

Sports

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North jolts John Glenn

By Brad Emons
staff writer

Lightning and thunder filled the skies. Rados blared that funnel clouds had been sighted in the general vicinity.

But the only tornado that touched down Friday night hit Westland John Glenn's football field, where No. 26, Scott Selzer, ripped up 206 yards in 28 carries to give North Farmington an upset 9-7 victory over the previously unbeaten Rockets.

The game was delayed nearly one hour and 20 minutes because of severe thunderstorms.

The estimated damage Selzer caused Glenn's vaunted defense was measured in the first quarter, where he gained 101 yards in eight carries.

The 5-foot-10, 185-pound senior tore through the Rockets' line and raced 44 yards for a first period touchdown.

On North's second possession, Selzer wreaked more havoc, racing 31 yards down to the Glenn 39. Six plays later, Chad Henry kicked a 32-yard field goal, which proved to be all the points North needed.

"SCOTT HAD a couple of great runs and receptions," said North coach Jim O'Leary. "We tried to hide him, much like Farmington Harrison did last year with Brian Smolinski. We ran him at fullback, at tailback and had him flanked out. We said, if you're going to key on him, then let them find him first."

The win was particularly satisfying for O'Leary, whose team was beaten by Livonia Stevenson a week earlier, 14-9, a game which Selzer was held to 65 yards.

"The kids really disciplined themselves during the week in practice," O'Leary said. "They're the ones who stayed until 6 o'clock at night and then they'd come back and watch films on Glenn. They wanted to

football

prove to the coaches that they were tougher than the way they played against Stevenson."

Glenn, held to 21 yards total offense in the first half by the Raiders' blitzing defense, made some adjustments in the second half to get untracked.

With 5:41 left in the third quarter, Glenn's Tony Svaluto just missed wide on a booming 45-yard field goal attempt, but the Rockets continued to press the Raiders, eventually scoring on a fourth-down play when Clint Straub threw a 34-yard back-pass to Mike Hammontree with 6:55 left in the game.

THE ROCKETS' defense then stopped Selzer cold on two straight running plays, but North quarterback Scott Simon, who hit five of seven passes on the night, connected with Ryan Meador on a key third down play, nudging just past the first down marker.

And although North had to punt two more times, the Raiders bought some time and gained field position with the first down pass.

"I was concerned about Scott throwing because he's our only quarterback," O'Leary said. "Our other quarterback quit and we wanted to protect him."

"Maybe I got a little conservative with my play calling, but we had to throw tonight to set up Scott's (Selzer) running."

North's defense, led by 5-11, 154-pound nose guard Mike Sinanis, along with tackles Tom McCarthy and Scott Sinelli, made the key plays when called upon.

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RANDY BORST/staff photographer

Margaret DeMattia drives to the basket Saturday night during Mercy's 51-31 loss. The game was played before 700-plus people at Mercy.

Salem drills the Marlins

By Chris McCosky
staff writer

A bad night for the home team. More than 700 people crammed Farmington Hills Mercy's claustrophobic gymnasium Saturday night to see Overland's top two girls basketball teams do battle.

The visitors, No. 1-ranked Plymouth Salem, stole the show. Final score, Salem 51, Mercy 31.

Things began to trickle away from Mercy in the first half.

The Marlins decided to place extra defensive emphasis on Salem's top scorers Dena Head and Jessica Handley. Fine, said Salem. The Rocks gave the ball to senior Kristen Hostynski, who responded with an eight-point first quarter. Salem led 16-12.

Mercy, led by Yvette Malson and Adrienne Clark, made a run at Salem in the second quarter. The Marlins pulled within three before the half and had a chance to get within a point with less than 30 seconds left.

Critical point in the game. Mercy turnover. Salem basket. Four point swing in Salem's favor. Now instead of a trickle, the damn breaks open. Before Mercy can plug the hole — Salem has outscored Mercy 26-8 in the final 12 minutes of the game.

"I THINK WHAT happens is, in a game of this importance, the rivalry and the tradition that goes with it, you had just a fantastic effort from both teams in the first two to three quarters," said Salem coach Fred Thumann. "Mercy fell behind and it is very difficult to play from behind in a game like this. Everything seems to compound itself."

That's exactly what happened. Salem compounded its lead while Mercy compounded the deficit.

"Salem is a tough team to play against when they are ahead," said Mercy coach Larry Baker. "But if you look at the first half, Malson and Clark were our only two scorers. That was our basic struggle throughout this game. I thought we did a credible job with our press. If we could have established any kind of confidence or consistency offensively, things would have been different in the fourth quarter."

SALEM'S DEFENSE forced Mercy to work extremely hard for every shot it took. Mercy shot just 26 percent from the floor and netted just five of 33 shots in the second half.

Malson, the all-state, All-Area point guard was pestered throughout the game by sophomore Jill Easley and made just four of 18 shots. Malson finished with 11 points. Clark had 10.

Salem, on the other hand, shot well from the floor making 22 of 45 shots.

And then there was Dena Head. Sometimes this extraordinary player simply takes over a game. She did so in the fourth quarter. She scored eight points. She made three steals. She grabbed four rebounds. In one sequence, she tipped the ball away from a Mercy player, bolted down court to receive a long pass for a layup. It was like Salem ran a give-and-go play. On the next sequence, she made a block, grabbed the loose ball and zoomed coast-to-coast for another layup. Whew!

On the night, Head scored 17 points and pulled down 16 rebounds. Hostynski finished with 13 points.

The win leaves Salem with a 7-1 record and Mercy will enter its Catholic League season Tuesday with a 4-2 mark.

Falcons stone Central

By Chris McCosky
staff writer

Farmington assistant football coach Forrest Geary was running on a hot dog after the game Saturday explaining what happened on the play that gave the Falcons a 6-0, mud-caked victory over Walled Lake Central.

"He almost didn't go," Geary said of senior captain Andrew Holliday. "We told him that he was going to be rushing the punter. He didn't understand. I was screaming at him to go. He looked over and said, 'Me? Finally, I just said 'Block the punter!'"

Andrew Holliday, at last, obliged. He burst through the Central line, leaped over a blocker and blocked the punt. Steve Howell scooped up the loose ball near the Vikings' 20 yard line and ran into the end zone.

That score late in the third quarter provided the Falcons and first-year head coach Dave Catherman with their first victory.

"All the coaches came up and told me I wasn't a rookie anymore. I finally won a game," Catherman said. "Really, though, this was the first equal opportunity we have had to win. Our three previous opponents

(Southfield, Harrison and John Glenn) were more prepared because they were all more established programs. Walled Lake Central has a similar program to ours. We are trying to improve our program to get into a position to where we can compete on that upper level."

THE HEAVY rains Friday night and Saturday morning had transformed the Farmington field into a swamp, complete with areas of quicksand-like mud. Consequently, neither team could do much offensively.

Three defenses, on the other hand, had a great time. The Falcons limited Central to just 23 yards rushing and forced two fumbles (both recovered by Jeff Brandt). The Vikings threw for 77 yards but the Falcons picked off the passes (one each by Holliday, Howell and Eric Green).

Farmington managed 111 yards rushing but a minus two yards passing.

"We're improving. I really think we are," Catherman said. "We gained confidence. But we really couldn't show our stuff out here today."

The Falcons had far and away the

better scoring chances.

They took the ball down to the Central 29 in their first possession and fumbled it away. Brandt recovered a fumble at the Viking 20, but the Falcons fumbled it right back.

In the second half, Brandt's second fumble recovery set up a 24-yard field goal attempt but Andrew Boden's kick sailed wide.

CENTRAL THREATENED once, late in the first half. Tom Murlita picked off a Drew MacDougall pass and ran it back to the Farmington 18. The Falcons' Ed Sudzina completed a sack and batted away two passes to kill the threat.

Also credit Farmington punter Joe Johnston for keeping Central bottled up. He got off four superb punts under heavy pressure in the final quarter.

"The key to a game like this is the kicking game," Catherman said. "We were working on snapping the ball out of the water and kicking it out of the water. I learned that from Ron Holland long ago. It's the little things that win for you and you have to give personal attention to every single facet of the game every single day."

Hawks 'D' tames Mustangs

By Bill Parker
staff writer

It wasn't a happy day for visiting Northville.

No matter how you look at it the bottom line is that Farmington Harrison was the better team Saturday afternoon.

The Hawks scored two times while dominating the first half of play and skated through the final two periods to a 12-3 Western Lakes Activities Association victory.

Harrison coach John Herrington was happy with the win but the fact that his team turned the ball over to Northville four times on fumbles had the coach a little upset.

"We're never unhappy about a win but I don't think the game was very well played," said Herrington. "I think Northville did a pretty good job but both teams were fumbling the ball."

"The field conditions out there were just horrible. The field wasn't that good when we started the season. Now it's really going to be terri-

ble. It's shot for the year I'm afraid."

HARRISON TOOK the opening kickoff and marched to the Mustang 29 before fumbling away its first scoring opportunity.

The Hawk defense proceeded to shut Northville down in three straight plays, enabling Rick Witte to return the Mustang punt 30 yards to the Northville 30.

Herrington's troops then took the lead marching those 30 yards in eight plays. Senior tailback Scott Bissell capped the drive with a 2-yard touchdown plunge. The extra point was tipped at the line and Harrison took a 6-0 lead.

On the Mustangs' next drive down the field, Jeff Skinner picked off an errant pass from Northville quarterback Scott Stevens and returned it to the Harrison 45. The turnover set up the Hawks' first touchdown of the afternoon.

With the passing combination of Mark Murray to Kurt Davis and the power running of Bissell, Harrison marched 45 yards in 11 plays and

used up 7:24 on the clock. Murray found Davis open in the middle of the end zone and connected on a 5-yard touchdown pass. An attempted two-point conversion was intercepted by Northville's Tony Briningstool. Harrison took a 12-0 lead.

NORTHVILLE'S ONLY points of the game came on a 25-yard field goal by Jack Sylvester. The Mustangs moved the ball 57 yards in 12 plays before Sylvester split the uprights.

The Hawks held Northville to 12 yards total offense in the first half. The Mustangs finished the game with 59 yards total offense while Harrison netted 218 yards total offense.

Murray connected on eight of 14 passes for 78 yards and one TD. Davis hauled in six of those passes for 52 yards and one TD.

Bissell led the ground game (140 yards total) with 95 yards on 19 carries. The win pushes Harrison to 3-1 on the season and 2-0 in the W.L.A.A. Northville falls to 0-4 and 0-2 in the league.

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