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Raiders close outsuccessful season

North Farmington soccer makes program history, reaches regional final

By Jon Malavolti
C & G Sports Writer

STERLING HEIGHTS — A few tears were shed, but the smiles outnumbered them by a good margin.

After all, the North Farmington High girls soccer team had just capped off its most successful season in program history.

The Raiders (12-5-5) fell 2-0 to Utica Eisenhower (17-2-1) June 5 at Utica Stevenson in a Division 1 regional final — marking the furthest the team had ever advanced in the postseason.

“We knew this whole thing is a bonus,” North Farmington coach Tim Russell said. “I always tell the girls every year that it’s about the seniors and about giving them a great experience. No North Farmington team has ever given the seniors a better experience, so it was tremendous. We were just going to go as far as we could go, ride it as hard as we could.”

North Farmington won its first postseason title with a 3-0 victory over Birmingham Groves in the district final May 30.

The Raiders then proceeded to knock off last year’s Division 1 runner-up, Grosse Pointe North, in a 4-3 June 2 come-from-behind regional semifinal thriller.

“We’re completely elated,” senior Stacey Wallis said. “When we came off the field, our coach was saying even though we lost, we still had a great season. So there’s nothing to regret; we did our best.

“I just love our team,” Wallis said.

And although she and fellow seniors Ella Blowers, Erin Cahill, Jessica Schultz and Missy Quasunella will be departing, Wallis is confident the Raiders can make a return run in next year’s playoffs.

“I expect they’re going to go further, because we’re just starting,” Wallis said about the program. “And we’ve got some solid players, and we have a lot of underclassmen and leadership for next year.”

Russell was also optimistic when looking to the future, especially after the experience gained by this year’s squad.

“There’s no way we’re going to hang our heads,” he said after the season finale. “I know they’re upset, but I’m kind of glad they’re upset, because that means they’ll



Photo by Tracy Dreslinski
North Farmington sophomore Morgan Moffatt, left, dribbles during the June 2 Division 1 regional semifinal at Utica Stevenson. The Raiders beat North 4-3 before falling to Utica Eisenhower 2-0 in the June 5 regional final.

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You can reach Sports Writer Jon Malavolti at jmalavolti@candgnews.com or at (586) 498-1040



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