

Sports

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Defensive des-Troy-er

Turnovers costly as Shamrocks get blanked

By Jim Hughes
staff writer

It took a while, but Troy High finally played its last football game of the 1985 season.

Outdoors, that is. The Colts won their third-straight Class-A state-playoff game as an underdog, stunning Redford Catholic Central, 10-0, Saturday afternoon in the semifinals at Allen Park High School. It was the 10th-straight win for Troy (11-1), and it puts them indoors for the state championship game 1 p.m. Saturday at the Pontiac Silverdome.

It'll be a TC vs. TC matchup with the Troy Colts taking on Traverse City. The Trojans qualified for the title game with a 19-10 win over defending state champion Ann Arbor Pioneer.

THE MATCHUP makes a dream, literally a dream, come true for Troy senior running back John Spinozi. The 5-foot-8, 160-pound running back had a dream the night his team lost to Berkeley, 14-7.

"I dreamt we won the state championship," Spinozi said after the victory over Catholic Central. "It was the night we lost to Berkeley, and I dreamt we won the state championship. Right as the buzzer went off, so did my alarm clock."

Troy's opportunistic defense helped Spinozi's dream stay on course as the Colts recovered five fumbles and had

one pass interception. Junior Dave Lamb, who had the interception early in the fourth quarter, picked off another pass in the first quarter and returned it 53 yards for a touchdown, but the play came back on a pass interference call.

Both of Troy's scores came as a result of turnovers, and both came in the first eight minutes of the game. On the Shamrocks' opening possession, a third-down play that went for a first down resulted in a fumble, which was quickly recovered by Chris Lin at the CC 45. The Colts moved the ball to the 18, picking up most of the yardage on a John Locker reception and a face mask penalty, which set up Scott Kanla's booming 35-yard field goal.

The Shamrocks coughed it up again on their second possession when a third-down snap was botched. Wayne Pasniak recovered, which gave Troy the ball on the Catholic Central eight-yard line.

AFTER TWO incomplete passes under heavy pressure, Troy quarterback Kurt Schram hit Eric Jenkins on a sideline pattern at the one, and Jenkins beat the gambling defender for the touchdown. Kanla booted the extra point, which concluded all the scoring in the game.

"I've never seen that many turnovers on our history," CC coach Tom Mach said, "and it seemed like everybody had a hand in it. No way are you going



Greg Haeger (left) dives over the outstretched foot of Troy defender Bruce Bloomfield in Class A state semifinal action Saturday. The Shamrocks lost the game, 10-0, as Troy's defense came up with the big plays, as evident (below) where CC running back Mark Stullgrose gets stacked up by Colts Jeff Czerwinski (21) and Jim Milewski (30).

to win if you give the ball away like we did. "Their offense took advantage of it. They didn't do anything different, but we sure did."

Nothing was different about the Troy win. It was a typical performance by the Colts, who lived through 11 wins with big plays and have yet to trail in a state-playoff game.

"We keep coming up with the big plays," Troy coach Jeff Keller said. "We've been a big-play team all year. These kids surprise me week in and week out. They come up with the big plays somehow. I think the key to a good team is coming up with the big plays."

Troy's other fumble recoveries came at key times. Although the Colts didn't muster any points from the miscues, they kept the ball out of the hands of the Shamrocks.

BILL HAYES, last week's hero in a 17-6 victory over Sterling Heights Stevenson, picked up a CC fumble off a pass reception at the Troy 23 and returned it to the Shamrocks' 37. The Colts missed a scoring opportunity when Kanla's 25-yard field-goal attempt from the right hashmark sailed wide left.

Lamb had a fumble recovery later in the first half, and Locker recovered a fumble punt late in the third quarter.

Troy's only turnover came on a razzle-dazzle play in the closing moments of the first half when Schram threw the ball to Locker, who in turn tossed the ball downfield where it was picked off by Jeff Schwartz.

The turnover seemed to ignite the Shamrocks, as they took over on their own 28 and reeled off 24 yards in four carries — two each by Tim Lafferty and Chris Kassa. But CC was stopped on an offensive pass-interference call, and an 11-yard loss on a reverse carry by Ken Wandzel.

Statistically, Catholic Central had the overwhelming advantage. The Shamrocks, who started Mark Sileve at quarterback but switched to Greg Haeger for three quarters, had 78 passing yards and 107 rushing. Lafferty was the leading rusher with 54 yards on 13 carries.

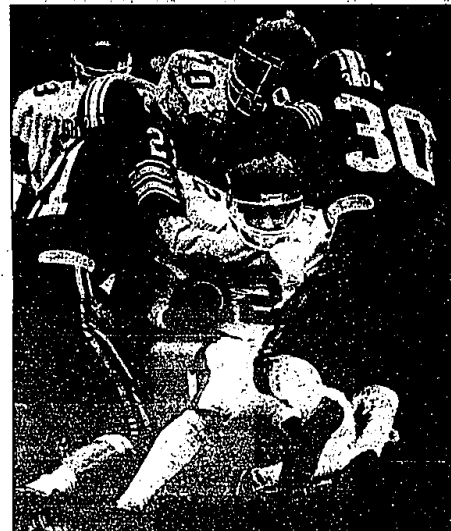
TROY WAS HELD to negative rushing yardage and Schram completed eight-of-18 passes for 61 yards. Locker was on the receiving end of four passes for 33 yards.

"Defense was the key for us," Keller said. "Catholic Central has only given up two points in the last two games, and we got 10, and our defense played a big role in that."

The defense made it a frustrating afternoon for Mach. "When things are going that way, it's hard to come back. It seemed like every time we had something going, we'd made a turnover or we were penalized."

The loss was the first in six Catholic Central playoff games. For Troy, it was the third playoff win in as many games.

The state championship is next, and the Colts are waiting to hear Spinozi's alarm clock.



Catholic Central starting quarterback Mark Sileve takes care of his injured hand, which forced him out of action against Troy.

photos by DAN DEAN/staff photographer

'Great Wall' rises to occasion in semifinal

By Brad Emons
staff writer

Catholic Central's student cheering section affectionately refers to their defense as a "Brick Wall."

But after Troy's 10-0 blanking of CC in Saturday's Class A semifinal tussle, Shamrock fans may have gotten a glimpse of "The Great Wall."

Troy's defensive effort could be described as concrete and slab, plaster and steel.

The Colts scored all 10 of their points as the result of CC turnovers. Five different Troy players recovered fumbles during the course of the game — Chris Lin, Wayne Pasniak, Bill Hayes, Dave Lamb and John Locker.

Lamb also intercepted two passes. On one of his

pick-offs, Lamb raced 53 yards into the end zone for an apparent Troy touchdown, but the play was nullified when another Colt defender was called for interference.

Not only did the Colts stymie CC's ball-control offense, but they also drew the frustrated Shamrocks into a number of penalties.

"We practice stripping the ball every day," said Troy defensive coordinator Gary Griffith. "We call it 'the ball.'"

"And when the weather is cold, the ball is harder to hang onto. We expect turnovers. We've done it all season."

The Colts' defensive line, giving up almost 20 pounds per man, held its own against CC's huge offensive wall.

And Troy's secondary, led by John Milewski, kept CC's outstanding wide receiver, Ken Wandzel, from having another big day.

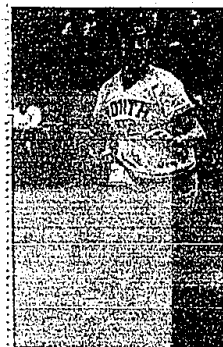
"I think Milewski is as good as anybody in the state," said Griffith. "And I'm kind of disappointed he hasn't gotten more recognition this season. We put him on No. 88 (Wandzel) a lot of the time, and he's as good as anybody."

Another unsung Troy defensive hero was No. 20, junior linebacker Brian Dawood, who is filling in admirably for the injured Chris Scott.

"Brian's been playing the last two weeks and he's responded well," said Griffith. "I just can't believe what a job everybody did today."

Start believing, coach. Nobody thought they could ever build a "Great Wall."

North moves on, stops Novi Farmington waits on deck



North's Heather McPhillips led her team with 10 points.

photos by DAN DEAN/staff photographer

By Chris McCoosky
staff writer

It was no work of art, but North Farmington never claimed to be Picasso.

All the Raider girls basketball team cared about Thursday night was advancing to the semifinal round of its state Class A district tournament — that much was accomplished with a 23-25 victory against Novi.

The Raiders will take on rival Farmington Monday night immediately following the Farmington Hills Mercy-Farmington Harrison contest at 6 p.m.

"We really needed this," North coach Greg Grodzicki said. "Win have picked us up this year and losses have pretty much destroyed us. The kids are really up right now. They want a chance to play Mercy."

North scored the final eight points of

the first quarter to assume command of the game. While the Raiders were never in danger of losing the game, they didn't exactly blow Novi away.

HERE'S AN idea of the type of game it was: Each team went four minutes, and 13 seconds without scoring a point in the final quarter — North clinging to a precarious 10-point lead throughout the stretch.

For Novi (6-14) the bad news began at the free throw line. The team hit only seven of 11 attempts. It didn't fare much better from the field hitting nine of 38.

For North, it was a two-sided tale. On offense, the team was superb. The Raider zone and combination presses forced 23 turnovers. Heather McPhillips and Sandy Spahn simply dominated the glass, limiting Novi to few second chances.

On offense, yech. The Raiders hit just nine of 40 shots in the first half, four of 24 in the second — 13 for 64 total.

But Grodzicki wasn't displeased.

"WE HAD been playing flat the last couple games," Grodzicki said. "Tonight we played hard and we got a lot of different people into the game. It was a good win. We're 13-8 on the season and that's not too bad."

McPhillips and Ann Howard each scored 10 points to lead North. Lisa McCarthy and Susan Sroka scored 11 each for Novi.

"We're not an overpowering team. We will have to come out and play hard against Farmington, too. We can't let up," Grodzicki said.

North has defeated Farmington on twice this season.



Jean Anziavor (No. 12) ran the North offense Thursday in the Raiders' district tournament victory over Novi.

photos by DAN DEAN/staff photographer