

Sports

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(F18)

Raiders hold off Farmington charge

By Chris McCosky
staff writer

The frustrations for North Farmington basketball coach Tom Negoshian were eased only a little by the not-entirely-convincing 46-30 win against Farmington Friday night.

For Farmington coach Richard Roy, the frustrations may have just begun. Let's take them one at a time:

North had its first unit together, barely, for the first time this season. Injuries to Rick Anderson and Rick Pennala have stalled the Raiders' cohesiveness. As a result, the Raiders at times looked like the world-beaters most people thought they would be this season. At other times, they looked, well, rusty.

"There's two things hurting us right

now," Negoshian said. "One, we've got to get healthy and stay healthy. Two, we have to start shooting better as a team."

ON FRIDAY, North made just 19 of 50 shots from the floor (most of which were fairly high percentage shots) and just 7 of 17 from the free throw line. Farmington came into the Raiders' gym with a 3-1 record and enjoying one of its quickest starts in several years. But, as has been the tradition, the North gym seemed to bring out the worst in the Falcons.

"We always seem to have trouble beating them here and they have trouble beating us in our gym," Roy said.

Farmington scored just 11 points in the first half, falling behind 21-11. As bad as North shot, Farmington was worse. In the first half, the Falcons hit on just 5 of 25 shots. The difference being this: where North was missing good percentage shots, Farmington was missing long-range bombs.

"We just played terrible," Roy said of his team's first half performance. "We hurried the ball too much. We're not a great shooting team. We've been winning with our defense and the defense was good again tonight. But, our offense just stunk."

THE TRAGEDY for the Falcons was not the bad first half, or the loss itself. With 4:15 left in the game, and Farmington in the midst of a furious rally (they trailed just 35-28 at the time), junior Bruce Kratt went down with an ankle injury.

Kratt, the swift floor leader for the Falcons, had played a strong game. His quickness on defense, his ability to break the Raider press and penetrate the defense, and his 5 second half points, had helped Farmington pull to within 3 points of North in the third quarter. After he went out, North outscored Farmington 10-2.

"Without Bruce in there, we're in a lot of trouble," Roy said. Kratt was to get the ankle X-rayed Saturday morning. Farmington plays Livonia Stevenson, Plymouth Canton, Walled Lake Central and Plymouth Salem in its next four games. Without Kratt — well, you can see why Roy's frustrations may have only just begun.

The game itself, despite the sloppy play on both sides, was a crowd pleaser. The gym was packed on both sides of the court and the spectators were boisterous. The game's action was fast-paced and when Farmington

made its run, the joint was rocking. PENNALA WAS the silencer for North. With his team up by only 5 with 5:05 left, Pennala went coast-to-coast for a spectacular driving layup. Three minutes and three missed free throws by North later, Pennala hit another clutch drive — and Farmington's back was broken.

"You may find this hard to believe," Negoshian said afterwards, "but, we miss Rick Pennala when he's hurt, more than we miss Rick Anderson."

A rather shocking comment, but Friday night proved his point.

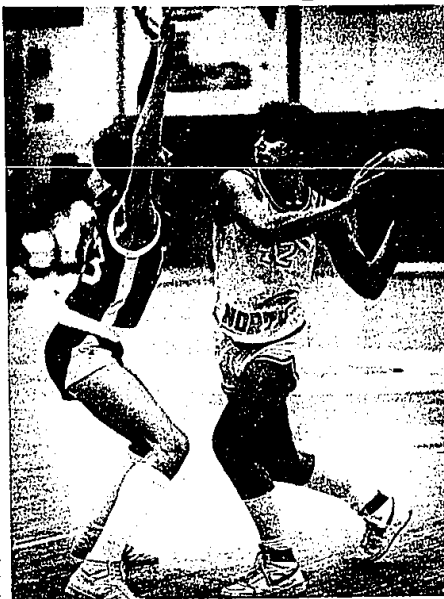
Bob Chwalk led all scorers with 15 points. He also pulled down 11 rebounds helping North to a 38-25 edge in rebounding. With Anderson in foul trouble much of the game, Chwalk had to take charge of the inside game, and he did.

Dean Temple, celebrating his birthday, added 12 points.

For Farmington, Kratt and Greg Peenstra led the way with 7 points apiece.

"We didn't quit," Roy said. "These guys never have. They won't lay down and die. The major problem is, they have a tendency to panic a little."

The Raiders are now 4-2, Farmington 3-2.



photos by RANDY BOHST/Staff photographer

North's Bob Chwalk (No. 42) gets off a pass around Falcon defender Kyle Mutz. Chwalk scored 15 points and grabbed 11 rebounds for North.

Negoshian foils Mikel's debut

The score was 3-2, North Farmington was on top of Farmington. Only about a minute and a half had gone by in the game. That's when North head coach Tom Negoshian arrived on the scene.

"My basement's flooded," said the

electricity lost — a nightmare. Thus, he was late arriving for Friday night's game.

Denny Mikel, the North Farmington assistant head coach and junior varsity coach, was set to make his debut as a varsity basketball coach. He didn't waste his opportunity.

The first thing he did was tell a reporter (jokingly, of course) that Negoshian had been fired. Then he

started in on Farmington head man Richard Roy. Finally Roy just laughed and said, "They should just have the two coaches meet at half-court and fight. The winner wins the game."

Alas, Negoshian showed up and Mikel was back in his assistant's role.

But, just between you and me, credit Mikel with the win Friday night, Negoshian gets the save.

—Chris McCosky



Bruce Kratt scored 7 points for the Falcons before leaving with an injury.

There's good, bad in JC hoops

By Chris McCosky
staff writer

There really ought to be a sign posted outside the Schoolcraft Community College gym that reads something like: "Bring us your unwanted, your overlooked, your unschooled and your underdeveloped."

Such are the types of players the Schoolcraft women's basketball team attracts (same holds for the Schoolcraft men's team) — players who weren't recruited out of high school, players who because of poor grades weren't accepted at a four-year college and players who need to hone their skills at the junior college level until they are fit to compete on a higher plateau.

This, you should know, is not a knock on Schoolcraft or junior college basketball. Rather, it is to point out the need for such programs. So many more players get an opportunity to extend their basketball careers, and thus their academic careers, because of institutions like Schoolcraft.

But, let it be known, playing junior college basketball can be a humbling experience.

THURSDAY, the Schoolcraft women's team hosted Mott Community College from Flint. The game epitomized the junior college basketball experience here in Michigan.

The gym, for the most part, was silent as a tomb. Perhaps there were 35 people scattered throughout Schoolcraft's spacious gym.

While the seven Schoolcraft players went through their somewhat organized pregame drills, the 10 Mott players acted as if they were schoolchildren on a recess. There was no organization to their warmups. They, quite honestly, just messed around until it was time to play.

Play was ragged on both sides throughout the game. Mott committed turnovers in each of its first three possessions. Schoolcraft could muster just two points in that time.

At one stretch, Mott went nearly three minutes without scoring. At other times, they simply could not be stopped. Schoolcraft played much the same way. No consistency.

BODIES WERE flying in all directions throughout the game. A record number of floor burns had to be set.

The basketball flew in as many different directions as the bodies. Sometimes the ball flew wildly out of bounds. Sometimes it was launched in the direction of the basket, often times missing the mark by good distances. But, other times the ball traveled spritely from player to player

to basket with a professional proficiency.

The style of play by both teams can be described only as physical. If a record number of floor burns were recorded, then certainly a record number of bruises were sustained as well.

WHILE SCHOOLCRAFT, a well-coached team, tried to play intelligently and with some sense of purpose, Mott was helter-skelter. They ran no offensive plays. They simply came down, shot and crashed the boards.

Yet in the end, Mott, possessing the better athletes, buried the home team, 92-71. It was not pretty from any standpoint.

Clearly, junior college basketball is not for everyone. For some, playing JC ball is a nightmare. For others, it is bliss.

For Ann Lukens, playing at Schoolcraft was rather a nightmare. Lukens was a standout at Livonia Ladywood, a school rich in basketball success. Oddly, she was overlooked by college recruiters when she graduated in 1983. She decided to play at Schoolcraft in hopes of gaining some recognition, as well as improving her game.

SHE LASTED just one year at Schoolcraft.

"It was kind of bad for me," said Lukens, who now attends the University of Michigan. "I kind of felt like the players weren't serious about playing. I came from a program where basketball was everything in your life."

"I couldn't understand why (at Schoolcraft) they didn't seem to care about something that was still very important to me. I guess they kind of resented me. It was probably my fault."

"IT WAS like everyone was distracted by other things," Lukens went on. "And I just couldn't understand what the distractions were."

"The priorities were different. I still had basically the same priorities that I had in high school, and everyone else was different. It caused a lot of problems. I guess I just didn't adjust to play at this level."

Missy Aiken represents the other side of the coin. She is absolutely having the time of her life playing ball at Schoolcraft.

After Thursday's loss, someone asked her what she thought of the small crowd. "Small?" she said. "Heck, I think that was the biggest crowd we've ever had here. That was great."



DAN DEAN/Staff photographer

Missy Aiken, a former Canton star, is having the time of her life at Schoolcraft College. For others, it's not been so grand.

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Catholic Central checks Borgess

By Brad Emmons
staff writer

Redford Catholic Central overcame a sterling performance Friday night by Bishop Borgess guard Joe Gregory to record a 58-49 Central Division basketball victory.

Gregory, a 5-foot-9 senior, rifled home 31 points, but the Shamrocks offset his fine individual effort with a balanced attack.

The visiting Spartans succeeded at making life miserable for CC standout John McIntyre, holding him to a season-low 14 points. But McIntyre's four teammates picked up the slack as Ron Wandzel finished with 14, Paul Tavans netted 11, Tom Goodwin added 10 and Lance Vaccarelli chipped in with 9.

"Neither team really got into a flow," said CC coach Bernie Holowicki, whose team is 5-1 overall. "They had a good player (Gregory) and we had a good player (McIntyre). They were trying to defend him and we were trying to defend Gregory. We were both too tentative."

CC LED 15-12 after one quarter, but Borgess came back to knot the score at halftime, 25-25, capped by a Gregory 3-point play with 17 seconds remaining.

The turning point occurred in the third quarter as the Shamrocks, using their patented match-up zone defense, caused numerous Borgess turnovers to build an 11-point bulge, 43-32, before coasting home.

"We seemed to play better when we went into the press," said Holowicki. "We got flowing, got a margin and that was it."

Borgess tried pressing with little success in the fourth quarter as McIntyre's ball-handling set the tone. He squashed any plans of a Borgess comeback.

"What we wanted to do was go full court man-to-man, but it just didn't work out," said Borgess coach Mike Fusco, whose team is 5-2 overall. "They scored several easy baskets. After we scored we should have been able to get into it (the press), but we only got 2 baskets in that quarter."

Even though the battle may not have measured up to previous CC-Borgess games, the 1,100 fans left knowing that Gregory ranks right up there with former Borgess standout Lewis Scott, now a starter at Eastern Michigan.

"NUMBER 32 is a fine player for them," Holowicki said. "He beat us twice last year. They really look to him. Without question he's one of the top five in our league."

But Gregory needs help and Fusco is looking for ways to get others to contribute offensively.

One plan Fusco is tossing around is inserting 6-4 sophomore Alex Marshall as the starting center, and moving 6-4, 175-pound senior Paul Newton to the perimeter.

"At this point and time we're not getting an inside game at all," said Fusco.

After Newton, Borgess' tallest player is 6 feet, which is simply too shrubby when measuring up to the rest of the Catholic League's premier division.

On Tuesday, CC tries for its second straight league win at Harper Woods Bishop Gallagher, while Borgess hosts Harper Woods Notre Dame.

North gymnasts go 2-0

North Farmington, led by Eileen Murtaugh, Lucine Toroyan and Kara Karhu, scored an impressive 123.75-102.95 gymnastics victory against Birmingham Seaholm last Thursday.

"The girls are coming along very nicely," said coach Mary Glitz, an understatement considering the Raiders have earned state regional qualifying team scores in each of their first two meets.

Murtaugh, a junior, led the scoring with three firsts and a second. She won the vault (6.3), floor exercise (5.7) and tied for first with Toroyan in the balance beam (6.25). Murtaugh placed second in the uneven parallel bars (6.3). Toroyan won the bars competition

with a 8.35. She placed fourth in the vault (7.7). Glitz held Toroyan out of the floor exercise because of a sore back.

KARHU SCORED in three of the four events, placing second in the vault (8.1), third on bars (7.9) and third on floor (7.5).

Lisa Brundie garnered second place points on floor exercise with a 7.85 and fourth on bars (7.5).

Sophomore Cindy Tijan placed fourth on the balance beam for North with a 7.05. North (2-0) will host Northville tonight.