

Big start for Kwan

By Philip Hersh
Chicago Tribune

DETROIT — Tara Lipinski is the defending U.S. and world figure skating champion, while Michelle Kwan was runner-up in both events. Yet the feeling is Kwan had more to lose when the two Olympic gold medal favorites met for the first time this season at Skate America on Friday night.

Lipinski had beaten Kwan three straight times coming here. A fourth straight would presumably shake Kwan's confidence even more.

"It would be harder for her (Kwan) over this year if she does lose," said Todd Eldredge, the four-time men's champion, who trains with the same coach as Lipinski. "A lot of people would start taking Tara more seriously."

"I think they still consider Tara the underdog. Her winning again would make a few people wake up and say maybe she is the one supposed to win and not the underdog."

Kwan still looked like the favorite after a confident, compelling performance to win Friday's short program over a flawless but again unimposing Lipinski.

The nine judges sent a clear message with their scores. Even though Lipinski did more difficult jumps, Kwan won eight of the nine judges and received higher marks for both the eight required elements and presentation.

It was Kwan's first short program victory over Lipinski in three competitions dating to February's U.S. Championships, and the way Kwan skated to piano music of Rachmaninoff recalled the elegant young woman who had swept away the world in 1996.

Given the problems she had in Friday's final warmup, botching two triple lutz attempts and falling on a double axel, Kwan's command once the music started was even more impressive.

"My body knows how to do it, but my mind has to stop thinking," Kwan said. "I have to say, 'Just let it go, Michelle.'"

Kwan breezed through her triple lutz-double toe loop combination, had a strong double axel and, once the jumping was finished, glided through the captivating spiral sequence in which a shift of her shoulders changes the blade edge on which she is skating without a wobble.

"My warmup was a little shaky, but I had to get it going," Kwan said. The Skate America title will come down to Saturday's free skate. The winner gets \$30,000 and an immeasurable confidence boost to kick off this Olympic season.

"I thought this was a great way to get started," Lipinski said.

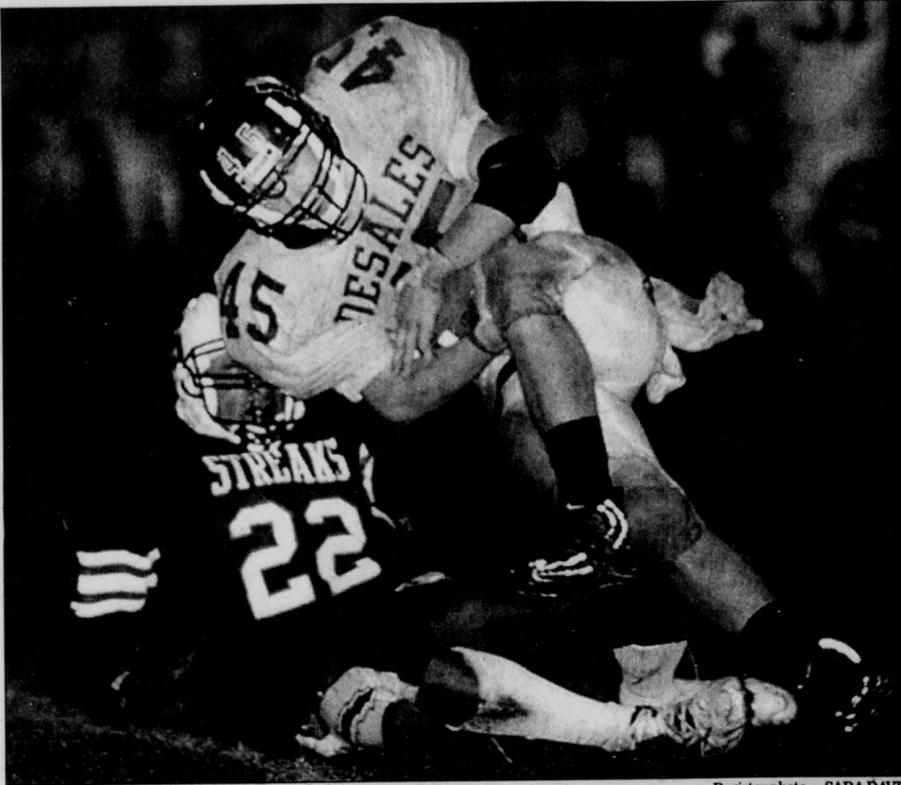
Lipinski, 15, who trains in Bloomfield Hills, Mich., and Kwan, 17, who trains in Lake Arrowhead, Calif., each concentrated during the off-season in improving the part of her skating where the other skater is believed to be stronger.

For Lipinski, that meant working on artistic impression, which has been denigrated because of her size (4 feet 10 inches, 82 pounds) and youth. By touring last spring with some of skating's best artists, including ice dancer Maia Usova and 1994 Olympic singles champion Oksana Baiul, Lipinski had a chance to see what kind of arm movements and body positions would be effective in making herself look more polished and mature to the judges and the audience.

For all that, Lipinski seemed to shrink into the ice surface during the minute of her short program that preceded her first jump, a triple lutz-double loop combination. The choice of a little girl's dirndl-style dress only accentuated the idea that this was a child among women.

There was nothing childish about her mental toughness, though. Skating immediately after Kwan received all 5.9s (out of 6.0) for presentation, Lipinski rose to the athletic challenge and carried off the performance with a champion's confidence.

Asked if it was important to win, Lipinski said, "Not at all. When you are second, there is always something to move up to."



Register photo — SARA DAVIS

Sandusky defender Orlando Williamson (22) tries to bring down Pat Vasil of Columbus DeSales Friday night at Strobel Field. The Stallions picked up a 28-7 non-conference victory over the Blue Streaks.

599

• Continued from Page B-1

Brent Peterson booted the first of four extra points at the 6:12 mark as the winners consumed almost half of the period.

Sandusky was unable to penetrate the DeSales defense on its first two possessions. In fact, the second ended when quarterback Jeremy Newell's pass was intercepted at the SHS 37 and returned 12 yards.

DeSales was stopped and Peterson missed a 37-yard field goal, only the second time in 10 attempts he has done so.

The Stallions had the ball 8 minutes and 46 seconds in the first quarter, but Sandusky had the upper hand in the second period.

However, DeSales cashed in on Sandusky's mental mistakes to strike midway through the second period.

Faced with fourth and two at its own 33, DeSales caught the Streak defense for jumping too early and

the result was a first down. The Streaks were guilty of a face mask penalty on the next play as the ball moved to the SHS 43.

Then, junior fullback David Cook bolted through an opening off-tackle, broke into the secondary and sprinted the distance with 5:40 left.

Sandusky came right back with its only points less than one minute later.

On second and 16 from his own 27, Newell stepped back to pass. Orlando Williamson broke over the middle and caught the well thrown pass at his own 43, then raced away from two defenders to complete the 72-yard strike. Mike Poeschl's placement made it 14-7 with 4:43 remaining in the half.

That was as close as it would be. DeSales twice sacked the Streaks for losses to begin the second half, then took over at its own 40.

The Stallions drove 60 yards in five plays and featured Cook, the 180-pound junior. He popped up the middle for 34 yards on the first carry, came back with 15 more around the left side, then five more to the seven.

Travis Marter, one of a fleet of good

running backs, scored the touchdown from the five at the 7:47 mark and the Streaks were down 21-7.

The Streaks had one sizable gain in the next three possessions, but were unable to sustain anything and Newell had passes picked off twice in the final quarter.

Meanwhile, DeSales tacked on another seven points and Cook was the key. He barreled in from the 12 at the 6:07 mark of the final quarter to cap a 71-yard drive in seven plays. Cook finished the night with 155 yards and was the leading Stallion rusher coming in with 417 yards in the first eight games.

Sandusky was held to 70 yards rushing while DeSales rushed for 295 yards in 49 plays.

The Streaks went to the air 19 times and completed six for 121 yards. Williamson had three catches for 99 yards and Darcel Irby the other three for 22 yards.

"Give DeSales credit. They have a very good football team which is sound fundamentally. They are the best team we've faced this year," Cook concluded.

St. Paul pounds Mapleton

■ **Monroeville stays one game back by dumping Crestview**

FIRELANDS

the mark to 55-0. Jason Pugh capped the offensive burst.

Monroeville 35, Crestview 22 At Monroeville, A 21-point blitz in a five-minute period of the first quarter keyed Monroeville's victory over Crestview.

The Eagles (8-1) remained tied for the runner-up spot in the Firelands Conference with South Central, a winner of Plymouth. They tangle Friday in the season finale for both teams. Norwalk St. Paul is assured of at least a share of the crown.

Quarterback Chad Ackerman tossed for three touchdowns as the Eagles rebounded from their only loss of the season a week ago to St. Paul.

After Paul Drossman bolted three yards for the first score of the game at the 6:33 mark, Ackerman came back with two of his strikes. He connected for 17 yards with Brad Clark with 4:06 left, then fired a 37-yard touchdown pass to Scott Benfer with 1:28 remaining in the period.

Crestview bounced back and closed the margin to 21-16 with 1:59 left in the third period on a one-yard run which followed a safety in which the Cougars blocked a Monroeville punt out of the end zone.

Monroeville struck back 90 seconds later as Benfer ran in from two yards out and Ackerman hooked up with Derek Yoder for the second time on a two-point conversion. The Eagles scored again as Ackerman and Clark hooked up for 23 yards at

the 8:37 mark of the final quarter.

South Central 25, Plymouth 14 At Greenwich, the Trojans broke open a close game with a pair of scores in the third quarter for a 25-14 win over Plymouth.

The win was the sixth in nine games for South Central which will take a 5-1 Firelands Conference record into Friday's season finale at home against Monroeville, also 5-1.

South Central scored first with just 11 seconds to go in the first period on a 40-yard pass from Doug Dendinger to Ty Stevenson.

Plymouth, falling to 4-5 overall and 2-4 in the conference, battled back for the lead just eight seconds into the second quarter as Kevin Rodman scored on a 42-yard run and Zak King added the point after for a 7-6 lead.

With just one second to go in the first half, South Central forged ahead to stay with Dendinger going in from two yards out for a 12-7 lead.

Gary Ramsey scored twice on runs of five and 30 yards in the third quarter to help the Trojans take control and Plymouth came back in the final period with a four-yard run by Ryan Click.

New London 31, W. Reserve 7 At New London, the Wildcats spotted Western Reserve a 7-0 lead and battled back for a 31-7 win.

Micaiah Zsigary hauled in a 40-yard pass from Sonny Bivins to give Western Reserve the lead (7-0) in the first quarter.

But, the Wildcats stormed back in the second period as Kevin Wise scored the first of his two touchdowns on a three-yard run.

Truckers run down Flashes

■ **Norwalk snaps 10-game skid against Willard with 19-7 win**

Special to the Register

NORWALK — Norwalk got a pair of scoring runs from Josh Schlotterer in the first period and the Truckers snapped a long drought against rival Willard with a 19-7 win at Whitney Field.

The Truckers, now 3-6 overall and 2-4 in the Northern Ohio League, snapped a 10-game losing streak to Willard. Norwalk last posted a win over the Crimson Flashes in 1986, 20-13.

It didn't take the Truckers long to get on the board as Schlotterer rambled 69 yards on the first play from scrimmage and Tom DeLuca added the point after for a 7-0 lead.

The Truckers came right back with a sustained scoring drive of 11 plays and 61 yards, capped off by a five-yard run by Schlotterer for a 13-0 lead.

Prior to Friday, the Truckers had been blanked by Willard in seven of eight previous meetings.

Willard, now 1-8 overall and 0-6 in the league, closed the gap in the second period with Nick Bailey going the final two yards and Chad Carr added the point after as Norwalk's lead shrunk to 13-7 at the 9:29 mark.

The 65-yard scoring drive in 19 plays was the longest scoring drive, both in yards and plays, for the Crimson Flashes this season.

There was no further scoring until 5 minutes were left in the game when quarterback Brad Moore scored on a 15-yard run for the final 19-7 count.

"I thought Schlotterer ran well. He has had some big games for us this year. We thought going in that we could run against them. We have a good offensive line," said Norwalk head coach Ron DeLuca.

"I thought Willard run and the ball well to the outside. We knew we had to keep control of the ball and we did. I think we have the best team here we have had in four years. We have close at halftime in a lot of games."

"The first play we saw something we thought would work and just wanted to take it as far as we could. I think coach (Terry) King should be proud of the job (Charlie) Frye is doing, he is doing an outstanding job," said DeLuca.

Frye, the sophomore quarterback

for Willard, has passed for 1,450 yards this season and Chris Ludban holds the school record with 1,766 yards in 1995. Jarrod West was on the receiving end of eight Frye passes for 103 yards.

"Their early score really hurt us. I thought we ran well but this is not a team that can come from behind," said King.

The Crimson Flashes were led in rushing by Bailey with 37 yards on 12 attempts.

Bucyrus 21, Upper Sandusky 19 At Bucyrus, the Redmen held on to a share of first place in the league following a 21-19 win over lowly Upper Sandusky which dropped to 1-8 overall and 0-6 in the league.

Bucyrus, 8-1 overall and 5-1 in the league, built a 21-12 lead in the first half.

Steve Binnix scored on a one-yard run and Benji Brant added the point after for a 7-0 lead with 7:35 to go in the first period.

Upper Sandusky battled back on a 17-yard run by Keith Montgomery, but the PAT failed and Bucyrus was clinging to a 7-6 lead with 4:21 to go in the first quarter.

Brant scored on a 43-yard run just 35 seconds into the second quarter, but Upper Sandusky countered on a four-yard run by Eric Trautwein.

Bucyrus added another score with just 19 seconds left in the half as Shawn Higgenbotham hauled in a 12-yard pass from Josh Weiler.

The only scoring in the second half helped Upper Sandusky draw close as Trautwein scored on a 17-yard run and J.J. Minehart added the PAT to get the Rams within two points of a major upset.

Brant finished with 138 yards on 25 carries for the Redmen.

Galion 15, Shelby 13 At Shelby, Galion made two first period scores hold up for a 15-13 win over Shelby.

With the win, the Tigers remained tied with Bucyrus and Bellevue for first place in the NOL.

Galion, 7-2 overall, jumped out to a 15-0 lead as Josh Barnett scored on a 15-yard run and Tony Powell added a two-yard run. The Tigers converted after both scores including a two-point run by Powell after the second score.

Shelby, 6-3 overall and 3-3 in the league, battled back as Israel Martin scored on a two-yard run and Toby Stepsis scored on a 63-yard interception return in the second quarter.

Waldorf claims 4-stroke lead in Vegas Invite

LAS VEGAS (AP) — On a day when the wind howled and scores soared, Duffy Waldorf may have been the most surprised golfer in the Las Vegas Invitational.

Make that pleasantly surprised, after a 3-under 69 Friday left Waldorf with a four-shot lead after three rounds of a tournament suddenly turned topsy-turvy by wind gusting to 45 mph that caused scores to balloon.

"I never saw a leaderboard so I didn't know I had that kind of lead," Waldorf said. "I really had no idea what a good round today would be."

Playing away from scoreboards and on the Desert Inn Country Club course, the most sheltered of the three courses used in the tournament, Waldorf shot six strokes worse than he did a day earlier. It was still enough to vault him from a tie for the lead to a four-shot margin over Billy Mayfair. Fred Couples was tied with Kevin Sutherland another shot back.

"I got up and realized it was going to be different today," Waldorf said. "But I was fortunate because the wind doesn't get you as much on this course as in the other places."

Defending champion Tiger Woods, who double-bogeyed two holes on his

front side after flubbing shots around the green, shot a 5-over 77 on the more open TPC Summerlin course and was 12 shots back. First-round leader John Adams, meanwhile, didn't even make the cut after shooting a 79 at the Las Vegas Country Club.

Phil Mickelson, who flirted with a 59 on Thursday before finishing with a 63, was 16 shots worse Friday after shooting a 7-over 79.

A day after four golfer shot 63s and five others had 64s, the best round of the day was a 67 by David Berganio. Others, such as Tom Kite, who shot 82, simply couldn't figure out the gusting wind and suddenly slick greens.

"I was afraid the ball was going to move on the green," Sutherland said after a 70 put him five shots back. "There's just nothing out there to stop the wind and everything is so dried out and fast."

Sutherland played at the host TPC course in the foothills of the Las Vegas Valley, where conditions were the worst and where the final two rounds will be played.

Waldorf, Mayfair and Couples played at the Desert Inn, a traditional tree-lined course on the Las Vegas Strip.

Mayer gets 100th win as coach at Vermilion

■ **Sailors make it a special night by knocking off Parma**

By CHARLES WAGNER
Sports Editor

VERMILION — It was a special night Friday for veteran Vermilion football coach Ralph Mayer, thanks in part to the members of his specialty units.

The Sailors held a 14-0 halftime lead and hiked the margin to 28-0 in the third quarter before the offensive unit touched the ball.

Mayer earned his 100th career victory as his alma mater with a 35-18

win over Parma Senior to keep Vermilion's playoff hopes alive.

Scott Rogers returned the second half kickoff 80 yards for a touchdown in 17 seconds, then Terry Dalehite raced 75 yards on a punt return three minutes later as the Sailors opened a commanding lead.

"Getting 100 wins was a personal goal for me, but all that means is I've been around coaching a long time (15 years). We've had so many great kids come through the football program since I became the head coach and they are the ones who deserve the credit. I've also had some outstanding coaches, especially Mark Fowler who has been with me for all



Ralph Mayer

into November.

"We are still in the playoff picture

100 of them," Mayer said. Mayer, who also serves as the athletic director, will retire from coaching at the end of the season. However, he hopes it continues

and got some help from Bellevue tonight when they beat Tiffin. We have to beat Admiral King next week first, then wait until the rankings come out. It's going to be close but I think we can stay in fourth place," Mayer noted. The top four teams in each region qualify. Vermilion is in Division II and was listed No. 4 this week in Region 6.

Mayer's coaching record is 100-51, all at Vermilion.

The Sailors took a 6-0 lead in the first period as Scott Rogers dashed in from the four, then increased the margin to 14-0 on a 14-yard scoring strike from quarterback Roger Kurtz to Dalehite.

Redmen

• Continued from Page B-1

really hurt and two interceptions which hurt us when we tried to battle back," said Tiffin head coach Steve Gilbert.

The Tornadoes completed nine of 23 passes for 123 yards and finished with 368 yards on 69 offensive snaps while Bellevue had 39 yards passing on four of 14 completions and finished with 375 yards on 50 offensive plays.

"It was a combination of everything tonight. It was our offense, our defense, our coaches, our scout teams. It was the everything clicking together," said Nasonti, who has a 5-1 won-loss record against Tiffin and 64-10 overall at Bellevue.