

Thursday, November 25, 1982 O&E

Can Tractor power halt Hawks?

By Tom Baer
staff writer

"Harrison's a very solid football team, the best overall team we've seen all year." That was Dearborn Fordson football coach Charles Justice praising the Harrison Hawks.

"Fordson's defense is really tenacious. Those kids really hit." That was one of the many nice things Harrison coach John Herrington had to say about the Fordson Tractors.

This Mutual Admiration Society will be disbanded at 1 p.m. Saturday when Harrison and Fordson clash on the artificial turf of the Pontiac Silverdome with the Michigan Class A high school football championship going to the winner.

Harrison, unbeaten through 11-straight games this season, ran its two-year win streak to 22 last Saturday, using two field goals by Dave Blackmer to eliminate previously-unbeaten Milford Lakeland, 6-3, in the Class A playoff semifinal on a muddy Birmingham Groves field.

The kicking game made the difference for oco-beaten Fordson in its 3-0 semifinal victory over Saginaw Arthur Hill last Saturday at Lansing Sexton High School.

FORDSON SHOULD be picked to win by most the Detroit-area newspaper "experts," Herrington believes.

"I think Fordson will be favored going in because of its tremendous football reputation and its victories over teams like Monroe and (Dearborn) Edsel Ford," he said. "I'm sure this will be our toughest game of the season."

Offensively, Justice has used both the popular Power-I and the old-fashioned full-house backfield formations to roll up 278 points in the 11 games this season.

"Fordson has a power offense, ground oriented," Herrington said, "and they take it right to you."

Fordson's offense revolves around left halfback Kevin Harris, a 5-foot-11, 175-pound senior who missed the first two games of the season but has since come on to gain more than 700 yards, and senior quarterback Larry Kopchik, who is considered a running threat because of his size (6-5, 210).

Other running threats are seniors Lacerio Pugno (5-11, 175) and Paul Potrzeba (5-10, 180). Fordson's top lineman is guard Bill Kiofoullis (6-0, 205). Place kicker Dick Brooks, a junior, made good on a 20-yard field goal, his first success in four attempts this season, to beat Arthur Hill.

"We're going to have to find a way to stop that power running game," Herrington said. "Our defense has risen to the occasion before. Hope they can do it one more time."

FORDSON'S DEFENSE has given up more points (53) than Harrison's (33), but the Tractors have some rugged defenders, including Harris at safety and Kiofoullis at linebacker. Other mainstays are senior ends Mark Brown (8-11, 180) and Mario Brunetti (6-2, 190) and halfback Hassan Jafer (5-7, 160).

'Our defense has risen to the occasion before. Hope they can do it one more time.'

—John Herrington
Harrison coach

Harrison would seem to be at the top of its game right now. The Hawk offense, potent with the running of sophomore tailback John Miller (6-2, 180) and the running and place kicking of senior Blackmer (5-10, 180), has been overshadowed by the defense, which has six shutouts, including a 23-0 thumping of Bloomfield Hills Lahser in the first playoff game.

Blackmer, who plays fullback and linebacker when his foot services aren't required, tied the state high school field goal record when he kicked a 55-yarder last season. His field goals against Lakeland went 34 and 32 yards.

Harrison also has an excellent passer in senior quarterback Ken Rick (6-1, 175), who likes to throw to seniors Jim Adams (5-9, 180), Rick Main (6-3, 175) and Gordie Dawson (6-1, 165).

Hawk defensive standouts are nose guard Jim Barkach (5-11, 165), tackles Tim Smigielaki (5-11, 195) and Jerry Elmon (5-10, 195) and cornerback Flan Baker (5-9, 160).

"You have to play a sound, complete game to beat Harrison," Justice said. "And I don't know that anyone can do it. Harrison kicks the ball well and plays excellent defense. They have enough offense to get by."

BOTH TEAMS have been to the Dome for big games before.

Harrison won the Class B championship last year by upsetting Muskegon Catholic Central in the finals. The 1980 Hawks made the B playoff semis before losing to Okemos. In 1978, Harrison lost to Midland Dow in the Class A final. Fordson advanced to the Class A finals in 1980 only to drop a 6-0 decision to Birmingham Brother Rice. Fordson also made the playoffs in 1979, when it lost to Redford Catholic Central in the first round, and again in 1981, when it fell to Escanaba in the semifinals.

The 1972 Tractors were ranked No. 1 in the state with a 9-0 record.

Fordson shares the Great Lakes Eight football championship with Monroe and Wyandotte. Monroe beat the Tractors, 24-14, but Wyandotte came back to shock Monroe, 28-0.

Harrison won the championship of the new Western Lakes Activities Association by beating tough Tiptonville, Tenn., 14-7, in the eight game of the regular season.



RANDY BORST/staff photographer

Harrison's Rick Main (86) closes in on Milford Lakeland's Darrin Campbell during a state Class A semifinal football game last Saturday at Birmingham

Groves. Harrison won that game to advance to the Class A playoffs Saturday in the Pontiac Silverdome.

Despite injury, Davey deserves All-Area billing

By Marty Budner
staff writer

Joe Davey never had a chance to prove it. But, Birmingham Brother Rice coach Bob Stark believes to this day that his talented runner is undoubtedly one of the state's premier cross country performers.

Davey, a savvy veteran who logged more miles than Atlas Van Lines over his four-year Warrior career, finished fifth at last year's state meet. He had won the Oakland County championship this year with a time of 16 minutes flat and was peaking for the state championship meet at Flint's IMA Brookwood Golf Course.

Then, the injury bug bit him some three weeks before the state meet.

Davey's determination and dedication had Stark saying that he wouldn't be surprised if his prized runner participated in the state meet despite a nagging muscle pull. But it never happened.

"He pulled a muscle in his leg and just couldn't run the rest of the season," said Stark.

"I think Joe was definitely one of the three best runners in the state. I think he could have been a winner this year. I know if he would have run we could have finished among the top-10 teams (Rice finished 18th overall)."

"He beat the state champion — Joe Schmidt of Grosse Pointe North — at the Shrine Invitational," said Stark. "In his four years on the team, we won four regional championships, three county championships and three Catholic League titles."

DAVEY, A three-time all-county runner who is contemplating Georgetown University to further his education, is one of eight runners recently selected by a panel of area coaches to the

Girls' All-Area cross country team inside.

1982 Observer & Eccentric boys' cross country team.

The other first-team members include teammates Cliff Krug, Rick Wood of Rochester Adams, Eric Wittenberg of Birmingham Seaholm, Chris Clark of West Bloomfield, Bob Thompson of Rochester, Brian Hobart of North Farmington and Ken Nash of Troy.

Jim Wood of Southfield Christian was picked as coach of the year.

Here is a profile of the other first-team runners:

CHRIS CLARK (senior): Clark, the Greater Oakland Activities League (GOAL) runner up in 1981, won the 1982 league championship with a season-best time of 16:14. He was sixth at this year's regional meet and finished 30th at the state meet. Clark won four of five dual meets this fall. "He was a good, steady runner for us, and he was starting to come on at the end of the year," said Laker coach Lee Averill.

BRIAN HOBART (senior): Hobart won the Northwest Suburban League title and finished fourth at the regional meet at Casa Benton Park. A transfer student this year from Texas, Hobart made the All-County team by taking eighth place at the annual Oakland County meet. He finished 31st at the state meet in the individual race.

CLIFF KRUG (senior): Krug was an All-Catholic and All-Regional runner for Brother Rice. Krug was the top runner (sixth-place overall) in leading Rice to its third straight regional championship. Krug was 18th overall at the county meet. This was Krug's first year on the varsity.

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Wayne Gwizdala, Kip Petherick, Bill Meldell, Trip Bosart

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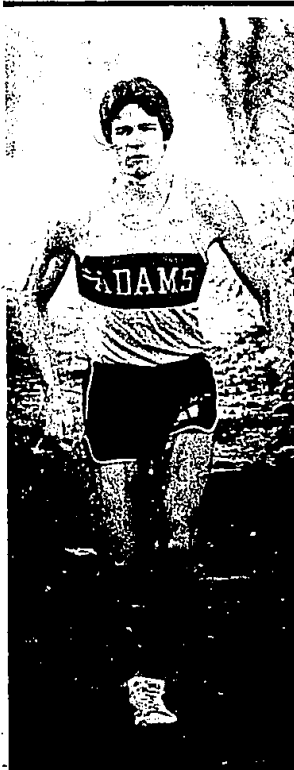
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DAVID FRANK/staff photographer

Rick Wood won 11 of 17 dual meets over the past two years for the Rochester Adams cross country team.