

Sports

Chris McCosky, Brad Emone editor/591-2312



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(F)10

Hawks bounce back to win 4th straight title

By Chris McCosky
staff writer

The streak is over. Farmington's one-game losing streak came to an abrupt end last Friday night as the Hawks, once again, pummeled Watford Lake Central, 35-0.

Another streak remains in tact. Harrison's consecutive league championship streak is now at four. The Hawks won the last two Western Six League titles and now have taken the first two Western Lakes Athletic Association titles.

"WE WERE real fired up tonight," said Harrison coach John Herrington. "We had to prove we could come back. They certainly made believers out of the Vikings. In the two meetings between the teams, Harrison has outscored Central 61-0.

"We did pretty much the same things we did last time," Herrington said. "I told the team that there was no disgrace in being beaten. But, if you stay beaten, then there is. This was the most intense I've seen this team play all season."

John Miller, Harrison's All-State junior back, typified the Hawks' intensity. He carried the ball 24 times for 161 yards, scored three touchdowns and intercepted a pass.

"The whole team was really up," said Miller. "We had to prove we were still No. 1, and that's exactly what we are."

ROB SMIGIELSKI got the Hawks off and running as he blocked a punt on Central's first series. Terry Grabinski scooped up the ball and ran it 17 yards to the Viking 6. Two plays later Miller scored from the 2.

On the point after try, Miller, who was holding for kicker Dave Quarles, took a high snap and rolled right. He flung a pass into the end zone that was tipped and wound up in the hands of Harrison's Steve Orsini. Harrison led 8-0.

The Hawks stopped Central on its next possession and drove to the Viking 24. On fourth down, Quarles attempted a 40-yard field goal in the midst of swirling crosswinds. The kick hit the crossbar dead center and fell forward; no good.

Central then drove to midfield before Rob Wasczenski made a spectacular interception of a Tom Menard pass at the

Harrison 36. Six Miller carries good for 61 yards and a key Vince Earlight-to-Geoff Russell pass good for 14 yards, set up a 3-yard TD pass from Earlight to Wasczenski. After Quarles' point after, Harrison led 15-0.

On the very next series, the Hawks blocked their second punt of the game. This time it was Wasczenski crashing through to block it and Pat Mistorovich recovered at the Central 25.

MILLER TOOK it in from there on the Hawks' first play. After two off-side penalties against Central on the extra point attempt, Miller ran it in for two points. Harrison led 23-0.

Menard, with his uncanny ability to scramble away from would-be tacklers and hit receivers downfield, began to march his team down the field. He got it all the way to the Hawk 6.

On a second-and-goal play, Menard rolled to his right and was hit hard by Orsini and fumbled. Jerry Elzen alertly recovered at the Harrison 18.

Elzen, along with Jeff Shottroff, Ken Hixon, Smigielski and Orsini, stymied Central's offense all night. Central could muster just 38 yards net rushing on the night. Menard completed six of 14 passes for 63 yards, but he was consistently rushed out of the pocket.

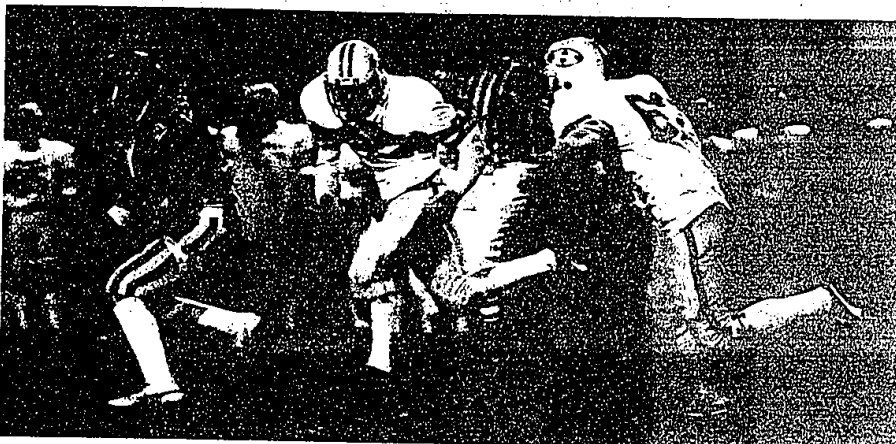
"THIS GAME MEANT a lot to us," Elzen said. "The defense just did what coach (Bob) Sutter told us to do. He told us where the holes would be (in the offensive line) and we just ran through them."

The Hawks led the game early in the fourth quarter. After a six-yard Viking punt put the Hawks at the Central 35, Miller took five handoffs, gained 30 yards and scored from the 4. Quarles, who is now 18 for 20 in extra points, made it 30-0.

Central made one last drive. They got to the Harrison 13 before a Smigielski sack pushed it back to the 22. Then Miller made a leaping interception of reserve quarterback Dean Nessen's pass in the end zone.

When asked after the game about the Hawks' domination over the Vikings Herrington said, "It's nothing special, really. It's just in the big games we seem to play real good. This is a great team, they proved that tonight. This might be the best team I've ever had."

The Hawks finish the regular season next Saturday at home against Monroe.



Sack attack: Harrison's Steve Orsini (No. 82) and Rob Smigielski (No. 62) chase Viking quarterback Tom Menard. Menard was slippery, but the Rocks managed to pressure and contain him most of the time Friday night.



The Hawks' Geoff Russell bats pass away from Central's Dave Lombert. Russell played a strong game both offensively and defensively.

Thursday

The results of Saturday's North Farmington-Watford Kettaring football game will appear in Thursday's Farmington Observer.

Canton notches first win at Falcons expense, 14-0

Plymouth Canton finally won its first game of the season Friday, defeating Farmington 14-0 in a battle to stay out of the cellar in the Western Lakes Athletic Association.

Windy conditions forced both teams to stay with their ground games, but neither team was able to move the ball in the first half and they went into the lockerroom scoreless.

It wasn't until the middle of the third quarter that the Chiefs finally got on the scoreboard on quarterback Tony Alken's 1-yard sneak. Jim Kaske made the extra point, and Canton led 7-0.

Canton's final score was set up by a 25-yard fumble recovery by Dave Knapp. Knapp picked up the loose ball at the Falcon's 45 and raced to the Chiefs' 20-yard line. On the first play from scrimmage,

tailback Rod Williams dashed 20 yards to ice the victory.

"IT FELT good," Canton coach Rich Barr said. "It's been a long time coming. We kept them off the board and scored a couple ourselves. I'm happy."

There wasn't much offense in the game. Canton gained only 117 yards in total offense, all on the ground. The Chiefs were led by Williams, who rushed for 50 yards. Rod Boyd added 40. Alken attempted only three passes and wasn't able to connect.

Canton held Farmington held to 73 yards in total offense, including 23 on the ground and 50 in the air.

Canton's win gives them a 1-7 overall record this season. Farmington dropped to 2-5. Canton will play its final game Friday at Belleville.

Mercy, North eye titles



RANDY BORST/Staff photographer

Mercy's Sue Scott (No. 15) feeds inside to Sarah Basford during action against Ladywood last Tuesday. Mercy won big Thursday over Borgess and the Marlins have their sights set on a Catholic League championship.

Farmington Hills Our Lady of Mercy, winner of the Catholic League Central Division, ended its regular season schedule by pounding Birmingham Marian 49-25 Thursday night.

Mercy will open the Catholic League playoffs Thursday night at University of Detroit's Cullen Hall against Royal Oak Shalom.

The Marlins used a familiar formula for success against Marian. They played outstanding team defense, controlled the boards and got balanced scoring led by Mary Rosowski and Sarah Basford with 10 points each.

"We played excellent 'D' tonight," coach Larry Baker said. "We held them scoreless for 6 1/2 minutes."

That defense enabled the Marlins to race ahead 17-4 after one quarter. It was 25-10 at the half and the game, for all intents and purposes, was over.

Amy DeMattia, perhaps the most unheralded of the Marlins' starters, dominated the boards. She pulled down 10 rebounds on the night.

Baker was very pleased with the way his ballclub moved the ball around offensively.

"Sarah and Annette (Rugiero) made some great passes. It's funny how passing can be contagious on a team," he said.

A Catholic League title has eluded Mercy for the last five seasons. The last two years, Mercy was ousted by Dearborn Divine Child. While Mercy wants the title badly, Baker said that it wasn't the team's top priority.

"I would say that the Catholic League title was secondary to the state title among our priorities," he said. "That sounds so arrogant to say, but I think that it's true for anyone in our level of competition. We put full emphasis on the state playoffs. The league is something we go for but, if it should happen that we get knocked out, it wouldn't end our season."

Mercy, rated No. 4 in the state by the High School Coaches Association poll, is 13-2 overall this season.

N.FARMINGTON 59, REDFORD UNION 39: This was an important win for North. The Raiders maintain their two-game lead in the Northwest Suburban League race over Westland John Glenn and Livonia Franklin, both 5-2 and winners Thursday.

North (7-9 in the league, 13-1 overall) has three league games left, against Franklin, Glenn and Garden City. Thus, their magic number is one. One more North victory, or one more loss by Franklin and Glenn, will give the Raiders a title.

Please turn to Page 3

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