

Sports

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Mercy hopes dashed by DC

By Chris McCosky
staff writer

The first goal was to win the Catholic League Central Division girls basketball title. Goal dashed by a pair of losses to a powerhouse Livonia Ladywood team.

Second goal was to win the Catholic League playoffs. Goal dashed Thursday night with a 51-40 loss to Dearborn Divine Child in the semifinal round at Harper Woods Notre Dame.

It's been a rough season for Farmington Hills Mercy.

Thursday night's setback was perhaps the most frustrating of the season. For 24 quarters Mercy battled Divine Child (17-1 on the season) with a fierce intensity only to collapse in the final 10 minutes of the game.

"For many weeks we have preached intensity to the kids," Mercy coach Larry Baker said. "We got the intensity to fight, but we forgot to play basketball along with it."

MERCY SCORED six straight points to pull within one, 28-27, midway through the third quarter. That was the peak for the Marlinas.

Sue Nissen, DC's talented junior center, stole the ball on Mercy's next offensive possession. She dribbled the length of the court, making a pretty crossover dribble in the process, and scored the layup.

In so doing, she sent a large and loud throng of DC rooters into a frenzy, and the Mercy collapse began.

DC outscored the Marlinas 10-2 in the final four minutes of the third quarter and dominated the fourth quarter. The Marlinas were held without a field goal for eight minutes — Terri Ford, a junior with 1-86 left in the third quarter, the next Marlin hoop came with 35 seconds left in the game.

"I feel I have to give Divine Child credit for playing a strong all-around game," Baker said. "But at the same time, I felt we were going one-on-five most of the game."

girls basketball

The "one" was Missy Duczynski. The 5-10 senior forward single-handedly kept Mercy in contention with diligent play on both ends of the court. She scored 20 points, many off perimeter jump shots. She also pulled down 10 rebounds, blocked two shots and created three steals.

"MISSY was terrific, but she didn't get a lot of help," Baker said. "There were air balls, balls just dropping out of bounds, passes going through people's hands — it wasn't a pretty thing to see."

Divine Child, once in control, never loosened its grip on the Marlinas. Nissen and Karen McDonnell each scored 18 points. Nissen hit eight of nine shots from the floor.

Another consideration was, usually if our offense isn't getting the job done we can get help from our press," Baker said. "But DC did a good job not making turnovers. We didn't get many easy baskets."

Credit DC guard Jennifer Dyer for keeping her team calm in the face of Mercy's pressure by patiently working the ball upcourt.

The Falcons, winners of 16 straight games, will meet Ladywood in the Catholic League championship (see related story).

For Mercy (13-5), it's time to go after goal No. 3: Kalamazoo and a berth in the state Class A championship game.

N. FARMINGTON 45, FARMINGTON 26. The scoreboard says "rout," but Farmington coach Diana Schwartz

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Mercy's Jean Wassenberg goes up for two against Dearborn Divine Child Thursday night in the Catholic League semifinals. Mercy took it on the chin 50-41.

RANDY BOSTY/staff photographer

Shamrocks get by feisty Fordson, 7-2

By Brad Emons
staff writer

How does Catholic Central's football team spell relief?

D-E-F-E-N-S-E.

The Shamrocks from Redford repelled every Dearborn Fordson offensive threat Saturday, scoring a hard-fought, 7-2 state Class A playoff victory over the Tractors before an estimated crowd of 3,500 rain-soaked fans at Pontiac's Warner Stadium.

CC, 9-1, next faces unbeaten Grosse Pointe North in the second round of the playoffs at 1:30 p.m. Saturday at Lincoln Park. North was a 19-18 first-round victor over Detroit Murray-Wright.

"This is as tough a ballgame as we've played," said CC coach Tom Mach. "Fordson always comes to play and they are a great job. They play as well as anybody."

But it was the Shamrocks' defense, once again, that told the story. Fordson's outstanding 6-foot-4 quarterback Mike Iaquanello was sacked five times and intercepted twice.

"Our defense has been good all year, but we were really tested out there today," Mach said. "The key was doing the job when we had to. And our defense was on the field a long time."

"Iaquanello gave us a lot of problems. He's so tall. Even when we had him contained, he somehow was able to get the ball away against our defense."

FORDSON'S DEFENSE was equally as impressive.

Enjoying good field position a majority of the first half, the Tractors only scored two points.

Defensive back Moe Berry and linebacker Kirk Rydzak tackled CC's Perry Chaney in the end zone for a two-point safety with 8:47 left in the first half.

The Shamrocks also scored their only points of the game in the second quarter.

Quarterback Mark Stieve hit Jeff Schwartz out of the backfield for a 16-yard scoring toss with 3:26 remaining.

(George Daraban added the extra points to make it 7-2.)

The TD was set up by a couple of key plays — Chaney hurled a 30-yard half-back pass to Mark Grenier, who made

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a circus grab at the Fordson 30; followed by a Stieve 7-yard pass to Ken Wandzel on fourth-and-five.

In the third quarter, Fordson marched down to the CC 27, but tackle Dan Nash and linebacker Matt Fras sacked Iaquanello for a 10-yard loss on fourth down.

IAQUANELLO, playing in the defensive secondary, gave CC some anxious moments when he intercepted a Stieve pass and returned it 47 yards down to the Shamrocks' 30 with 6:27 left in the final period.

But the CC defense dug in again, as Jeff Brand batted down an Iaquanello fourth down passing attempt.

"The interception by Wandzel was certainly a key, but everybody had a hand in this victory," Mach said. "And we were saved by Chris Kassa on a couple of runs up the middle. We were able to get some first downs and that took some time off the clock."

Kassa was the game's leading rusher with 81 yards in 14 carries. CC's total yardage, rushing and passing, was 132.

FORDSON, MEANWHILE, was limited to a total of 89 yards. Iaquanello was 7-of-22 passing for 40 yards. He also had a minus-28 rushing in 10 attempts.

"We did not run well against them," Mach said. "But that's to their credit. They made us put the ball up."

But Mach knows his defense was equal to the task.

"They played well, too," he said, cracking a Rotunda smile.

Pioneer thumps Glenn

Westland John Glenn's first appearance in the high school football playoffs ended quickly Friday night at Ann Arbor Pioneer.

The Pioneers scored 33 points in the first half en route to a 33-20 victory. Quarterback Adam Burns led Pioneer's attack throwing for four touchdowns. He hit back Brian Voleitich for 10 and 76 yard scoring strikes, and John Cunningham for 14 and 43 yard strikes.

On the night, Burns connected on seven of 15 passes for 185 yards. "That's a real attack didn't surprise me," said Glenn coach Chuck Gordon. "But the way we defended against it sure did."

Glenn, the Western Lakes champion, finish the season at 9-1.

CONVERSELY, Glenn quarterback Stieve Irwin hit just two of 20 for 12 yards with two interceptions.

"Rather than criticize or, passing, why don't you give them credit. They are not a bad team," Gordon said.

Tony Boles, Glenn's all-state tailback, single-handedly kept his team in contention. Boles gained 185 yards in 23 carries. He scored on runs of 36, 15 and 50 yards.

Pioneer will move on and play the winner of the Lansing School-Trenton ballgame next Saturday in Jackson.

Glenn, the Western Lakes champion, finish the season at 9-1.

Ladywood outthustled by DC

By Chris McCosky
staff writer

Livonia Ladywood basketball coach Ed Kavanaugh sat on the bench Sunday night before his team's Catholic League championship game with Dearborn Divine Child.

Suddenly, he got up and grabbed a couple of aspirin from the first-aid kit.

He would need more later as Divine Child turned Kavanaugh's headache into a migraine with a resounding 64-51 victory in front of an estimated 2,500 fans at U-D's Calihan Hall.

DC's win snapped Ladywood's 18-game winning streak and prolonged a 17-game win streak for the Falcons.

The bottom line: DC simply outthustled Ladywood.

"EVERY TIME the ball hit the floor, they came up with it," Kavanaugh said. "They came to play and we didn't."

Divine Child (18-1) harassed Ladywood with a man-to-man pressure defense. The Blazers shooters, normally confident and consistent, were suddenly tentative and hurried.

"We did not take good shots," Kavanaugh said. "We were impatient — one pass, one shot. That's not the way to beat a team that plays pressure defense."

The Blazers made just 6-of-30 shots from the floor in the last three quarters, only 4-of-23 in the second half.

Still, the game didn't reach blowout proportions until the final minutes. For three full quarters, the teams played an even, ultra-physical basketball game. The Calihan court was no place for the meek and mild Sunday night.

After three quarters, DC led 40-38. The Falcons had led by as many as nine points in the third quarter, but a nine-point quarter by Sue Laiberte and some aggressive play off the bench

from sophomore Katie McNulty kept the Blazers close.

THE OFFICIATING became a more debatable issue as the game's intensity picked up. Kavanaugh felt his team was getting the worst of it and proceeded to tell the official as much between the third and fourth quarters.

The result was a technical foul and a pair of DC free throws at the outset of the final quarter.

The Falcons ran off a 10-1 spurt in the first two minutes of the fourth quarter and were never threatened again.

Sue Nissen, a powerful junior center, led DC with 19 points. Karen McDonnell added 16 and Jennifer Dyer 15, nine in the fourth quarter.

The Falcons also did a solid job on boards. Nissen and former Redford Union player Julie Marchand were especially effective on the defensive boards

limiting Ladywood to eight second-shot opportunities in 36 second-half possessions.

LADYWOOD, WHICH had three starters foul out of the game, got 16 points from Laiberte and 11 from Jenny Nadeau.

"Sometimes when you're undefeated the tendency is to become complacent and not work as hard in practice," Kavanaugh said. "The teams in back of you work harder and eventually you pay for it."

The Blazers advanced to the championship game with a sluggish 39-28 win against Harper Woods Bishop Gallagher Thursday at Notre Dame. Nadeau scored 11 points and played an inspired defensive game to guide Ladywood to victory.

DC won its semifinal game Thursday, 51-40, over Farmington Hills Mercy.

1985 All-Area cross country squads

Chris Inch
FarmingtonAl Stebbins
FarmingtonBryan Lawton
FarmingtonKirk Armstrong
N. FarmingtonRon Tolson
WayneDan Liedel
John GlennKaren Opp
John GlennNicole Jolley
FarmingtonDonnie Stocker
FarmingtonLeslie Martin
FarmingtonDonna Chubb
N. FarmingtonKaren Kantor
ChurchillBy Chris McCosky
staff writer

CHRIS INCH, Al Stebbins and Bryan Lawton — in that order, always.

Or so it has seemed for the Farmington cross-country team the past two seasons.

With that trio leading the way, the Falcons placed 11th in the state in 1984 and 10th in the state this season. They have lost just one dual meet in that span and captured the Western Lakes crown both years.

Not too shabby, especially since Inch and Stebbins will return next year for their senior season.

Part of the reason for the trio's, and Farmington's success has been coach Jerry Young. The veteran track and cross country coach is a master motivator, running the courses with his team during practices.

Young, the Observerland's cross country coach of the year, and his trio of standouts headline the 1985 Observerland All-Area boys and girls cross country teams.

ALL-AREA BOYS FIRST TEAM

Chris Inch, Farmington; Inch ran the

all-area cross country

North based time at this year's state meet. He 15:50 captured third place in the team race. An all-state performer and a two-time All-Area champion, Inch is a personal champion, Schoolboy Invitational champ, Western Lakes champ and Hallett Invitational champ this season.

At Stebbins, Farmington: Also an all-state and two-time All-Area runner, Stebbins ran the 10th fastest time at the state (16:10). He 16:04 placed him second to Inch at the regional. He ran second at Schockcraft this season, good for 17th place. He was the Falcons' team leader this year.

Bryan Lawton, Farmington: The team runner Farmington placed 10th at state and not 10th or fourth because the senior was 5:15:30 on the day of the race. He ran a personal best 16:40 at Schockcraft this season, good for 17th place. He was the Falcons' team leader this year.

Kirk Armstrong, North Farmington: Two have been very few runners better than this senior the past three seasons. A two-time All-Area and three-time All-Area choice, Armstrong ran an impressive 10:17 in the individual race at the state meet (5th place). He finished second at the Western Lakes meet and fourth in the regional.

Dan Liedel, John Glenn: Only a junior.

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