

Franklin moves into top spot

North Farmington drops key NSL game

By RON GARDEN

The home-court advantage just wasn't enough last Friday for North Farmington in its showdown with Livonia Franklin for first place in the Northwest Suburban League.

Franklin won the game, 61-55, and now leads the league with a 4-1 record. Coach Ken Dean's North Farmington squad fell to second place with a 3-2 record.

North came out shooting in the first quarter,

...sinking its first four shots and establishing an early eight-point lead. But the lead began to crumble when the Patriots guards began to feed the ball to their big men under the boards.

"It wasn't anything we didn't expect," Dean said. "We knew they had some big men in there and they were going to be tough under the boards. They played well and really hurt us with their rebounding."

The Raiders hit on only 18 of 32 shots from the field, but they did a bit better from the free-throw line, making 21 of 27.

Franklin outshot the Raiders, making 24 of 36 field goals and 13 of 21 from the line. Rebounding statistics don't really show the Patriots' dominance under the boards. Franklin dominated the offensive and defensive rebounding in the second half. Overall, Franklin outrebounded North Farmington, 29-25.

TURNOVERS HURT North. The Raiders threw the ball away 21 times while Franklin was guilty of 18 miscues.

"Those turnovers really hurt us," Dean said. "We had a lot of them. And to top it off, we made a lot of foolish mistakes like getting into early foul trouble. Those mistakes cost us the game."

With six minutes left in the game, Franklin took a 47-46 lead and never gave it up. From then on, Franklin's Dennis Wesley and Sam Williams worked the baseline and put up the job passes which were converted into baskets.

Williams, a 6-4 forward, led all scorers with 24 points. Wesley, a 6-4 center, followed with 12.

Mike Morrow scored 17 points on six baskets and five of seven free throws for North Farmington. Mike Garcia and Dan Werner added 16 and 13 points respectively.

"It's always good to beat the home team," said Franklin coach Bob Vear. "We played a good hustle ballgame and really crashed those boards in the beginning. It was nip and tuck, but we came back strongly by halftime."

"Our team had their minds on the game and we started to click in the second half. We were passing off the short four-foot shots for even closer ones."

North Farmington plays next on Tuesday (Feb. 3) at home against nonleague Ferndale High. The Raiders resume NSL play on Feb. 6 at Westland John Glen.

Franklin-N. Farmington

Livonia Franklin (61): Dan Peterson 2, 5-8; John Lyons 1, 2-2; Dennis Wesley 4, 6-12; John Elmore 3, 6-6; Sam Williams 11, 22-24; Dennis Smith 1, 6-6; Dave Wilson 1, 6-8; Jeff Phillips 1, 6-7. 2 Totals: 34, 132-141.

North Farmington (55): Dan Werner 3,

7-10; Mike Garcia 6, 4-16; Mike Morrow 6, 5-7; Mark Thompson 6, 22-24; Ryan McCrum 8, 12-13; John Piek 2, 2-5. 4 Totals: 17, 21-12. 55.

Total Fouls: North 19, Franklin 14.

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