



Southfield's Michael McCaskill (20) soars through a group of Saginaw players, but the Trojans eventually grounded the Blue Jays Tuesday.

Harrison whips Western Raiders rip Brighton

North Farmington raised its basketball record to 7-6 with a 55-44 victory over non-league Brighton Tuesday.

Ray Boyle, a senior guard, led the Raiders with 23 points. John Dawson followed with nine points, Mike Black had eight and Marty Shoberg seven. Tom Garback scored 16 for Brighton.

North Farmington trailed, 11-7, after the first quarter, but came back to lead, 23-17, at halftime.

North plays next on Friday at Livonia Franklin. The Northwest Suburban League game begins at 7:30 p.m.

FARMINGTON HARRISON beat up on lowly Walled Lake Western, 77-49, in a Western Lakes Activities Association basketball game. Harrison is 4-10

overall and 3-7 in the league. Western is winless in 15 starts this season.

Wes Jones, Brian Hickey and Dave Younger each scored 10 points for the winners. Mike MacDonald and Gordie Dawson contributed nine and eight points, respectively.

Dan Gabriele scored 12 points for Western, which made 20 of 58 field goal attempts. Harrison hit on 30 of 55.

Harrison hosts Livonia Stevenson on Thursday.

FARMINGTON'S DAN Zang scored 12 points and grabbed nine rebounds, but his team was beaten by Plymouth Salem, 65-42. Tuesday in another WLLAA contest, Farmington is 3-8 in the league and 3-10 overall.

Terry Geistler scored 11 points for

Farmington, which trailed by 17 points (32-15) at halftime. Tim Medalle scored 17 points for Salem, and David Houle added 10.

Farmington travels to Walled Lake Western on Friday.

FARMINGTON LUTHERAN Northwest was outscored, 18-1, in the first quarter and finally beaten, 56-17, by Grosse Pointe University Liggett in a Michigan Independent Athletic Conference basketball game Tuesday.

Northwest, which is winless in 13 starts, got 10 points from senior forward Mike Aumann. Liggett was led by Brian Hunt (18 points) and Carl Bradley (10).

Northwest is home to Pontiac Oakland Christian on Friday night.

Saginaw stings Southfield

By Tom Baer
staff writer

Greg Sliwka, Southfield High's basketball coach, faced the television camera outside the school's basement locker room.

"When we got that big lead, I said to myself, 'This is too easy.' I knew they'd come back."

The "they" referred to Saginaw High. Southfield's "big lead" was 14 points in the third quarter. And the talented Saginaw squad did, indeed, come back to beat the Blue Jays, 64-59, in a thrilling non-league, played before a near-capacity crowd Tuesday.

The win boosted Saginaw, a member of the Saginaw Valley Conference, to 13-2. Southfield owns a 12-2 record.

It was a close game in the beginning. "We had a close game in the beginning," Sliwka said. "We were down 14-13 at the quarter and by only six (30-24) at the half-time break. Then the Jays appeared to take control, going up by eight, 10 and, finally, 14 points (43-29) with 3:37 left in the third quarter."

Saginaw, far from folding, rallied to score the last 10 points of the third quarter to trail by only two, 45-43.

Saginaw's Andre Jackson, a 6-foot-3 senior forward who favors the slam

dunk but can hit from the outside, too, asserted himself with 10 of his game-high 23 points to lead the Trojans back.

Jackson's offensive antics — he started and ended the game with a two-handed slam — combined with the Jays' bad luck — their shots just weren't falling in the fourth quarter — meant victory for the outstars.

"SOUTHFIELD HAS a nice squad," said Saginaw coach Marshall Thomas. "I knew that coming down here. But we've been down that way before and came back. I knew we wouldn't fold. 'Maybe, just maybe, the difference in this game was our schedule. With our tough league, we just don't have many breathers. We're used to playing teams like Southfield.'"

Sliwka, who guided last season's Blue Jays to the state Class A semifinals, was hoping his players would learn from the mistakes they made against Saginaw.

"Sure, we made a lot of mistakes, and we're going to learn from them," he said. "It was a pressure situation, and we've got to learn to handle that. I mean, they (Saginaw) did."

"But our kids played well. They got their confidence. They'll be OK. They know they can play with the best. I'll

tell you, if they (Saginaw) are not the best, I'd like to see who is. They (Saginaw) sure have the talent."

Brian Humes, the Trojans 6-foot-8 center, scored 15 points, and teammate Russell Brown added eight.

Southfield's Michael McCaskill, an outstanding jumper, scored 18 points and grabbed 14 rebounds to help the Jays rule the boards, 30-27. "We can rebound with anybody," said Sliwka.

Southfield guard Joey Walton contributed 12 points, and teammate Vince Baldwin had 10. Substitute Jerry Longrey, a 6-foot-1 senior, and starter Charlie Hart each had eight points.

SOUTHFIELD SHOT 43 percent from the field (25 of 58) to Saginaw's 53 percent (29 of 55). Saginaw hit six of 17 free throws; Southfield made nine of 13.

Both teams pressed. The result: Saginaw made 10 turnovers, Southfield had 14.

Saginaw was one of several tough non-league opponents Southfield's schedule this season. The Jays lost to Lansing Eastern, beat Ypsilanti Willow Run and will play at Highland Park on March 1.

The Jays resume their Southeastern Michigan Association schedule on Friday with an 8 p.m. game at Berkley.

Let's hear it for volleyball



A couple years back, I was asked to play in a recreation coed volleyball league. It sounded like a good time, so I went to the first game only to find spiking was not allowed. I questioned why, and a representative from the recreation department replied, "They don't want the girls to get hurt."

I started to walk away when I realized how absurd the reply was. "They don't want the girls to get hurt?" I asked myself. "What about us guys?"

In the four years I've watched girls' high school volleyball, I've been in awe of their skill level. The sport itself is one I've always enjoyed, but the one I've played — on beaches and in backyards during the summer — is a different game altogether.

Volleyball on the high school level, in my estimation, is the most exciting sport offered to the girls. Some would argue basketball rates as the No. 1 sport, and I'm sure I'll hear some pitches from the soccer players. But for constant excitement and fast-paced action, volleyball is tops in my book.

It's fun to watch because it's a team sport, with players working harmoniously to set up the kill. And it's fun to watch in anticipation of the spike. The spike — that no-no in the recreation league — is the big play in volleyball. It's the slam dunk of basketball, the long bomb of football and the grand slam of baseball.

SATURDAY, I just happened to be in the neighborhood, so I dropped in at Dearborn High to watch its 16-team volleyball invitational. The Dearborn tourney is prestigious each year, but even more so this year since half of the teams were state-ranked.

At this point, the results of the tournament are academic. What was important was the level of play. With teams like Wayne Memorial, Warren Cousino, Battle Creek Lakeview, Portage Northern and Dearborn on hand, fans were treated to some of the best volleyball you could see at one setting.

The tournament brought out interested spectators and college recruiters. To look around and read the writing on the jackets, it also looked like a who's who of high school coaches. You need not have a team there to be present, just an interest in volleyball.

That's where I come in. Although fans do come out in respectable numbers, they're not pounding on the doors to get in. I'm just wondering if volleyball isn't one of the best kept secrets around.



Jim Hughes

Saturday, I cornered some coaches to gather their thoughts on the sport and its growth, and each was tremendously pleased with its progress and more than optimistic about the future.

DEARBORN COACH Lou Stehlik, who ran Dearborn's volleyball team when it was a club sport in the early '70s, has seen a rapid growth since her AAU team was fourth in the nation in 1972.

"There's a big difference in the quality of play and the talent the girls have exhibited," Stehlik said. "The team I had that finished fourth in the nation probably would finish 16th in this competition (Dearborn tourney). The skill level has exploded so much."

"I see it getting better and better and better. There are college recruiters all over the place. We haven't had a dual meet where a recruiter hasn't been there," she added.

Although scouts are interested in Annette Ewasch, Dearborn's talented hitter, Stehlik believes the attraction is due to the success of the schools' volleyball program.

Another school with a strong volleyball program is Bishop Borgess. Jerry Abraham, coach of defending the Catholic League champion Spartans, is a volleyball enthusiast, to say the least. His eyes open wide when he talks about the game.

"VOLLEYBALL IS supposed to be closing in on basketball, but I think it's time to surpass it. It's great. I love it. The kids are enthusiastic about it and it's created a new enthusiasm in the school."

Another reason the sport is growing is because the players themselves are improving. According to Southfield-Lathrup coach Lionel Blogg and Livonia Stevenson coach Lee Cagle, some of the school's best athletes now are playing volleyball.

"Instead of just basketball getting the top players, you're seeing big girls playing volleyball, too," Cagle com-

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