

Agatha Clashes With St. James For Title

Is St. Agatha High's football team capable of a major upset? It'll take one for the Townships to beat Ferndale St. James Sunday when the teams clash at Notre Dame field in Harper Woods for the Catholic League's second division championship.

St. Agatha, unbeaten in eight games, made it to the title game Sunday by thrashing Mt. Clemens St. Mary's, 31-6, while St. James drove past St. David, 42-0. St. James is an old hand in

the title game. The Ferndale team won the title last year and is seeking its fifth flag in eight years. St. Agatha never before has finished in the king's role, but if Mike Murphy, the Township's great back, has his way...

this will be THE YEAR. MURPHY KEEPS going merrily on his way. All he did was to score twice and add 123 yards more to his fabulous total in the victory over St. Mary's.

He's now gathered in 1,339 for the season, along with 14 touchdowns. There was no wasted time by St. Agatha and Co. St. Mary tried an outsideline, but St. Agatha got the ball and marched 47 yards in 12 plays

with Murphy carrying 10 times and finally plunging the final yard. AFTER A recovered fumble by Jim Krupanski, St. Agatha rushed for 37 yards in short order and Murphy went over

from the two. A safety added to the St. Agatha total. Bob Blackmore went three yards and Charles Schrock took a 10-yard pass from Dave Urban to finish the point production.

St. Mary's moved 74 yards in 13 plays for its lone touchdown. Tony Ransome was the big gun for St. James. He scored on runs of 10, 2, and 70—the latter with an interception.

Franklin's Great Comeback Nips Bentley In Last Minute

Scripts written for Frank Merriwell, everybody's mythical sports hero of years ago, or Jack Armstrong, the All-American boy, couldn't have come close to matching the thrills of the Bentley-Franklin grid duel Friday in a drizzling rain on the Bentley field.

Taged as a bitter battle between traditional rivals, it turned into one of the greatest football contests of the year in Observerland and left everyone of the more than 2,000 spectators gasping for breath at the finish. Franklin, which started the season with only three holdovers from last year's varsity, came charging from 12 points back with 5:31 remaining to score two touchdowns -- and then win in the final 57 seconds on a perfect placement by Junior Terry Maas, 27-26.

It didn't seem to matter much when Dave Rice's placement was blocked. What with the rain falling, time running out and the field a quagmire down the middle, it seemed as if Franklin was fighting a losing cause. The kickoff was returned to the Franklin 34 and the Patriots had 66 yards to go for a touchdown that would still leave them six points down.

BUT THIS WAS A scrappy team that had fought and overcome odds through a season that found it suffering only one loss -- at the hands of the powerful, unbeaten Thurston Eagles. Quarterback Frank Kasperak whipped a pass to Dan Thorpe who fought his way to the Bentley 34, a gain of 32 yards, Kasperak flipped a screen pass to Mark Letto and he booted to Bentley 14. Kasperak faded back again,

shook off two tacklers and finally found End Wayne Florida open in the end zone for his second touchdown of the evening. Mass' placement was wide and Franklin trailed, 26-20, with 4:15 showing on the clock. Bentley stormed back and had the ball on the Franklin 44 when the Patriots tightened their defense and held for three downs. Gary Battle punted to the Franklin 17 and the Patriots were 63 yards from paydirt with less than three minutes to play.

THEN CAME ONE of the most spectacular marches of the year -- it ended with a Franklin touchdown and the game-winning conversion. Kasperak started it with a nine yard gain around left end. He rifled a pass to Jeff Kind for a first down on the Bentley 47. Kasperak hit Letto in the right flat and he picked up six. Florida grabbed another Kasperak aerial on the Bentley 19 and there was 1:14 to play. Kasperak dropped back to pass, found his receivers covered and turned right end for five.

Back dropped Kasperak again, waited and then tossed a high, looping pass towards the back of the end zone where Florida leaped high for the catch and the game tying touchdown with 57 seconds on the clock. It was the third touchdown pass of the evening for Florida and the third thrown by Kasperak.

The rain-soaked Franklin rooters screamed their delight when the score card showed 26-26. Everything was quiet as Mass prepared for the try for extra point there was a moment of hesitation and then Referee Sam Taub signaled the conversion that spelled



BOWLING OVER a would-be tackler is St. Agatha's Mike Murphy who roared past Rick Lansing for a long gain in Sunday's game against Mt. Clemens. (Observer photo by Craig Gaffield)

Blocked Punt Gives Raiders Triumph Over Stevenson, 12-8

What happens when two rated football teams oppose? Sure, enough, a spine tingler develops and it did Saturday when North Farmington struggled to down Stevenson, 12-8.

Here were two of Observerland's football giants locking horns. That it rained all day ... that the field was a sea of mud, well, nothing really mattered. Seldom has a prep football game produced so much suspense. As usually is the case in such a brutal contest, there

to literally the last play before it was decided who won ... and who lost. THAT DECIDING moment came when North Farmington's Steve Pease, bathed in mud and wet from head to toe, reached to deflect a Rusty Gregg pass which would have spelled a Stevenson touchdown with a few seconds to go. Such a touchdown, of course, would have turned around who won and who lost.

As usually is the case in such a brutal contest, there had to be a big hero ... two or three heroes. In North Farmington's case... Mike Pease was one. Bob Hughes, who scored both touchdowns, was another. And the third had to be Drew Mahalic, who roared through to block a punt and make it possible for Hughes to fall on it for the winning touchdown.

THIS SAME Mahalic had punted four times for a 44-yard average and it was his final kick that set Stevenson back deep in its own land and eventually forced the punt which was blocked by Mahalic and then Hughes' recovery. North Farmington marched 50 yards, mostly on the early running of Hughes and Quarterback Steve White and then on White's 40-yard "bomb" to Hughes for his first touchdown. Stevenson tied it and went ahead in the third period on Gene Walker's TD gallop from the three and Gregg's two-point conversion.

But the real dramatics came in the final few moments when it looked like Stevenson was going to pull the game out. In the regional, Schoolcraft will have to contend with, among others, the Lorain Community College team from Ohio which whipped the Livonia earlier in the season. The regional winner will qualify for the national meet in Miami.

Lynn Dodds pumped in two goals, Bob See, Rick Riedel and Tim DeWitt one each in the victory over Concordia as John Bliss again sparkled in the Schoolcraft goal. Bliss never played soccer before joining the Schoolcraft team this year. He attended



WINNING TOUCHDOWN is scored by N. Farmington's Bob Hughes as he falls on ball in end zone after blocking a Stevenson punt. Drew Mahalic (92) and Jay Pease (67) rush in along with Mahalic to grab the loose pign. For what happened originally turn to page 2. (Photo by Warren Bopp)

Thurston Ends Perfect Season With 20-6 Win

PERFECT! That was the Thurston High football story in 1969. Eight victories and no defeats -- the Northwest Suburban League's outright championship -- rulers of prep football in Redford Township. The climax came Saturday in the rain, mud and the mist. Thurston arose to best Redford Union, 20-6, in a titanic struggle as the series between the Township rivals ever has produced. Redford Union had come into the game with a streak of four straight victories and a share of the Suburban Six League crown.

For Thurston it was a joyous occasion for Coach Bill McDonald and his charges. It was the school's finest hour and year in varsity football. Never before a perfect year! CERTAINLY it was McDonald's, too, in the 15 years he has handled football at Thurston. But the highest compliment when it was over came from Bob Atkins, coach of fallen RU. "That Thurston was a very fine football team," said Atkins. "So many thought it was just a one-man team (back Craig Mutch), but you never saw better linebackers than it has, or better defensive play. They hit well, they run well, they come to play. They truly were beaten by an excellent team and Bill McDonald deserves all the orchids for having done such a fine job over there."

And Mutch? The area's No. 1 back for the past couple of years ended his high school football career in blazing fashion. He ran for two touchdowns to bring his total for the season to 18, one of the highest in the state. He personally chalked up 169 yards and that lifted his season's total to 554, added to the 1,034 he churned up a year ago. HIS is a name which will be heard from in the years to come. Dozens of colleges want him. But add the likes of Gordie Ezres and Paul Seren and the Falats and the others... they all add up to the eight victories Thurston compiled. Few RU-Thurston battles have been more intense. This one was 0-0 after a half. RU had fumbled away a fine chance in the second quarter when the wet ball scooted away from Bill Booker deep in Thurston territory. It was one of six RU turnovers--three on fumbles and three on interceptions.

To start the second half ... there was Mutch, taking the kickoff and running it back to the RU 36. A moment later, Mutch took the ball on a reverse and slashed his way for 36 yards. A couple plays later ... boom... he was over and Thurston led, 6-0. THERE WAS no holding Redford Union back. Quarterback Gary Bevington went to the air and led a drive that finally paid off from the Thurston eight. On fourth down, Bevington shot a TD pass to Kirk Taylor and the score was tied. In the fourth period, a Ron Barringer to Larry Marshall pass for 25 from midfield started Thurston in high motion again. Mutch and Ezres took turns getting the ball to the one from where Mutch barged over and Ezres made the two-point conversion. * SHOWING THAT he was just as brilliant on defense. Mutch snared a RU pass later in the quarter and ran it 30 yards to the RU 5 to set up Ezres' short plunge for the final TD of the game.

Schoolcraft Wins Title In Soccer

Champs of the Michigan Junior College Conference, Schoolcraft College's soccer team now shoots for bigger honors... honors that could lead to the state's trip to Miami, Fla., at Thanksgiving time. Schoolcraft batted in the loop title by blanking Concordia, 5-0, and thus qualified for the four-team regional at Bay City, Nov. 14-15.

In the regional, Schoolcraft will have to contend with, among others, the Lorain Community College team from Ohio which whipped the Livonia earlier in the season. The regional winner will qualify for the national meet in Miami.

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