

Schoolcraft places 3rd in national tournament

Going into the consolation game of the National Junior College Athletic Association Division 1 men's soccer tournament Sunday, the Schoolcraft College team wanted to prove it was one of the best in the nation.

After beating Iowa Central CC with just 10 players, 1-0, the Ocelots left little doubt they are deserving of a third-place finish.

Worth Sampson saved the day when he drove home a shot from 18 yards with six minutes left in regulation to lift the Ocelots to victory.

"He's been hurt for the last two months," Schoolcraft assistant coach Josef Kurta said. "He played great and we won the game."

COLLEGE SOCCER

Despite Schoolcraft pulling out an improbable victory, Kurta was still stinging about losing to Mercer County (N.J.) on Friday, 1-0.

Yavapai (Ariz.) won the NJCAA title on Sunday with a 2-1 victory over Mercer County.

"I still think we could have finished first," Kurta said. "But, overall, finishing third in the country is acceptable."

Schoolcraft finished the season at 17-7 overall.

Two Schoolcraft players, Salvador Djuekeng (Cameroon) and Leonardo Moyn (Costa Rica), earned all-tournament honors.

Whalers skate to 5th consecutive win

By C.J. RISAK
STAFF WRITER

OHL HOCKEY

Five and counting. The Plymouth Whalers collected their fifth-straight win Saturday, getting two goals and an assist from John Vigilante and three assists from John Mitchell in a 6-3 triumph over the Peterborough Petes at Plymouth's Compuware Arena.

The Whalers improve to 16-6-2 overall; their 35 points tie them for first in the Ontario Hockey League's West Division with the Saginaw Sting.

The game was tied at 1-1 after one period, Plymouth getting a goal from Ryan Ramsay (from David Liffiton and Chad LaRose) and Peterborough

countering with a score from Josh Rattson.

The Whalers took command with three second-period goals. Jonas Fiedler got the first (from Mitchell and Vigilante) at 4:18 and Vigilante made it 3-1 (from Mitchell) at 6:52. The Petes

announced it to 3-2 with a goal from Jordan Morrison, but a LaRose power-play goal at 15:05 (from Ramsay and Cole

Jarrett) pushed Plymouth's lead back to two. Gary Klapkowski (from Jimmy Gagnon and Tim Sestito) and Vigilante (from Fiedler and Mitchell) accounted for the Whalers' third-period goals. Patterson scored for the Petes.

Jeff Weber was superb in goal for Plymouth, making 44 saves. The Whalers have a pair of home games this weekend, hosting the Saginaw Spirit at 7:30 p.m. Friday and the London Knights at 7:30 p.m. Saturday at Compuware Arena.

JARRETT AN ALL-STAR

Whaler defenseman Cole Jarrett has been added to the OHL Western Conference all-star team, one of three additions to the team. He joins

teammate Chad LaRose, already chosen to the squad. Originally, former Whaler Stephen Weiss — currently playing with the Florida Panthers — as well as Rick

Nash of the London Knights (16 goals and 30 assists), Carlo Colaiacovo of the Erie Otters (and Toronto Maple Leafs) and Steve Eminger of the Kitchener Rangers (and Washington Capitals) were all-star selections. Since Weiss was not returned to the Whalers, Jarrett was added to the team.

For the season, Jarrett (a fifth-round draft choice of the Blue Jackets in 2001) is fourth on the Whalers in scoring with six goals and 18 assists (through 23 games).

RAMSAY PLAYER OF THE WEEK

Ryan Ramsay was named the OHL Player of the Week for the period ending last Sunday, joining Canton native James Wainwright as the second

Whaler so honored this season. Ramsay, a left winger, started his scoring streak with a goal and two assists in Plymouth's 6-0 win over the Saginaw Spirit last Thursday (Nov. 21). He

added three goals and an assist in a 5-4 win over the Sault Ste. Marie Greyhounds on Friday, then had a goal and an assist in a 6-3 victory over the Peterborough Petes on Saturday.

His five goals and four assists

in the three victories gave him 16 goals and 30 assists (48 points) for the season, second best among the Whalers.

WHALERS ADD DEFENSE

With the possibility of three defensemen being absent during the World Junior Championships, the Whalers figured they'd better add some depth in that area, so they traded an eighth-round draft choice in 2004 to the Brampton Battalion for defenseman Grant Buckley.

A former first-round draft choice of the Mississauga Ice Dogs, the 6-foot-1, 195-pound Buckley was traded to Brampton in November, 2001. He collected three goals and nine assists in 51 games last season with the Battalion; this year, he had two goals and two assists.

"Grant is an experienced player in this league," said Whalers' coach/general manager Mike Vellucci. "With the possibility of having three defensemen playing in the World Junior Championships, we needed to make sure we have some depth at that position."

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This material was developed through a project funded by the Michigan Truck Safety Commission.

