

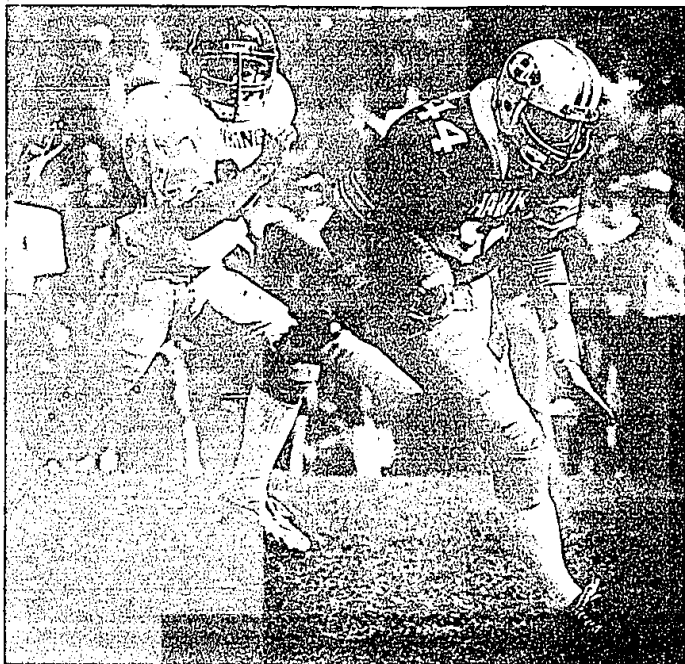
Sports

Chris McCosky, Brad Emons editor/591-2312



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Hawks humiliate Central in showdown



RANDY BORST/staff photographer

Awsome: That's all there is to say about John Miller's (44) performance against Central Saturday. Miller, pictured above stumbling into the end zone with the Hawks' first score, rushed for 144 yards and scored three TDs to lead the 31-0 homecoming day victory.

By Chris McCosky
staff writer

The bleachers on the visitors' side were jammed with enthusiastic Walled Lake Central rooters. They had come to see their undefeated football team knock heads with the defending state Class A champions, Farmington Harrison. The feeling was strong that their team would beat the champions and stop their winning streak at 28 games.

"We're gonna beat ya, John," a neighbor of Harrison head coach John Herrington said to him as he left his house the morning of the game. Herrington resides in Walled Lake. He'd been hearing such taunts all week.

The papers were filled with talk of "the big game," the "showdown." Coaches, players and fans from all over the state stuffed the Harrison stadium. The prevalent thought was: Could this be the week Harrison finally falls?

THE QUESTION was answered swiftly and assuredly. Harrison won 31-0. The "big game" was a blowout.

And nobody was happier than Herrington. Not only did the victory extend his team's winning streak to 29 games, but the victory was the 100th of his coaching career.

"How long is going to be before the second 100?" joked Herrington afterwards.

Herrington was at a loss to explain the lopsided score.

"I really don't know. No way did I expect to win by such a large margin. We just played great football. Coach (Bob) Sutter's defense kept them off the board. All I had to do was get a few points," he said.

He got more than a few.

JOHN MILLER, and there really is no other way to describe his performance, was awesome. The junior back gained 144 yards and scored two touchdowns rushing, he caught a pass for 22 yards and he returned an interception 57 yards for the Hawks' first score.

"Nothing John Miller does in a football game surprises me anymore," said Herrington, who has seen his share of outstanding Miller plays over the past two seasons.

The turning point in the game occurred on the final play of the first half. Harrison grabbed a quick 10-0 lead on a 34-yard touchdown run by Miller, set up by a Ken Hixon pass interception, and a 32-yard field goal by Dave Quarles.

Central, who had pelted just one first down, began a drive with about a minute left. Quarterback Tom Menard hit on three straight passes for 23, 14 and 33 yards, to put the ball at the Harrison

5. With no timeouts left, Central waived the field goal and opted to try for six. Menard's run around the right end was stopped and Harrison maintained its 10-point advantage.

"If they get in there, it's 10-7 and I think you would have seen a much different game in the second half," Herrington said.

AN INTERESTING sidelight to that first half: Harrison switched quarterbacks. Scott Gilinski, who had completed one pass for 22 yards, but was sacked three times for 29 yards in losses, was replaced in the second quarter by junior Vince Enright.

Enright responded by completing his first three passes.

"I just felt we needed a change at that point," Herrington said. "Scott was getting a big rush, and he was having trouble seeing over the defense. I thought we'd be better off getting a taller kid in there. Herrington said he didn't know whether the change would be permanent.

Miller gave the Harrison fans (and coaches) a scare in the first quarter. He went down clutching his knee.

"I just hyperextended it. But, it's no problem. It feels fine," Miller said.

THE ROOF CAVED in for Central in the third quarter. On their second play,

the Vikings' Menard fumbled and Jim Nelson recovered for the Hawks. Four plays later, Miller broke off left tackle for a 27-yard TD. He broke four tackles en route to the end zone.

Quarles, who missed a 39-yard field goal in the first half, was perfect on four extra points.

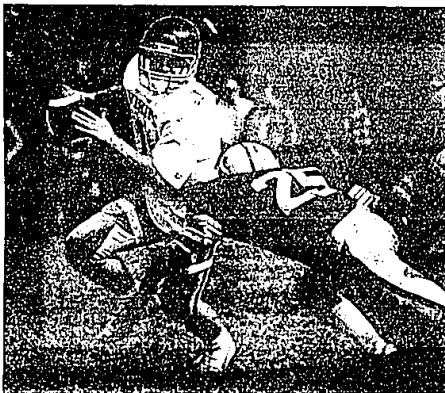
Next, it was Bob Wasczenzki's turn to shine. Central drove down to the Hawk 10 on the strength of Menard's passing. But Wasczenzki picked one off in the end zone to kill the threat. Then, three plays later, he caught a long pass from Enright and ran away from the defenders for an 80-yard TD.

Miller capped his day by picking off a fourth-quarter pass and racing 57 yards for the Hawks' final score.

The key to Harrison's success on this day, Herrington pointed out, was the defense. The normally potent Viking running game was held to 81 yards. The play of Rob Smietgieldz, Scott Novis, Hixon and Jeff Shotroff helped contain Central's option attack.

The Hawks, meanwhile, had a total of 144 yards rushing — the same total as Miller had. The losses sustained by the quarterbacks and backs, negated the yardage gained by four other Harrison backs. Enright completed four of five passes for 99 yards and a TD.

Next up for the Hawks is Livonia Churchill, at home next Saturday.



RANDY BORST/staff photographer

Jeff Shotroff (25) puts the hit on Central quarterback Tom Menard. Shotroff was a key for Hawks in stopping the Central option attack.

Spartan win a passing thing

For the Farmington Falcons, one out of two wasn't nearly good enough.

The end result, a 33-3 Stevenson victory.

The Falcon defense shut down the Livonia Stevenson running attack, but quarterback Dan Gilmartin burned the Falcons with his passing.

"His passing just killed us," said Falcon coach Don Kuick. "He threw for two touchdowns and moved the ball all day in the air."

Farmington's only score came on a 40-yard Bruce Kraft field goal.

For the second week in a row, sophomore quarterback Joe Bob Wenson had a good outing for the Falcons. He completed nine passes for 132 yards. Farmington is now 1-5.

Rice stuns CC in Boys' Bowl

By Marty Dudner
staff writer

Brother Rice used its "heavyweight" to deliver the knockout punch to arch-rival Catholic Central in the 35th annual Boys' Bowl yesterday at Ryncarson Stadium in Ypsilanti.

Mel Farr Jr. scored from one yard out on a fourth down play in overtime to give the gambling Warriors a scintillating 13-10 victory.

Catholic Central's Tom Rice, whose team had possession of the ball first in the overtime, booted the Shamrocks into a 10-7 lead with a field goal. On its first three overtime plays, CC ran twice for -4 yards and had a pass blocked by Rice linebacker Bob Wozniak.

Rice began its series of downs with two incomplete passes. On third down, tri-captain Matt Dinges — used strictly as a linebacker for most of the season — was inserted into the game as a tight end. The 6-5, 232-pound senior leaped to make a clutch reception near the end zone on a pass from quarterback Allen Szydlowski. The ball was spotted inside the one-yard line.

AFTER A BRIEF moment of sideline contemplation, Rice coach Al Fracassa decided to forgo a field goal, which would have tied the game, for a touchdown. The winning play was a pitch right, and Farr took it cleanly over the goal line to keep Rice undefeated through six games.

In silence as the Warriors whooped it up.

"Our players really wanted to go for the touchdown," said Fracassa, whose team has won three of the past four Boys' Bowls.

"They were bunched up in the middle, and I decided to give it to the best back (Farr) I have. He's a heavyweight. I thought about the field goal, but you have to go for it."

Catholic Central coach Tom Mach, whose team's record fell to 3-3 overall, knew Farr would get the call on the game's final play.

"We were in a goal-line defense, and we should have stopped that play," Mach said. "We knew he (Farr) was going to get it, but they did it when they had it."

Rice had taken a 7-0 lead late in the second quarter. Farr capped the nine-play, 66-yard drive with a one-yard run. The senior halfback carried the ball six times in the drive.

THE GAME remained that way until the fourth quarter when CC finally penetrated the steady Rice defense. After taking over on its own 40-yard line, the Shamrocks tied the score on just three plays. The touchdown was scored by Ron Wandell, who outplayed Rice defender Mike Flynn at the goal line. The pass play from quarterback Matt Wilczewski covered 35 yards. Rice booted the extra point that ultimately sent the game into overtime.

"I thought we came back well, especially in the second half," said Mach. "We had a lot of opportunities in the first half. A couple of passes were a matter of inches either way."

Offense stalls and North falls

By Brad Emons
staff writer

The Westland John Glenn defense rested its case Saturday afternoon.

It took little time to deliberate as the Rockets moved within one game of winning the Northwest Suburban League football crown outright with a hard-fought 6-0 victory over North Farmington.

"This is one of the best defensive games ever played at Glenn," said coach Chuck Gordon, whose team is 4-0 in league play and 5-1 overall. "What makes this thing good is that they (the defense) just kept coming back."

"We played our hearts out, especially on defense."

North, meanwhile, did everything but win.

The Raiders, now 3-1 in league play and 3-3 overall, controlled the ball the entire second half but failed to score the equalizing touchdown.

Glenn sophomore Tony Boles accounted for the game's only TD when scored on a 25-yard run in the opening quarter after the Raiders fumbled a punt deep in their own territory.

THE BIG PLAY came with 5:43 remaining as Glenn's Jim Vojak and tight nose guard Tom Forchione stopped Raider back Ken Goss on a fourth-and-three play at the Rockets' 25.

"Our big tackle Mike Miller was out with an injury and Jim Vojak had to play for the first time," said Gordon. "He made a big play."

"And Forchione is one of the 'guttiest' players who ever played the game."

During the final minute of play, North quarterback Eric Engel drove the Raiders down to the Glenn 29, but safety Doug Corbell ended the suspense when he picked off a pass near the goal

line with only 10 seconds remaining.

"It was a matter of not making the big play," said North coach Jim O'Leary. "We went with an unbalanced line on the fourth-and-three play and we thought we'd catch them off guard. The kids didn't get there in time and it was a great defensive play for Glenn."

GLENN ENJOYED good field position in the first half as North fumbled twice.

The Rockets, however, could punch in only one TD. At the end of the half, Glenn marched down to the North 13, but linebacker Scott Knoll picked off a Jeff Hawley pass to end the drive.

"We moved the ball, but it was with field position," Gordon said. "And when we had it, we didn't take advantage of it."

"But give North credit. That's what happens when two teams are going for the championship."

North's defense contained Glenn's potent running game, especially during the final three quarters of play.

"Boles slipped inside on us some early, but I thought we shut them down pretty well," O'Leary said. "The kids did a great job in that respect."

"WE HAD SOME dropped passes that hurt us in the first half and I thought Eric threw well in the first half. But Glenn hit hard and came after us."

Goss was the game's leading rusher, carrying 18 times for 73 yards. Boles led Glenn with 59 in 14 tries.

But it wasn't a day for offense. The stars for Glenn were on the other side: Vojak, Forchione, Corbell, Jeff Melner (interception), Mike Leck, Dan Strehl, Tim Naughton (fumble recovery), Jim Jakary, Scott Lucas (fumble recovery), Craig Thornton and Cass Simpson.



ART EMANUELE/staff photographer

North's David Kramer returns a punt during his team's 6-0 loss to John Glenn Saturday. There were a lot of punts to be returned as neither team mustered much offense.