

When they had the ball, the Wolverines lost 2 yards on consecutive running plays and threw two incomplete passes.

Will Danko gave the Vikings an early lead with a 30-yard run, and NWB had another TD run of 70 yards called back due to a penalty.

Madison Heights tied the score late in the first quarter with a 40-yard pass. It remained 6-6 until overtime.

"Our defense really won that game for us," Vikings assistant coach Don Hayes said. "We didn't have any one standout. It was team defense. That's why they have the saying 'Defense wins championships.'"

"On this particular day, that was the case. They really stepped up, especially in the fourth quarter and overtime."

"As successful as we were all year, the season came down to eight plays in overtime. The kids had their backs to the wall and made the plays when they needed to make them."

"We're real proud of them; they're a real special group of kids."

The NWB flag football team (ages 6-8) lost to the Shelby Lions in the championship game Sunday at Seaholm, 6-0. The Vikings finished with a 7-2 record; both losses were to the undefeated Lions.

■ Sinclair tops OCC

Sinclair (Ohio) Community College built a 15-point half-time lead Saturday and went on to defeat host Oakland CC in men's basketball, 113-100.

The loss overshadowed a 33-point effort by OCC's Michael Russell, who made 14 of 25 field goals (3-of-6 from three-point range) and two of three free throws.

Craig Myree scored 19 points and led the Raiders to a 42-34 advantage on the boards with 13 rebounds, including 11 at the defensive end.

Robert Clayton added 15 points and Adam Collins 13 for OCC (0-2). Will Pendegras, who chipped in eight points, had 11 assists and four steals.

Sinclair offset Russell's performance by having seven players score in double figures. Guard Corey Hadnot led the Pride (1-1) with 19 points.

Sinclair established a 55-40 halftime lead and outscored OCC in the second half, 60-58.

PLEASE SEE SWIM, D3

Falcons set their sights on regional title

BY DAN O'MEARA
STAFF WRITER

The 2002 Falcons hope to go where no Farmington High School football team has ever gone: to the semifinals of the state tournament.

Farmington can achieve that goal with a victory Friday night at Allen Park in a Division II regional championship game that starts at 7:30 p.m.

The Falcons reached this point in the playoffs three years ago but lost a hard-fought game to the University of Detroit-Jesuit.

Allen Park, a tri-champion of the Mega

FOOTBALL

Conference Red Division, is expected to provide formidable opposition. Since dropping the season opener to Dearborn Fordson, Allen Park hasn't lost. Both teams are 10-1.

"They're a tough football team," Farmington coach John Bechtel said. "They're a lot like us. They're not real big, but they have great quickness. Their defense is real tough. They're as fine a defensive team as we've seen. They're awfully good."

The Jaguars, who were Class DB state

runners-up in 1995, have made 12 playoff appearances since 1987, losing four times to Farmington Harrison, including a 42-0 loss to the Hawks in a Division III playoff game last year.

"The winner of this game gets to play the team that beat Harrison," Allen Park coach Tom Hoover said. "What a deal!"

The teams have scored nearly the same amount of points. The Falcons have posted five shutouts and allowed 66 points; those numbers for the Jaguars are four and 66, respectively.

"From what I know of Farmington, they have an excellent defense," Hoover said. "They're very quick and they pursue

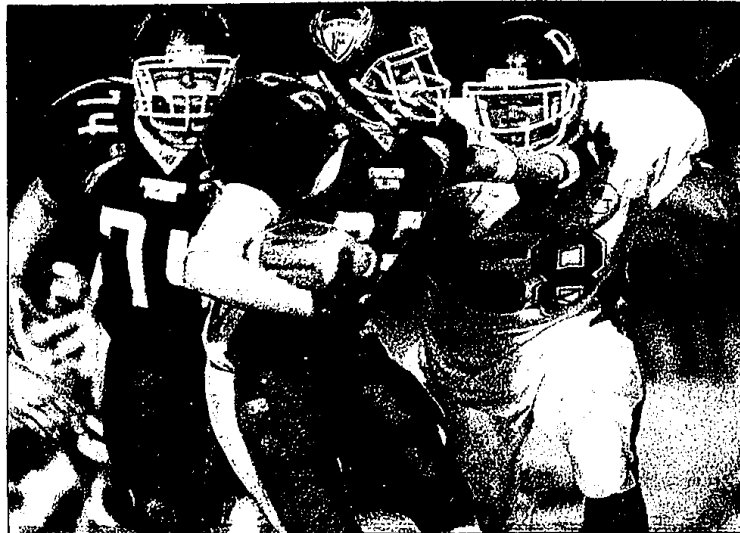
to the ball.

"I like their kicker and I like what (Bechtel) is doing, playing for field position and waiting for you to make mistakes to set up short drives for his offense. They make you pay."

Some of the top players on the Allen Park defense are noseguard Eric Sarkozi (5-10, 230), linebacker Tim Vezina (5-11, 180) and defensive back James Klos (5-11, 170).

The leading tackler for the Jaguars with 112, Vezina "plays with the heart of a lion," according to Hoover.

PLEASE SEE REGIONAL, D4



Farmington senior tailback Eric Halberstadt applies the stiff-arm technique to Detroit Central's Kelvin Cousins in a district championship game Saturday night. Senior tackle Jim Thrush (74) follows the play. Farmington won the game, 21-0.

Farmington wins district crown, 21-0

BY DAN O'MEARA
STAFF WRITER

Farmington High's formula for success on the football field this year has included a strong defense, good field position and an opportunistic offense.

The Falcons parlayed their ability to excel in those areas into a 21-0 victory over visiting Detroit Central in a Division II district championship game Saturday night.

It's the second district title in four seasons for Farmington (10-1), which travels to Allen Park for a regional tournament game Friday.

The Falcons held a big, strong Trailblazer offense in check and used their defense to set up two scoring drives and to score a third touchdown.

Central outgained Farmington, 193-143; however, the Farmington defense bent but didn't break.

Tailback Pierre Walker rushed for 136 yards on 20 attempts, but he had just two carries for more than 10 yards and never reached the end zone. "We stuffed people this year, but I'm

PLEASE SEE FALCONS, D4

Falcons are Division III champions

BY DAN O'MEARA
STAFF WRITER

The members of the Farmington High girls swimming and diving team had an opportunity and made the most of it this season.

In their first year in the Oakland Activities Association, the Falcons captured the Division III championship Saturday at Royal Oak Dondoro.

SWIMMING

Farmington, which also won the dual-meet title with a 6-0 record, finished well ahead of runner-up Clarkson and third-place Farmington Harrison.

"This is a good step in the right direction," Farmington coach Jason Caviecholi said. "It's a good building point for our program. It gets the girls enthused about the sport and, hopefully, will get more of them out for the sport."

The Falcons, who weren't competitive with the bigger schools in the Western Lakes Activities Association, benefitted from the move to the OAA with its system of separate divisional alignment for each sport.

"It worked out great," Caviecholi said. "Our girls were excited at all the dual meets, walking in knowing they had a chance to win, and they did it. Here we are - conference champions! You can't be too sad about that."

"It's a great way for our seniors (Lauren Allmayer, Laura Atkins,

Shamrocks hope to ride momentum

BY PAUL BEAUDRY
STAFF WRITER

FOOTBALL

Momentum is as big a part of any football team as blocking, tackling and running.

It's a trait that both Novi and Catholic Central share as they head into their Division I, Region 3 final at 1 p.m. Saturday at Redford's Kraft Field.

Both teams have it, both want to keep it, and both want to take it away from the other team.

"We got off to a slow start this year," said Novi coach Tub Kellepoury, whose team started 2-3 but has rattled off six straight wins. "We had a lot of young kids who weren't playing well. We had 10 juniors walking into a starting role, and that takes time. There's a big difference in playing the game on Thursday night as opposed to Friday night."

The Shamrocks (10-1) are on a roll, too,

and it's the kind of one that gives other coaches fits. In its 11 games this season - nine against teams that made the playoffs - CC is averaging 30 points on offense, while its defense has yielded just over eight points per game - and has never allowed a team to score more than 14 points against it this season.

But in the five games since its 13-0 loss to Orchard Lake St. Mary's on Oct. 4, CC is still averaging 30 points a game on

PLEASE SEE SHAMROCKS, D5

Early jump leads Rice past Harrison, 28-7

BY DAN O'MEARA
STAFF WRITER

Birmingham Brother Rice football coach Al Praccassa said the Warriors couldn't afford to fool around and waste time Saturday and they didn't.

Rice struck quickly for 21 first-quarter points and acted early to nail down an eventual 28-7 victory over host Farmington Harrison in a Division II district final.

It was Rice's second win this year over 12-time state champion Harrison and its fifth straight in the six-game series, which dates to 1991.

The loss ended Harrison's string of five consecutive state titles and marked its earliest exit from the tournament since losing a first-round game in 1995.

"They were the better team," Hawks coach John Herrington said of the Warriors. "They deserved it; they proved it twice now."

"It's a disappointing way to end the season. In the state tournament, half the teams (in every round of play) are always disappointed."

The Warriors (9-2) took advantage of having the wind at their back and field position to score three touchdowns in the first quarter.

Rice used four timeouts, milked the clock and extracted every bit of advantage from that situation that it could, scoring its third TD on the final play of the quarter.

"Some times, as a coach, you do things right and some times you screw it up," Praccassa said.

PLEASE SEE HAWKS, D6



Harrison senior quarterback Jake Ghanam fires a pass to junior tight end Kyle Taylor in a district championship game Saturday.

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