

Sports

Chris McCosky, Brad Emons editors/591-2312



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Mercy chills out, Salem moves on

By Chris McCosky
staff writer

Let's forget the high-tech coaching theory for just a second, shall we? All those Xs and Os are fine; those forever varying presses and press breakers, those well-engineered out of bounds plays, those cleverly devised offensive and defensive schemes all have their place.

But when you come right down to it, basketball is as simple as this: The team that puts the ball into the basket the most wins the game.

Wednesday night, in the Class A quarterfinals at a jam-packed Southfield High School gym, Plymouth Salem put the ball into the basket more often than Farmington Hills Mercy. Thus, Salem won 63-46 and will move on to the semifinals Friday at Grand Valley State College.

"I thought Mercy had a good game plan tonight," said Salem coach Fred Thomann. "They really attacked our defense. They drove that ball in and got us in foul trouble real early. They forced us into doing something we don't do a lot of and that's play zone defense."

girls basketball

SALEM PICKED up six quick fouls in the first quarter, and Mercy spent a lot of time at the free throw line. In the quarter, Salem's Keri McBride picked up three fouls, Jill Estey and Jessica Handley two each.

"Our high priorities in this game were to break their press, contain their offense reasonably well and get the ball to the basket to try and get them into foul trouble," said Mercy coach Larry Baker. "Those things happened."

Mercy was utterly frosty when it came to putting the ball into the basket. In the first quarter the Marlins made just one of 12 field goal tries. In the half they hit four of 23. At one point they missed 12 consecutive shots at the basket. Mercy made 13 of 36 shots in the second half. That's 28 percent on the night.

Salem led 26-15 at the half. Seven of the Marlins points came off free throws.

"OUR SCORING production was just miserable," Baker said. "We had some people struggling to find a groove and establish their confidence on the court. Unfortunately, that didn't happen until we were too far behind."

Said Thomann: "We put them in a situation where they had to score from the perimeter. We're thankful that they were missing a lot of perimeter shots. That was definitely a key factor in this game."

Salem, conversely, had little trouble scoring. The Rocks hit 25 of 43 shots from the floor (58 percent) and 13 of 16 free throws. (Mercy was 10 of 18 from the line.)

Dena Head led Salem with 25 points. Jessica Handley scored 12, Kristen Hostynski 10 and Jill Estey and Keri McBride each scored eight.

Estey was a key player for Salem. Her coolness in the face of Mercy's intense trapping defense enabled Salem to not only break the press, but to score easy baskets against Mercy's press.

For Mercy (18-7), Margaret De-

Mattila led the way with 14 points. She also played a strong game defensively and on the boards. Jan Herberholz scored 13 points and Yvette Malson 12.

MERCY MADE a mini run at Salem in the opening stages of the second half.

Led by seven quick points from Herberholz, Mercy pulled within eight, 28-20.

The teams traded hoops for two possessions. With 3:32 left in the third quarter, Malson hit her first field goal of the game to pull the Marlins within six, 32-26.

Hostynski scored a crucial basket for Salem to slow Mercy. Then, after a Mercy miss, Estey drained a 12-foot jumper to put the Rocks back up by 10.

In a time span of nearly four minutes (last two minutes of the third and the first two of the fourth) Salem outscored Mercy 12-4.

Mercy's mini run proved to be its last gasp.

THE VICTORY, aside from sending Salem to the state's final four for the first time in its history, lifted a huge monkey off its back. Mercy has ended Salem's past three seasons.

"This feels great," Thomann said. "When you get beat three years in a row by a team in the state tournament, you have to continue to challenge yourself. You have to keep getting better because you know that Mercy will show up on your schedule at some time in the state tournament."

Said Baker: "I'm proud that we were able to get this far. And we'll be pulling for Salem from this point on. In some ways I think we've helped contribute to their success because of the tremendous competition we've provided for each other over the past three years. I certainly don't begrudge them anything."

The Rocks, winners of 24 consecutive games, are 25-1 on the season. They will play either Detroit Martin Luther King or Utica Friday night.



photos by RANDY BORST/staff photographer

Dena Head and Mercy's Jan Herberholz (No. 42) collide during Salem's 63-46 win in the

Class A quarterfinals Wednesday. Head led Salem with 25 points.

Karcher's 31 lifts North

Rick Karcher certainly made Redford Union aware of his presence Tuesday night.

The 6-5 North Farmington senior led his basketball team to a 64-46 win at RU with a 31-point, 17-rebound performance. He outscored the entire RU team 17-15.

"He had one of those nights," said North coach Tom Negoshian. "Everything he put up went in."

North needed every ounce of Karcher's effort as Redford Union stayed within four points for most of the game.

"They just killed us inside," said RU coach Tip Smithers. "We have some work to do on that. Karcher is a fine player and he was getting excellent position inside all night."

Chuck Howard added eight points for North (1-1).

Craig Watson scored 10 to pace RU (1-1).

basketball

W. BLOOMFIELD 42, HARRISON 36: Farmington Harrison's offense decided to take the second half off Tuesday night and it cost the Hawks a game.

"I think our inexperience showed up tonight," Harrison coach Mike Teachman said. "We just stopped running our offense in the second half — and West Bloomfield played awfully good defense."

Harrison led 19-11 at the half. In the third quarter the Hawks missed six consecutive free throws and the Lakers got back in the game. They won it with a 14-7 fourth-quarter spurt.

"Actually we shouldn't even have been on the same court with them. They're a big, physical team. We had the home court advantage and we basically outscored them. We stayed with them the whole game."

The Cougars pulled ahead 13-10 after the first quarter, only to have Stevenson cut the lead to 23-27 by the half. After three quarters of play the Cougars held a narrow 41-43 edge.

Scott Harvey paced the winners with 18 points. Kroll finished with 16 and teammate Rick Bazzano added 11.

Pete Mazzoni led all scorers with 27 points for Stevenson. Eric Johnson added 13 for the Spartans.

ADRIAN 59, LIVONIA CHURCHILL 55: On Tuesday, Scott Riley scored 27 points for Adrian, 13 in the final quarter, to lead the visiting Maples to victory.

With the game tied at 54 and 1:07 remaining, Adrian took over the ball and began running down the clock.

Churcilli was content to play a tough defense and let the Maples mix the clock. They wanted to keep Riley from getting the ball, force a poor shot and regain possession of the ball or send the game into overtime.

With eight seconds left, Adrian's shot missed its target. Riley was there for the rebound, however, and returned the ball to the hoop with one second left in the game. He drew a foul on the shot and scored the free throw giving his team a three-point victory.

Brad Ridgeway was Harrison's top gun. He scored 11 points, grabbed nine rebounds, blocked eight shots and altered five other shots. Chad Burgess added 10 points.

Marty Wolfe led West Bloomfield (2-0) with 15 points. He nailed 5-of-8 from the free throw line in the final quarter.

Harrison is 1-1.

WAT. KETTERING 58, FARMINGTON 57: The Falcons simply ran out of time Tuesday night.

Waterford Kettering built up a 17 point lead in 2 1/4 quarters. Farmington chipped away and chipped away at that lead. In the final seconds, the Falcons had one final shot at winning the game. Down 58-57, an 18-foot jump shot missed the mark.

Steve Howell scored 24 points to pace the Falcons (0-2). Brandon London added 14. Tim Maxfield scored 16 for Kettering (1-1).

John Knittel set the pace for the Chargers with 17 points and eight rebounds. Brad Wylie added 18 and Mark Beebe chipped in with 11 for Churchill.

On Friday, in its season opener, Churchill was outscored by Deason 49-45.

Steve Moore controlled the game for the Pioneers, mauling in 31 points and hauling down 13 rebounds.

Brian O'Leary led Churchill with 14 points.

ST. AGATHA 59, HOLY REDEEMER 49: Redford St. Agatha stormed out to a 23-14 halftime lead and never looked back in earning a season-opening victory Tuesday night.

Kevin Foulkes led all scorers in the game with 14 points. Kevin Rich added 12 for the Aggies.

Holy Redeemer was paced by Jerry Stepp with 15 points.

BISP. BURGESS 74, BEDFORD 46: Redford Bishop Burgess, the area's top-ranked team, improved to 4-0 on the season with this easy victory over the Temperance-Redford Mules.

The Spartans breezed to a 25-10 advantage after the first quarter and put the game out of reach with a 12-3 spurt in the second.

Cordell Robinson netted 30 points in a winning effort for Burgess. Patrick Hickman added 17 points and 15 rebounds while Kevin Van Hook chipped in 10.

Mike Stevenson scored 10 to pace the Mules.

Glenn's towers topple Glenn

Westland John Glenn, the No. 2 ranked boys basketball team in Observerland, stood up to its ranking with a season-opening 89-57 victory over host Dearborn Edsel Ford Tuesday night.

Defensive pressure and inside shooting set the tone for the Rockets as they jumped out to a 21-15 first quarter lead. Andy Graziulis' 22 points paced Glenn, which led 49-27 at the half. The Rockets led 70-38 after three quarters of play.

Greg Bates added 16 for the winners while Steve Hawley and Marcus Lowe pumped in 15 each.

John Tobin scored 10 for Edsel Ford which fell to 0-2 on the season.

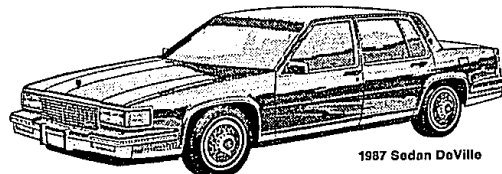
GARDEN CITY 60, LIVONIA STEVENSON 59: Jeremy Kroll hit both ends of a pressure free throw with nine seconds left Tuesday to lift the boat Cougars to their second victory of the new season.

"We led, basically, throughout the game," said Garden City coach Bob Dropp. "They went up 41-39 in the third quarter, but that was their only lead."



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