

# Falcons play well in tourney loss

BY DAN O'NEARA  
STAFF WRITER

Farmington High gave a commendable performance in a losing cause Saturday in the quarterfinals of the University of Michigan-Dearborn volleyball tournament.

The Falcons battled state-ranked Mount Clemens Chippewa Valley in the gold bracket playoffs before conceding 25-16, 25-18 victories to the Big Red.

Farmington had just played Chippewa Valley in the last round of pool play, and the Big Red won that match, 25-19, 25-9.

The Falcons made a major adjustment for the rematch, according to coach Alex Perrin, adding a fourth player to their serve-receive line and moving it farther back to defend against the Big Red's strong servers.

"The scores were not that close, but the match was close," Perrin said of the quarterfinal. "It was like a college match. Both teams were making a lot of amazing digs and rallies."

"It may very well have been the most high-level match I've ever coached. The level of play was absolutely amazing. It was two power teams really going at it, and neither team was making bad plays."

Top-seeded Chippewa Valley turned around and lost its semifinal match to Chelsea, which eventually won the tournament.

Chippewa Valley's only previous losses were to defending Class B champion Marysville

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and last year's Class A runner-up, Fraser.

"I think we had taken some wind out of their sails," Perrin said. "They didn't play well against Chelsea, and I think we had a lot to do with that."

"Afterward, the (Farmington) girls said they were glad they played that match. It was probably the best preparation we could have to get ready for Mercy (in the district tournament Saturday)."

"I don't think anybody could have said they beat up on us. We really improved our defense. I think we played well at the tournament, so we feel good about going into the district."

In other pool-play matches, Farmington defeated Dearborn Edsel Ford (25-13, 25-22) and Dearborn Heights Rohlfenhard (25-14, 25-9).

Melissa Patterson and Jessica Janowicz had 17 kills apiece to lead the Farmington attack. Patterson also had 15 digs.

Deanna Gauer recorded six kills, three blocks, two block assists and two aces, and setter Lisa Hellebyek had six assists in addition to six kills and seven aces.

Brittney Coleman had nine kills and seven digs, Jill Alspaugh seven kills and three aces, Marissa Matherly three kills and eight digs, Mallory Annarino 13 digs and 23 service points (four aces).

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put it in. That gave them an opportunity, and they just ran with it."

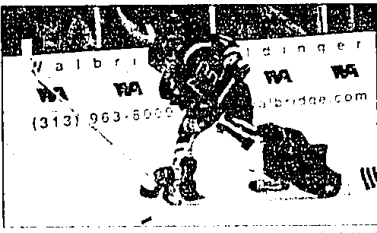
Blanchard had gone behind the net to clear the puck but stumbled. It wasn't until the stick of Mike Hand, who passed it to Keith Hay near the blue line between the faceoff circles.

Blanchard was unable to get back into his net in time, and Hay had an open lane in which to score. The goal cut the margin to 4-2 with 10:21 to play.

Just 1:15 later the Flyers sliced the deficit to 4-3 with the help of a couple of fortunate bounces.

A shot by CC's left defenseman was blocked at close range by Nick Hernandez, and the puck bounced nearly straight back to center ice.

Hand outraced a CC defender to the puck, broke in on Blanchard and fired a shot the CC netminder blocked. But the puck came right back to Hand, and he was able to score on the rebound.



Catholic Central's Tim Buttery dives at the puck in an attempt to stop a shot by Farmington Unaffiliated's Phil Scott in a regional tournament game Tuesday.

A Shamrock defender preserved the lead with 4:40 to play when he blocked an attempt by Hay to score from right in front of the net.

The Flyers made a nicely-timed timeout call with 55 seconds left. Top-scorer Hay had just gone off the ice after a minute of playing time. The CC netminder gave him enough of a rest to finish the game.

"If we had tied it up in the last two minutes," Vellucci said,

"we all felt that with the heart this team has that we would win it in overtime or in the last minutes."

"But they're a great team. They're the four-time defending state champs. They were a little deeper, a little better."

"I was pacing a bit more at the end of the game than I did at the beginning," St. John said.

"That's a good hockey team. They did a good job."

Farmington was outshot in

the game, 28-23, but CC dominated the first period by a much greater margin than the 14-8 shot margin showed.

Naurato broke a scoreless tie with 2:12 left in the first period, and he scored on a power play right at the end of the period.

Nathan Perkowski hiked the lead to 6-0 early in the second period, jamming home a loose puck in front of Allor.

Farmington cut the lead to 3-1 minutes later on a power play, with Hay bounding in a rebound of a shot by Brett Laird.

"It just came down to a couple of lucky bounces on their part," Vellucci said. "They're a veteran team. They have a lot of skilled players."

"I told our guys they had nothing to be ashamed of this season. It was an honor, a pleasure to coach them."

The pairing of the highest-rated teams in the state in the first round of the tournament won't lull CC to sleep, St. John said.

"We both showed a little nervousness," he said. "But none of the games we play is going to be easy. In the playoffs, you never know what to expect."

# OHL foes inflict defeat on Whalers

Matters went from good to bad to worse for the Plymouth Whalers, who played three Ontario Hockey League games in three days for the second consecutive weekend.

After beating Sarnia 6-2 on Thursday in Sarnia, the Whalers traveled to Hamilton to take on the Storm on Friday.

The results weren't good: After taking an early one-goal lead, they fell behind by two goals, battled back to knot it at 3-all late in the first period, then lost 4-3 by surrendering the game-winner with 4:30 left.

Plymouth got back to Compuware Arena's home ice for a game Saturday against Owen Sound, but that didn't turn out well either. The Attack's goalie, John Ceci, stopped 31 of 42 shots in a 2-1 Owen Sound win.

The Whalers remain in first place in the OHL's West Division with a 36-13-2 record (82 points). Owen Sound, third in the Midwest Division, improved to 25-26-5-3 (58 points), while Guelph was 23-26-9-2 (57 points), fourth in the Midwest.

In Friday's loss at Guelph, a goal by Plymouth's Chris Thorburn (assisted by John Mitchell and Karl Stewart) at 4:08 of the first period gave the Whalers an early lead. It didn't last; the Storm's Dustin Brown got the equalizer at 13:43 of the

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first, and a pair of power-play goals by Ryan Callahan in the second period put them up 3-1.

James Wisniewski (from Canton) moved the goal for the Whalers with a power-play goal with just :02 left in the second period (assisted by Stewart and Ryan Ramsay). Mitchell tied it with 4:55 left in regulation (Wisniewski, David Lilford and Stang).

But Aaron Lobb knocked in the game-winner for Guelph just 1:25 later.

Jeff Weber had 33 saves for Plymouth; Andrew Penner made 23 stops for Guelph. The Whalers never got a lead against Owen Sound Sunday. The Attack got a power-play goal from Mark Giordano at 4:40 of the first period, but the Whalers tied it with just :33 left in the period on a goal by Mitchell (assisted by John Vigilante and Lilford).

The Attack's Jeff MacDermid got what proved to be the game-winner past Whaler goalie Paul Drew at 6:21 of the second period. Although the Whalers snatched an overtime goal at Owen Sound 18:0 in the third period, they could not get the equalizer.

The Whalers host East Division-leading Ottawa at 7:30 p.m. Friday and Sarnia at 7:30 p.m. Saturday.

# CC sending 5 to state meet

BY PAUL BEAUDRY  
STAFF WRITER

A quintet of Redford-Detroit Catholic Central wrestlers advanced to the state finals beginning on March 13 after their performance at the Division I individual regional on Saturday at Novi.

"We took eight in and got five out," said CC coach Mike Rodriguez. "You always figure you are going to lose some, but there's still disappointment when it happens. It hurts when they work hard and you're sad that it's gone for them."

The champions had a pair of individual winners on the afternoon from Sean Dong at 103 pounds and Trevor Stewart at 160. Dong beat Salem's Ryan Stump in a major decision, 14-1, while Stewart stopped Hasten Berni of Fondson, 5-1.

Matt Steintrager was the runner-up at 112, losing to Pino Momett of Temperance Bedford, 9-5. Brad Bartram was pinned in the 152-pound final by Matt Velasco in 1:49.

CC's other placer was Scott Schwarzkose at 171, where he finished fourth. Charlie Kowelle at 152 and Kevin O'Boyle at 145 both went 1-2 on the day and came up a match short of qualifying for the state meet. Heavyweight Pat Clark was injured in his first match of the day, against eventual champion Kyle Schuyler of Saline, and did not return.

"The guys we have going are good," said Rodriguez. "We have two freshmen, a junior and two sophomores, so that's a good nucleus coming back."

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