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End of the road

Local boys basketball teams meet their match in districts

By Christian Davis
 C & G Sports Writer

North Farmington boys basketball coach Tom Negoshian knew early on this season could be a struggle on account of injuries and youth.

In fact, the veteran coach thought 10 wins would be a successful mark.

Well, the Raiders did one better, finishing the year 11-12 overall.

Two of the team's 11 wins came in the postseason, as the Raiders beat Walled Lake Northern 59-9 March 11 in the semifinal and Farmington Hills Harrison 74-58 March 9 in the opener.

But the season came to an end following a 50-45 loss to Orchard Lake St. Mary's March 13 in a Class A district final at home.

"They're not a pretty talented team; they are a very, very talented team," Negoshian said of the Eaglets.

In the final, the Raiders played tough, but struggled from the free-throw line, making less than 50 percent, according to the coach.

"We were right there in position to beat them. Our kids felt real comfortable coming into the game because of the league we play in. We were mentally and physically prepared for it," Negoshian said March 14. "If you take everything else and throw it out the door and we make our free throws, it's a different game."

The Raiders say goodbye to seniors Brandon Bell and Drew Blazaitis.

"I'm really just proud of them," the coach said. "We wear a warm-up shirt that says 'Tradition' on the back, and I feel that these two seniors, with as young and inexperienced as we were, really upheld that tradition by keeping us going in the right direction."

In other local basketball action:

Farmington High lost to Livonia Stevenson 62-54 in overtime March 11 at Livonia Stevenson in a Class A district semifinal.

The Falcons drew a bye in the first round.

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Photo by Tracy Dreslinski
 North Farmington junior Robert Hogans drives by a Walled Lake Northern defender March 11 in a Class A district semifinal. North Farmington won that game, but fell to Orchard Lake St. Mary's in the district championship.

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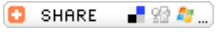
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