

Goaltending call lifts Groves

By BRAD EMONS

Birmingham Groves coach Jay Schwalm got an unexpected ride into the regional at Southfield-Lathrup Tuesday in the most bizarre circumstance.

Detroit Mumford's David Hopkins goaltended Tom Fletcher's shot with only one second left in the game to give the Falcons an unbelievable 51-50 victory to win the district title at Berkeley Friday.

Groves, seemingly down and out of the contest, trailing 50-49, with nine seconds left, worked a full-court play to perfection after Mumford's Durand Walker missed two free throws.

Walker's errant free throw was snatched by Groves' Jeff Fortan who turned and threw midcourt to teammate Bill Riker.

Fletcher received Riker's pass in the dead corner and without hesitation, arched his shot over the outstretching arms of a Mumford defender who partially deflected it.

Hopkins, standing under the basket, jumped up and batted the ball away just inches from the rim.

The officials immediately signaled

basket interference and the Groves following went into a frenzy.

"I WAS STUNNED and I don't know what to say," said Schwalm. "All I know is, he (Hopkins) shouldn't have done it."

Playing inspired basketball all evening, Groves appeared to have the contest under control with 3:52 to go and a 49-41 lead.

But Groves came apart in the final three minutes as Mumford crept back, canning key free throws and causing turnovers.

With 1:06 remaining and Groves on top, 49-47, the Falcons Dan Bertelson committed a backcourt foul sending Johnallison Westbrook to the charity stripe.

The Mumford forward made his first free throw but missed the second. The rebound came out to center Michael Bradly who tipped the ball in giving the Detroit team a 50-49 advantage.

Groves was then forced into 10-second violation in the backcourt handling the ball over to Mumford.

For the next 15 seconds, Mumford ran a stall to perfection with Groves eventually having to intentionally foul

Walker.

It was the best thing that could have happened to the Falcons. Walker missed both free throws and that set up the winning shot.

"I thought we did a good job of sagging inside on their big people and we handled their pressure well," said Schwalm.

Mumford's Brady and Hopkins combined for 34 points and dominated the backboards. But Brady hurt his teams' chances for a victory by hitting only five of 13 free throws.

Groves was led by swingman Al Ucar, who netted 16, and guard Rusty Liebetrau adding 15.

THE FALCONS WERE OFF from the free throw line themselves, canning only one of nine.

Mumford coach Dwight Jones described his team's effort as "the worst we played all year."

"We didn't play until the end and you can't expect to do that and win," said Jones.

"We were not aggressive defensively," he said.

The first-up Groves squad took an early 10-4 lead on Ucar's jumper at

Mumford came back however on the 6-3 Hopkins' tip-in at 2:30.

Groves led at the end of the quarter, 14-12, after Ucar made a basket driving through two Mumford defenders. He hit the shot with 58 seconds left in the period.

With Mumford in a bonus free-throw situation, Groves maintained its slim lead in the second quarter.

Hopkins' baseline jumper with 1:34 to go in the half knotted the score, 24-24.

There were eight ties and 10 lead changes in the first half.

Ucar had eight points in the first quarter but did not tally any in the second stanza.

In the third quarter, both teams stayed close as Liebetrau kept Groves ahead with his outside shooting against a relaxed Mumford zone defense.

UCAR CAME ON in the fourth period hitting his first three shots to give the Falcons a brief 46-39 advantage with 5:16 to play.

"Anything can happen in the regional," said Schwalm.

Anything can happen in the district.

Hertle paces Barons

By JOHN BOZZO

If there's one thing Andover's Class A district basketball championship will give to the school's athletic program, it's confidence.

If there was one player who embodied that attitude, it was junior Bill Hertle.

Andover's first-year coach John Maloney said Hertle was the key in the Barons' 62-60 victory over Seaholm Friday in the tournament finals. The victory advances Andover to the Pontiac Central regional where the Barons will face the winner of the Pontiac Northern-Pontiac Central game 7 p.m. Tuesday.

"The most important thing we learned this week," said Maloney, whose team upset highly ranked Rice in a preliminary game, "is to have the feeling that we should win."

"Before, if we were behind two minutes left, the players would say, 'Don't give me the ball.' Tonight Bill Hertle was saying, 'Give me the ball. I'll find a way to score.'"

HERTLE DID find a way, and it's a lucky thing, because Andover sure needed a pathfinder.

Seaholm, now 4-18 on the season, played an inspired game. The Maples led by two at the end of three quarters. Baskets by Bob Polin and David Keller, the games' highest scorers with 21 and 19 points respectively, increased the Seaholm bulge to 48-42.

Tim Meter and Galen David brought Andover to within two points with one basket apiece, then Hertle went to work. Hertle hit four field goals in the fourth quarter and one free throw for nine of his 15 points.

Andover finally wrestled the lead away from Seaholm with 4:35 remaining when Andy Krystal put together a three-point play. Hertle's shooting help-

ded Andover increase its lead to 60-56 with 18 seconds to play.

But the never-say-die Maples weren't through. Bob Polin sank two free throws with 10 seconds to play. Andy Sovran stole the Andover inbound pass, tossed the ball to teammate David Keller who scored. Seaholm now trailed 61-60 with three seconds left.

Andover's Tim Meter finally put the game away for good when he hit a free throw with two seconds showing on the clock.

"**WE GAVE IT** everything we possibly could," said Seaholm coach Bob Sherwood, "right up until the final buzzer. We've got nothing to be ashamed of, just disappointed that we didn't win."

"I'm proud of the way the kids conducted themselves, not only in the tournament, but during the latter half of a losing season. We were so close, but we're still 15 miles from Pontiac (the regional tournament site)."

Seaholm had scored the first six points of the game, with Keller netting two and Sovran four points. Andover had to outscore Seaholm 8-2 late in the opening period to get a 16-16 tie going into the second quarter. Galen David and Hertle each had six in the first quarter.

Two Polin free throws and a Keller basket put Seaholm back on top again. But a hot-shooting Tim Meter, who finished the game with 18 points, lifted Andover to a 28-26 halftime advantage with his 10 second-quarter points.

The game was tied five times during the third stanza. Jeff Maher put Seaholm on top 44-42 when he hit a 10-footer with three seconds left in the third period.

"I told the kids that Seaholm might as well be 18-4 the way they've been playing in the tournament," said Andover's Maloney. Seaholm had upset Rochester and Rochester Adams

in preliminary games.

"Seaholm had momentum," Maloney said. "My number one concern was emotion. If we don't play with emotion, we don't win. I thought we were emotionally ready for the game."

At the start of the season, first-year coach Maloney said his goals were the Greater Oakland Activities League championship and a district title. Last Friday night he reached those goals. The remainder of the state tournament is icing on the cake.

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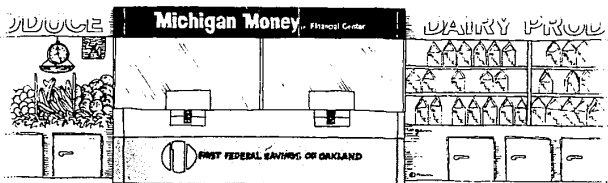
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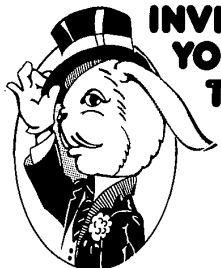
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