



13650 11 Mile Road • Warren, MI 48089 • 586.498.8000

[Home](#) | [About Us](#) | [Calendar](#) | [Classifieds](#) | [Dateline](#) | [News Archives](#) | [Neighbors](#) | [Advertising Info.](#) | [Contact Us](#) | [Legal Notices](#)

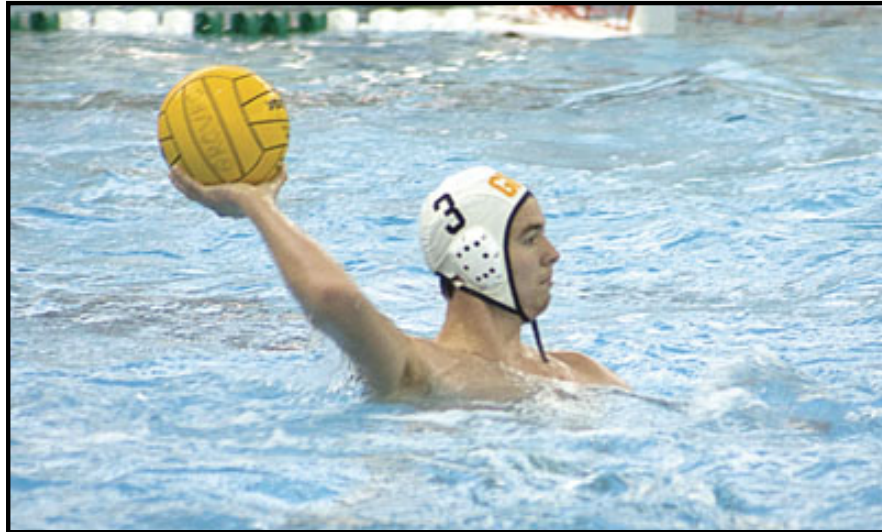


Photo by Frank J. Parker

Birmingham Groves senior Austin Seymour looks for an open teammate during the Nov. 9 state tournament game against Rockford High. Seymour earned first-team All-Region honors and was the team's leading goal scorer this season.

‘Playing with pride’

Birmingham Groves boys water polo wins district, ranks eighth in state

By Sue DePassio
C & G Sports Writer

BIRMINGHAM — Water polo has been played competitively in high school pools since the 1960s.

Its steady growth in the U.S. — as documented on the USA Swimming Web site — has won the hearts and minds of young swimmers across the nation, including those in our own backyard.

Locally, the Birmingham Groves boys water polo team made a splash in the water polo world this season, earning a district title and a spot in the state final tournament, where the Falcons finished eighth overall with a 15-22 record.

“The guys worked really hard this year,” Groves coach Rick Mida said. “We had a really great season.”

Though the Falcons began their season unranked, they were able to turn the tide.

“Halfway into the season, we talked about playing with pride,” Mida said, adding that the Falcons started to believe in themselves and began to compete with renewed effort.

“They just didn’t settle for being mediocre anymore,” Mida said. “It was a collective effort.”

The change in effort and attitude led Groves to district championship, beating crosstown rival Birmingham Seaholm — which it lost to earlier in the season. The victory earned the Falcons their third district title in five years.

“Going into that game, we knew there was a lot on the line,” Mida said. “It being a crosstown rivalry made it an exciting game.

“I’ve never seen a Groves team celebrate a district championship like that.”

With the district title, Groves advanced to the regional tournament, where it finished third. Two team members — seniors Austin Seymour and A.J. Mestdagh — earned

highest honors. Seymour was a first-team All-Region selection and was the team's leading goal scorer, while Mestdagh, one of the team captains, earned second-team All-Region honors. Mida was named East Region Coach of the Year.

The regional performance secured the Falcons a spot in the Nov. 9 state championships.

"For us, making states was our goal," Mida said. "We knew early in the season that we were hosting, and we didn't want to be spectators at our own pool."

Because Groves had lost key players to graduation last year, it entered the tournament as host and underdog.

"Not a lot of teams thought we'd make it to the state championship," Mida said. "The team had really improved, and we were playing our best water polo at the end of the season."

Groves took on the defending state champions from Rockford High in the opening round and was unsuccessful. After consolation round games, the Falcons ended up in 8th place overall and at the top of the East Region North District.

"I feel like we did have a successful season," senior captain Teddy Albertson said. "We were very glad to get back into the state tournament after not being in it last year, and I was happy to represent and lead our team as captain this year."

The Falcons bid farewell to Seymour, Mestdagh, Albertson, Matt Quenaudon, David DeVore, Alex Power, Will Ashbaugh and Mike Sofia.

You can reach Sports Writer Sue DePassio at sdepassio@candgnews.com or at (586) 279-1107.

Copyright © 2007 C&G Publishing

Advertiser Times • Birmingham-Bloomfield Eagle • Eastsider • Fraser-Clinton Chronicle • Grosse Pointe Times • Journal
Macomb Chronicle Madison-Park News • Rochester Post • Royal Oak Review • St. Clair Shores Sentinel • Shelby-Utica News
Southfield Sun • Sterling Heights Sentry • Troy Times • Warren Weekly • West Bloomfield Beacon • Woodward Talk