

# Western Lakes powers advance

## Salem giants crash boards to put the crush on Wildcats

By Chris McCosky staff writer

Statistics sometimes deceive. At times they mask what actually transpired during the game.

Friday night, however, during Plymouth Salem's 86-66 romp against Novi in the finals of the Class A District 22 Basketball Tournament at Salem, one statistic told the story completely.

Salem outscored Novi 33-0 on second-shot opportunities. Salem grabbed 30 offensive rebounds to Novi's five. The stat for total rebounds: Salem 51, Novi 13.

"They were just too big," said Novi coach John Cicchelli, fully aware of the understatement. "We tried to block them out and they kept getting inside."

Rick Taylor, 6-7, and Mike Hale, 6-5, did most of the damage on the boards. Taylor had 16 rebounds, 12 offensive; Hale had 12 rebounds, eight offensive.

"Our intensity really picked up midway through the first quarter," said Salem coach Bob Brodie. "We went to full-court pressure and that helped pick up the tempo. Before that, Novi was doing a nice job of slowing the game down."

THE DISTRICT championship was Salem's second in Brodie's three-year reign. The Rockets have won five district titles since 1980. They advance to the regional tournament Wednesday at Eastern Michigan University's Bowen Field House. Game time will be announced today. The Rockets will face either Monroe or Trenton.

"I couldn't be happier for the kids," Brodie said. "They have

### basketball

achieved every one of their goals for this season. They wanted to be 18-2, win the division and the league, hold opponents under 40 points per game and win the district. They've done all that. Now we have to establish some additional goals."

The Rockets took the game away from Novi in the second quarter. The Wildcats led 17-16 early in the second quarter. But the Rockets closed out the first half with a 25-7 run.

The full-court press Brodie mentioned created seven turnovers in the quarter resulting in six Salem baskets.

TAYLOR LED all scorers with 27 points. Bryan Kears scored 20 and Hale added 13.

Hale also dished out nine assists, an abnormal amount for a 6-5 forward who doesn't often handle the basketball. But Hale was Salem's press-breaker this night.

Novi deployed a three-quarter court trapping press throughout the game and Salem picked it up. The Rockets would have the press to the wing then fire the ball back to Hale in the middle, who would break upcourt. Often this led to a three-on-two break for the Rockets with Hale leading the charge.

"We wanted to go back to attacking the pressure. In the last couple of games we were concerned only

with breaking the press, not really attacking it," Brodie said. "Tonight we wanted to attack and score."

Mistion accomplished. BRYAN KEARIS also played as if he was on a mission. The senior point guard opened the game by scoring Salem's first six points. His message was clear: Go ahead and key on our big guys. I'll light you up from the outside.

In the second quarter Kears scored eight more points, including an Ishai Thomas-like, high-arching scoop shot that seemed to remove a good bit of the light from the Wildcats. The shot and subsequent free throw (he was banged to the floor on the play) came with 3:59 left in the half. It spread Salem's lead from three to six and the Rockets scored the next 12 points without interruption.

"Bryan has been down lately," Brodie said. "He's faced a lot of pressure from Glenn and Canton and it had shaken him up some. He came out of his shell tonight. He knows we need him to play like that for us to be effective as a team."

The Rockets, runners-up in the Kensing-ton Valley Conference this season, got 21 points from Joe Mistoylich and 15 from Dave Skown. Jeffrey Tanderay added 10. The Wildcats finish with a 15-7 record.

The Rockets will take a 2-1 record into the regional tournament.

By Tim Smith staff writer

High-flying Westland John Glenn geared up for regional play with a close-than-expected 66-59 victory over Livonia Churchill in Friday's Glenn Class A district basketball championship.

With the win, coach Gordie Davila's team will square off at 7 p.m. Wednesday against Detroit Chadey at Glenn regional. But Davila said his team will have to play better than it did against Churchill to advance past that game.

"They (Chadey) have quickness and rebound well," said Davila in his office afterwards. "We'll have to shoot better than we did tonight (against Chadey). We could have led by 20 at halftime."

The Rockets hit on 27 of 60 from the floor, but missed many shots from in close. However, with the Chargers having an even harder time scoring, John Glenn (21-2) still coasted to its first district title since 1981.

After trailing early, the Rockets went ahead 6-3 three minutes into the game and never again looked back, leading by as much as 19 at one point.

JOHN GLENN'S offensive struggle may have been tied to the fact the team's leading scorer this year, Steve Hawley, found himself in early foul trouble and tallied only eight points. He eventually fouled out.

Picking up the scoring slack for Hawley was senior guard Greg Bates, who scored a season high 20 points. Senior center Andy Grarulis

hauled down 19 rebounds in a power performance for the Rockets. Leading the Chargers attack were junior center Brad Wylie and junior guard Steve Ditchkoff with 20 and 10 points, respectively.

The leading Chargers (8-14) played their opponent tough most of the way, and could have made it even closer with better second half shooting, according to coach Don Albertson.

"When the score was 36-29 (with John Glenn leading early in the second half), we had a lot of opportunities to eat into that seven-point lead — and just plain missed them," lamented Albertson.

Albertson also pointed to the fourth quarter, when the Chargers missed four scoring opportunities from close range.

"But we played a 2-2 team and they had to keep their first

strings in most of the game," he said. "I feel very good for our team. We won some other things tonight besides the game."


THE CHARGERS' coach gave credit to John Glenn's menacing leaping and rebounding skills. "They may have been intimidated, but their leaping ability enough to alter their shots a little bit."

anson Stromman and Marcus Lowe were two of the high-flying Rockets, with each ripping down six boards. Stromman chipped in with 10 points.

Leading Churchill in rebounds with four each were Wylie and senior forward Brian O'Leary. Wylie and John Glenn's Bates each were a perfect six-for-six from the free-throw line during the final quarter.

If John Glenn defeats Chadey, it will play at 7 p.m. Friday in the regional final.

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## Engineers ripped, series even

By Chris McCosky staff writer

The crowd at the Plymouth Cultural Center Ice Arena sat silent and nearly motionless through the hockey game Thursday night. It was so still it seemed at times unreal, like a painting or a backdrop for a theatrical production.

"The crowd is reflecting the team I'm afraid," said Larry Pilut, who is the director of player personnel for the Hennessey Engineers Junior A hockey team.

Correct. The Fraser-based Detroit Falcons nailed the listless Engineers 7-1 Thursday to even the best-of-seven semifinal series in the North American Junior Hockey League state playoffs at one game each.

The winner of the series will face Detroit Compuware in the best-of-five state finals beginning March 24. The winner will also get an automatic berth in the national Junior A tournament beginning April 3 at the Oak Park Compuware Arena.

THE ENGINEERS' performance, coming on the heels of an impressive 5-4 win at Fraser Tuesday in the series opener, baffled coach A.J. Baker.

"I really don't understand it," Baker said. "Guys at this level, with as much hockey as they have played, should not be so cyclical. They shouldn't be high one minute and low the next. But we did exactly that here tonight."

The Falcons broke the game open with a four-goal barrage in the second period.

The game had been every bit as close as the 1-1 tie on the scoreboard would indicate at one period. But just 23 seconds into the second period, the Falcons' Craig Colby scored on a flustering shot from just inside the blue line. This goal seemed to unnerv Engineer goalie Doug Brown who had been sharp up to that point.

Brown was nicked for two more goals in the period. On the second stretch a harrising and left the game. Dave Church came on with 5:30 left in the period and was greeted by a Falcon goal 1:05 later.

It was 5-1 after two periods. The Engineers applied pressure in the third period but Falcon goalie Brandon Reed skillfully kept the puck out of the net.

Deany Pevsner scored two goals and added an assist for the Falcons. Don Sutton, the NAJHL's leading scorer this season, scored his 51st goal and added an assist. Plymouth residents Sean Worden and Tom Yockey each scored a goal for the Falcons. Chris Hathaway also scored. Chris Valleccio notched three assists.

Tom Madden scored the lone Engineer goal on an assist from Mark Harmes.

"THE GUYS just got fired up in that second period," said Falcons coach Ken Knight. "Their play of late has not been that good, and they just got together on their own and decided to start playing the way they did at the start of the season."

Knight felt a win in Plymouth was mandatory Thursday.

"After they beat us in are own barn, they obtained the home ice advantage," he said. "We had to beat them tonight to get it back."

Said Baker: "If we win here tonight we send them on their way to the mortuary. Call for reservations. But I knew that the worst we could be after tonight is tied. So now it's a five-game series."

Missed opportunity was the order of the night for the Engineers. They wasted five power-play opportunities including 41 seconds with a two-man advantage in the second period.

The two teams played game three Saturday at Fraser. Game four is scheduled for 8 p.m. Tuesday at the Plymouth Cultural Center.

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