

Sports

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(F1B)

Hawks win title back

1st half flurry bushwhacks North, 34-7

By Chris McCosky
staff writer

In the quiet sanctum of his office, almost an hour before his Farmington Harrison football team would take the field against rival North Farmington in the Western Lakes championship game, John Herrington thought aloud about what might happen.

"You know if Mark Murray (Harrison quarterback) can get out early, we'll be in good shape," the veteran Harrison coach said. "Last week (in the Hawks' rout of Walled Lake Western) he hit his first six. The key is if Mark can hit his first couple of passes."

Herrington had no idea how prophetic his pre-game thoughts would be.

Murray's first pass was deflected by a North defender into the hands of Harrison receiver Rocky Varacalli for an 18-yard completion. Two plays later, Murray hit a wide open Mark Schmidt for a 52-yard touchdown pass.

North collapsed. Harrison went on to win the game 34-7. It was Harrison's fourth Western Lakes championship in five years.

"I think the game was lost when that first pass was tipped and their guy came down with it," said North Farmington coach Jim O'Leary. "Our kids just went flat after that. We were pumped up when the game started, but that play just flattened us out."

HERE'S HOW the Raiders' collapse played out:

After Schmidt's TD, the Harrison defense stopped North cold on the Raiders' first two offensive series. Dave Krolleki and Jack Funkhouser sacked Raider quarterback Scott Simon at the North 6.

After a short punt, Harrison took over at the North 36. Six plays later, Murray connected with swing back Gary Schwedt on a 10-yard scoring strike. Mark Calvaruso, who converted four of five extra points, added the point after to make it 14-0.

North's Scott Selzer, who hadn't fumbled all season, fumbled the ball back to Harrison on the first play after the TD. Schwedt recovered at the North 8. Scott Bissell scored two plays later from the 4.

Next North possession. Simon's third down pass is intercepted by Funkhouser at the North 44. Six plays later, Bissell dives in from the 2. Harrison 27, North 0 with 9:01 left in the first half.

North's second possession. Simon's second down pass is picked off by Karl Davis at the North 6. Two plays later, Rick Witte runs it in from the 63-40. Ballgame.

North scored its lone TD in the fourth quarter, against Harrison's second-team defense, on a 4-yard run by Selzer. Three on Simon-Chad Henry passes totaling 50 yards set up the score. Henry added the point after.

IT'S HARD to explain a game like this," Herrington said. "We

threw the ball well and they made some mistakes. The last two weeks it seemed like everything has gone our way. We're probably not as great as we seemed today, and they definitely aren't that bad."

Both coaches credited two facets of Harrison's game in creating the lopsided score: defense and Murray. "We had not faced a passer with Murray's ability," O'Leary said. "He did a heckuva job for them."

Murray completed 7-of-16 passes for 134 yards and two TDs in the three quarters he played. That, along with 137 yards rushing, gave the Hawks a balanced 271-yard attack.

It should be noted here that Simon,

football

despite throwing four interceptions, had a productive day. He completed 12-of-29 passes for 214 yards, 161 of those in the second half. Henry caught eight passes for 141 yards.

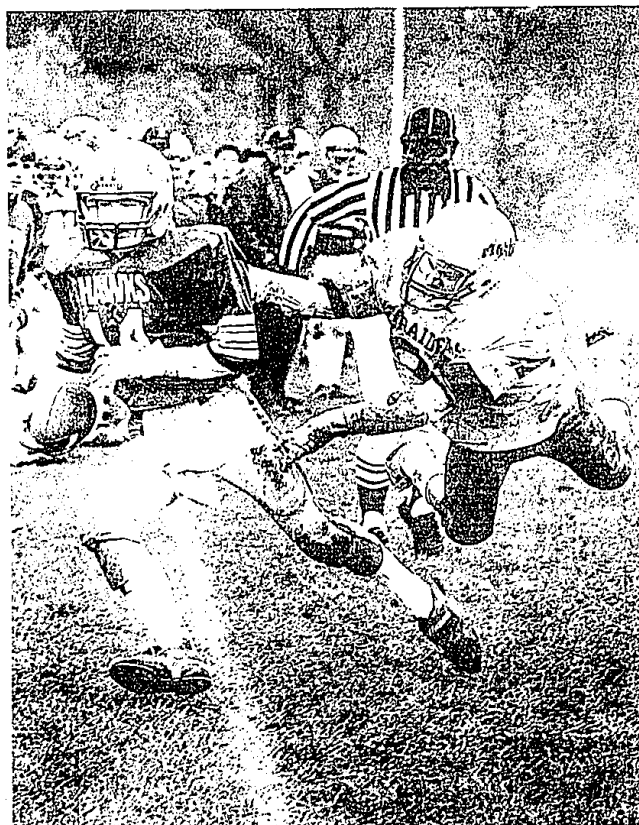
It should also be noted that the Harrison defense cold-cocked North's running attack. Selzer, who established a North single-season rushing mark with 1,127 yards this season, was limited to 66 yards in 19 carries. Overall, North's net rushing yardage was 61.

"GARY SCHWEDT and Jack Funkhouser have been the keys to our defense all season," Herrington said. Schwedt recovered two fumbles and Funkhouser picked off a pass. "Ever since we gave up 28 points to West Bloomfield the first game our defense has been great."

Harrison has yielded 33 points in the last seven games.

"We have to look at this as just a bad day and forget about it," O'Leary said. "We can do one of two things. We can quit, or we can come back Monday ready to play. The good thing is, we get a chance to redeem ourselves."

Harrison (7-1) will travel to North (6-2) Saturday.



Harrison's Mark Murray (No. 14) is chased out of bounds by North's Bill Krell during the

Hawks 34-7 victory in the WLAA championship Saturday.

RANDY BORST/staff photographer



DILL BRESLER/staff photographer

Farmington quarterback Steele Perrett unleashes a pass early in the Falcons' 15-7 victory Friday night.

Green TD ices Falcons' victory

Plymouth Canton's defenders spent most of their football game Friday chasing Farmington quarterback Steele Perrett all over the field. Unfortunately, in their frenzied pursuit the Chiefs forgot something — watching Eric Green.

Green broke open a tight game by racing 51 yards for a third-quarter touchdown that proved to be the clincher in a 15-7 Falcon victory at Canton.

Farmington (3-5) scored twice in the second quarter, as Steele Perrett fired a 17-yard scoring pass to Hill Lindbert. But the two-point conversion failed, leaving the Falcons ahead by just 6-0.

Andrew Boden increased that to 9-0 with a 39-yard field goal for Farmington. Canton (3-5) sliced into the Falcon lead by driving for a touchdown, scored by Joel Goebel on a 2-yard plunge, making it 9-7 at the half.

Green paced Farmington's rushers with 62 yards on 14 carries. But Canton's defense pressured throughout the game, dumping Falcon quarterbacks eight times for 57 yards in losses. Perrett, who completed six of 11 passes for 85 yards, also was intercepted once. Farmington's total offense was just 108 yards passing and 25 rushing.

The Falcon defense, however, was just as intense as its counterparts. Farmington punished Canton starting quarterback Neil Hubert, forcing him to throw two interceptions and fumble twice. Hubert completed three of 11 for 70 yards. Steve Genyk replaced him and hit one of three passes for 12 yards.

Tony Boucher topped the Chief runners with 66 yards on nine carries. Canton gained 93 yards on the ground and 82 in the air, outgaining the Falcons but not outscoring them.

forced Marian out of its game plan early and accounted for numerous turnovers throughout the contest.

After Mercy took a decisive lead in the second quarter, Marian was forced out of its zone and into a man-to-man defense. It played right into Mercy's game plan.

"We knew we'd have to control the ball with them playing a zone," said Baker. "We wanted to force them out of their zone and into a man-on-man. We did what we wanted to do. The key was pulling them out of that zone. That changed it from a nip-and-tuck game into a blowout."

After a 13-13 first quarter, the tide began to change. Mercy's full-court press began to bother the Mustangs and allowed Maria Dietz to convert back-to-back steals into four quick Marlin points. Yvette Mison then got hot from outside and pumped in four of her game high 24 points to close the half as Mercy stormed ahead 27-19 at the break.

MERCY'S DEFENSE, led by 6-foot junior Jennifer Solsar, denied

girls basketball

Marian the opportunity to get the ball inside to 6-foot-3 junior Kathy Phillips who was limited to eight points on the evening. Even when Phillips did get off a shot, the ball just wouldn't fall. It seemed to have a mind of its own.

"We looked all bottled up," said Marian coach Mary Lillie. "We got behind and got nervous and tried to get it all back at once. Then when the shots didn't fall, they got real upset. I don't know if we got too up or what. We wanted to win this one but we didn't play like it. Our heads just weren't in it."

Mison again took charge in the third quarter. With some strong drives to the basket and sharp passing underneath, Mison picked up eight points and three assists in the

stanzas as the Marlin stormed ahead 43-32.

In the final eight minutes, Mison hit six-of-six from the line and got offensive help from Jan Herberholz, Dietz, and Margaret DeMattia as Mercy avenged its earlier season loss to Marian.

"Our execution was much sharper this time around," said Baker. "We knew we wouldn't get too many second shots with Phillips in the middle so we needed to execute tonight."

"The girls are playing great. We're starting to peak when we need to and we usually don't do that."

W.L. CENTRAL 70, FARMINGTON 41: Host Walled Lake Central rattled off 10 straight points to close out the first quarter and never looked back in this Western Lakes

contest Thursday night.

Farmington (1-11 in the league, 1-14 overall) got 15 points from Stacy Swanderski and 11 points from Carrie Hale. Karen Jenkins clipped in six points and 13 rebounds.

Central (9-3 in the league, 11-3 overall) was paced by Pam Fitzgerald (18 points) and Diana Bolin (14).

JOHN GLENN 56, N. FARMINGTON 35: North Farmington's four-game win streak was stopped at Westland John Glenn Thursday.

Glenn put the Raiders away with a 16-0 burst in the second quarter. Jenny Okon led the Rockets with 15 points and Stacy Graham added 13. Glenn is 10-2 in the Western Lakes and 13-2 overall.

For North (6-6 in the league, 7-8 overall), Rory Talamini scored 10.

NORTHVILLE 91, HARRISON 21: Northville (7-5 in the league, 8-7 overall) got a 20-point performance from Katie Brugman to remain a game behind Western Lakes Western Division leading Plymouth Canton.

It was the 75th consecutive loss for Farmington Harrison.

LADYWOOD 52, BISHOP BORGESS 18: Boaring out to a 26-8 halftime lead, Livonia Ladywood (10-4, 6-2) cruised to a Catholic League Central Division win Thursday over host Redford Bishop Borgess (0-8, 2-11).

Katie McNulty and Mandy Chandler scored 13 and 10, respectively, for the Blazers.

Pay Hines netched 10 of the Spartans' 18 points.

BENEDICTINE 35, ST. AGATHA 20: The Aggies jumped out to a 12-2 first quarter lead, but fell apart in the final three quarters Thursday against host Detroit Benedictine in a Catholic League A-West encounter.

"We played a real good first quarter and were controlling the game," said Redford St. Agatha coach Jim Murphy, whose team dropped to 1-11 overall. "Then, in the second quarter, we got fancy and let things get away. In the third quarter we started throwing the ball away."

Maryann Kicall tickled half of the Aggies 20 points.

By Bill Parker
staff writer

The race for the Catholic League girls basketball title is about as tight as a Roman collar.

Farmington Hills Mercy, playing without injured starter Adrienne Clark, knotted everything up Thursday night with a 57-40 thrashing of Birmingham Marian in front of a standing-room-only crowd at Marian High School.

The win by the Marlin, coupled with Livonia Ladywood's 52-18 victory over Bishop Borgess, left Mercy, Marian and Ladywood each with 5-2 ledgers in the Catholic League with two league contests remaining for each team.

"We knew we had to win this one," said Mercy coach Larry Baker. "If we wanted to stay in it, we needed this one. That makes everything even again."

The Marlin showed no mercy to the Mustangs Thursday night.

MERCY'S PRESSURE defense