

Monday, November 29, 1982 O&E

# Harrison takes title with OT kick

By Tom Bear  
staff writer

To hear Dave Blackmer tell it, what he did was just no big deal. All he did was use his trusty right foot to hand Farmington Harrison its second-straight high school football championship before 21,413 frenzied fans Saturday afternoon in the Pontiac Silverdome.

Blackmer, a senior, closed out his prep career in thrilling fashion by kicking a 24-yard field in the second overtime to lift the Hawks past rugged Dearborn Fordson, 17-14, in the state Class A title game.

"That kind of a field goal isn't really a pressure field goal," said the 5-foot-10, 180-pound Blackmer, who tied the state record when he kicked a 55-yarder in 1981 and made good on a couple of 47-yarders this season, at a post-game press conference.

"It's so close." Now Harrison, the owner of 23-straight football victories, has a Class A title to go with the Class B crown it won in 1981.

Captain John Harrington, who's guided the Hawks to 12-straight wins this season, added, "I knew he'd make it. I never had a doubt."

Blackmer, who's leaning toward the University of Michigan, is a real triple threat, running from the fullback position on offense and playing a rugged linebacker on defense.

Sophomore sensation John Miller, Harrison's other offensive weapon, played yet another outstanding game at tailback.

Despite suffering a "slight" shoulder separation in practice last week, the 6-foot-2, 180-pound Miller gained 70 yards on 19 carries, proved himself an dangerous pass receiver and scored both HHS touchdowns on short runs.

"He's only a sophomore, so he has a long way to go," Harrington said at the press conference, laughing.

A knowledgeable prep football observer said, very seriously, "I just can't imagine Miller playing high school ball another two years."

**MILLER CAME** close to providing the game-winning heroics himself in the closing seconds of the fourth quarter with the scored tied at 7-all. Run-ner Fordson's secondary and snagged a long pass from quarterback Ken Kish and dashed down the sideline toward the Fordson goal.

Kevin Harris, an outstanding two-way halfback, and Hassen Saad, combined to make the game-saving tackle on the Fordson two-yard line as time ran out.

Fordson, which finished at 11-2 (its lone regular-season loss was to Monroe, which it later beat in the playoffs), proved a worthy opponent with its "power" running and its surprisingly effective passing game.

Fordson drew first blood as the workhorse Harris ran three yards for a touchdown and Richard Brooks tacked on the extra point to give the Tractors a 7-0 lead with 31 second left in the first half.

The third quarter was scoreless, but Harrison gained the tying points with 8:30 left in the fourth on Miller's one-yard run and Blackmer's PAT.

The drive, which covered 92 yards in 12 plays, included a razzle-dazzle pass play. Kish hit tight end Gordie Dawson for a two-yard gain. Just as he was being hit from behind, Dawson lateraled to the onrushing Miller, who ran for 33 more yards to the Tractor 18.

Fordson won the coin toss, which

precedes high school overtime, and elected to go on defense with Harrison starting from the 10-yard line and having four chances to score.

Miller carried the ball three times, gaining four yards to the six, slipping on the three and then going in for the touchdown. Blackmer's extra point made it 14-7.

Then came Fordson's four chances from the 10. Harris carried twice to the five and quarterback Larry Koplchia bootlegged to the two. Harris then went over for the touchdown and Brooks kicked the extra point.

Fordson started the next OT series on offense and couldn't score. Koplchia

ran for two yards, but Hawk nose guard Jim Barkach stopped Harris for no gain and a Koplchia pass was way long. On fourth down, Brooks was wide on a 25-yard field goal attempt.

ON HARRISON'S series, Herrington elected to have Miller carry twice to the seven before giving Blackmer the chance to win it with his foot.

Said Fordson coach Charles Justice, "It was a challenge and they (Harrison) pulled it out."

Fordson rushed for 162 yards to Harrison's 167, but Kish completed 15 of 27 passes to give the Hawks the passing advantage, 203 yards to 117.

"He (Kish) is the best quarterback I've ever had — and I've had some good ones," Harrington said.

Harrison, the champion of the new Western Lakes Activities Association, made the playoffs for the third-straight season with a 9-0 regular-season record and then beat Bloomfield Hills Lakeshore (23-0) and Milford-Lakeland (5-3) in the pre-final playoff games.

The 1981 Hawks won the Class B title with a stunning 7-0 upset of favored Muskegon Catholic Central in the Silverdome.

Fordson, in the playoffs for the fourth year in a row, advanced to the Class A final in 1980 only to lose to Birmingham Brother Rice, 6-0.



photos by RANDY BORST/staff photographer

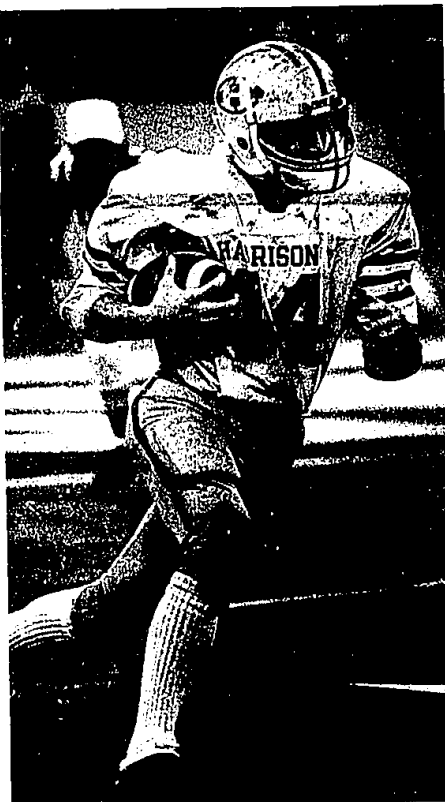
Harrison's Ken Baker gained about 10 yards on this reverse against Dearborn Fordson in the state Class A football finals Saturday in the Pontiac Silverdome. Harrison won, 17-14, in double overtime.

HARRISON 17 — FORDSON 14		DP
First downs rushing	15	16
First downs passing	0	5
First downs penalty	2	1
Yards rushing	132	152
Yards passing	204	117
Passes	15-27	9-19
Points — average	3-21.3	4-32.0
Penalties — yards lost	5-40	5-39
Fumbles — No. lost	0-0	0-0

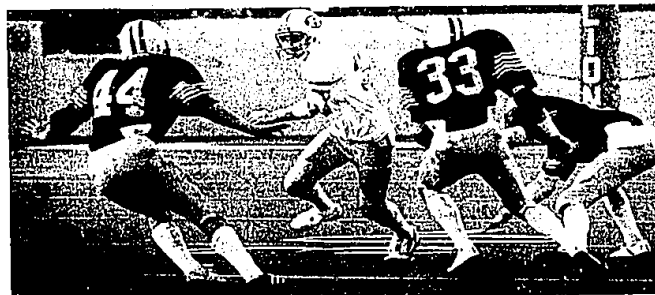
HARRISON	0	0	0	7	7	3	— 17
FORDSON	0	7	0	0	7	0	— 14

SCORING PLAYS

FORDSON — Kevin Harris 3 run (Rich Brooks kick)  
 HARRISON — John Miller 1 run (Dave Blackmer kick)  
 HARRISON — Miller 3 run (Blackmer kick)  
 FORDSON — Harris 3 run (Brooks kick)  
 HARRISON — Blackmer 24 field goal.



John Miller, Harrison's sophomore sensation, gained 70 yards and scored two touchdowns against Dearborn Fordson.



Fordson defenders David Gales (44), Ron Stewart (33) and Hassen Saad zero in on Harrison's Gordie Dawson.

## Regional next for Marlins Mercy wins; party rages

By Tom Bear  
staff writer

With a district trophy safe in hand and the regional road ahead looking a lot less rough, Farmington Our Lady of Mercy's girls' basketball coaches were in mood to party last Thursday.

"I don't know if we're celebrating Mercy's win or (Plymouth) Salem's loss or some kind of combination," said Mercy head coach Larry Baker over the happy noises in the Detroit home of assistant coach Mike King.

"Mike's our female impersonator," said Baker with a laugh. "He's the one who played (Livonia Bentley star) Kim

Archer for 10 days (in practice) to get us ready for Bentley."

Baker's high spirits could be traced to three causes. His Marlins, playing their best ball of the season, had won their biggest game of the season with the 44-35 showing over Bentley in the Class A district at Redford Thurston, and then had won the district with a 51-35 victory over a good Farmington Harrison team.

And then powerful Plymouth Salem, which was to be Mercy's opponent in the opening round of the Class A regional, had obliged by losing to upstart Westland John Glenn, 38-34, on Salem's court in the upset of this year's state tournament.

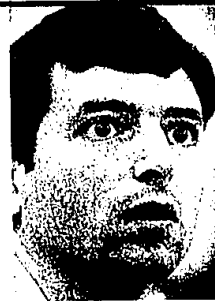
Now Mercy, with a 19-1 record, will face so-so (13-8) John Glenn — in the opening round of the regional at 7:45 p.m. Tuesday at Plymouth Canton.

Walled Lake Western meets Temperance-Bedford in the regional opener at 6 p.m. Tuesday, and the winner plays the Mercy-Glenn winner for the regional championship at 7:30 p.m. Thursday.

MERCY'S VICTORY over Harrison was anything but automatic, according to Baker.

"We had to come back within 24 hours of winning our biggest game of

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RANDY BORST/staff photographer

Larry Baker: "Sheer endurance finally won out for us. We just wore them down."

## Central too tall for Raider girls

By Tom Bear  
staff writer

North Farmington hit the heights of girls' basketball excitement with its 56-50 victory over West Bloomfield last week in the Class A district tournament opener at Walled Lake Central.

The win was North's 14th in a row and its first ever in post-season play.

But last Thursday Cloud Nine evaporated and coach Greg Grodzicki's Raiders fell from state tournament play following their 61-44 loss to host Central in the district final.

The loss closed out North's most successful season ever at 17-4.

"Central played a fine game is all," said Grodzicki after the game. "We couldn't stop their big people. They out-rebounded us and outscored us, ridiculously."

"I wasn't disappointed with the play of our girls. Everything just backfired in our faces. We couldn't rebound against Central. We couldn't do much of anything."

North, which never led in the game after the opening minute, trailed by six points (18-12) after the first quarter and was out of it (32-18) at halftime. Central center Caryn Lamb, a stocky 5-

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