

Pioneer defense notch better than CC's in 'A'

By Brad Emons
staff writer

Somehow things didn't quite turn out the same as it did in 1979.

Gunning for their second state Class A football title, the Shamrocks of Redford Catholic Central High were denied Saturday by nemesis Ann Arbor Pioneer, 3-0, before 20,000 fans at the Pontiac Silverdome.

It was a defensive yawner for the most part, but a defensive gem, particularly from Pioneer's standpoint.

The game was decided when left-footed Chris Moore booted 35-yard field goal with 6:46 left to play in the first half, marking the game's only points.

What went wrong for CC? Several times the Shamrocks appeared on the verge of making something happen, but Pioneer, as it did earlier in the season in a 7-2 victory over CC, came up with the right play at the right time.

AND PIONEER did it using a third-string quarterback, Junior Bob Ferrari, who was pressed into service for the playoffs when No. 1 starter Ken Dickerson and backup Brian Belick were knocked out of the lineup with injuries.

So it wasn't surprising to see Pioneer coach Chuck Lori, who usually employs a wide-open attack, run a conservative ground game.

And his strategy apparently worked because Pioneer had the ball almost twice as long as CC.

"When you have a third-team

football

'When you have a third-team quarterback you just play to win . . . We just wanted a quarterback who would not beat us.'

— Chuck Lori
Pioneer grid coach

quarterback you just play to win," Lori said. "It's not the way we like to play. We just wanted a quarterback who would not beat us. And he (Ferrari) played poised and accepted the challenge today."

Pioneer made few mistakes, while CC made several glaring ones.

CC marched down to the Pioneer 20 on their first possession, but the drive stalled when Pete Elezovic's 37-yard field goal try fell short and wide.

A personal foul called against CC's outstanding nose guard Erik Knuth, who used his "Butterfly" move on Pioneer long snapper Paul McDowell, resulted in a 15-yard penalty and first down, ultimately leading to Moore's game-winning field goal. "Scott McKee (a linebacker)

and I both blew down on the snapper on a double team," explained Knuth, who uses the move to rattle opposing centers on punts. "But the ref said I jammed my helmet into the back of the kids' neck."

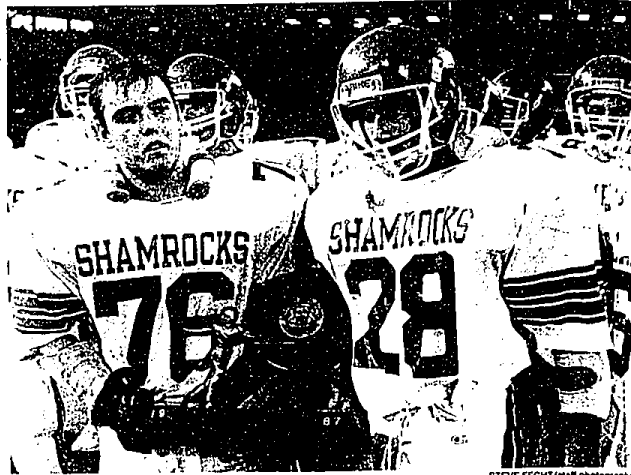
A pair of costly clipping penalties left CC in poor field position during the third quarter. "It seemed we had a lot of untimely penalties," said CC coach Tom Mach.

Early in the fourth quarter, CC quarterback Scott Hauncher hit Jeff Szajnecki with a 10-yard first down pass at his own 47, but the ball was popped loose by Pioneer's Jason Palmano and recovered by teammate Curt Large.

Midway through the final quarter, Hauncher hit tight end Lou Yeager two times in a row, 18 and 13 yards, putting the ball on the Pioneer 36, but a penalty on the very next play (illegal use of hands) shoved the ball all the way back to the 50. Pioneer's defense then stiffened, forcing CC to punt.

With Pioneer on its own 34, Aaron Bailey sealed the victory for Ann Arbor when he dashed 43 yards with 2:37 left, the longest run of the day by either team. The big gain put Pioneer in position to run out the clock, but CC got the ball back in the final 31 seconds. The Shamrocks, however, were out of timeouts. They got off three plays, moving up only to their own 27 as Hauncher was sacked to end the game.

"THEY (PIONEER) did a good job of executing and holding the ball at the proper times," said the CC



STEVE FECHT/staff photographer

Catholic Central co-captains Joe Sulak (left) feat in a defensive struggle with Ann Arbor Pioneer and Chris Kovach accept the runner-up trophy oner.

In Class A. The Shamrocks suffered a 3-0 de-

coach. "It seemed we were always in a hole, particularly in the second half. We had bad field position most of the time and that dictated us not throwing when we were deep in our own territory."

"We weren't in position to open up our offense, but the credit goes to them. Their defense was very good today."

CC's offense sputtered to say the least. The Shamrocks had only 94

yards net rushing as Chris Kovach led with 69 yards in 18 carries. Hauncher, a junior, completed five of 10 passes for 52 yards.

Pioneer, meanwhile, had 162 yards rushing with Bailey gaining 102 yards in 20 carries. Ferrari attempted only five passes, but completed four for 26 yards, including a 14-yarder to Cortez Paige, giving Pioneer a crucial first down in the

third quarter.

"This is the greatest bunch of overachievers I've ever been associated with," said Lori, who guided Ann Arbor to the state title in 1984. "We came along way and overcame a lot of adversity with all the injuries. We started a different lineup almost every game, but that shows the depth of our football team. We have 34 great seniors and they deserve this state championship."

the week ahead

BOYS BASKETBALL

Catholic Central at Oakland, 7:30 p.m.
Friday, Dec. 4
Dearborn at Taylor Baptist, 7:30 p.m.
Dearborn at Liv. Church, 7:30 p.m.
Liv. Franklin at Garden City, 7:30 p.m.
Liv. Stevenson at Bellevue, 7:30 p.m.
Wood. Glen at Wayne Memorial, 7:30 p.m.
Farmington at Redford Union, 7:30 p.m.
Mt. Leland at Red. Thurston, 7:30 p.m.
Ply. Canton at Brighton, 7:30 p.m.
Trenton at Pky. Salem, 7:30 p.m.
Farm. Harrison at West. Kettering, 7:30 p.m.
Beverly at Farmington, 7:30 p.m.
GC United at Pont. Greater Life, 8 p.m.

GIRLS BASKETBALL

Class A Regional at Southfield
Thursday, Dec. 3
Pky. Salem vs. Liv. Ladywood, 7 p.m.

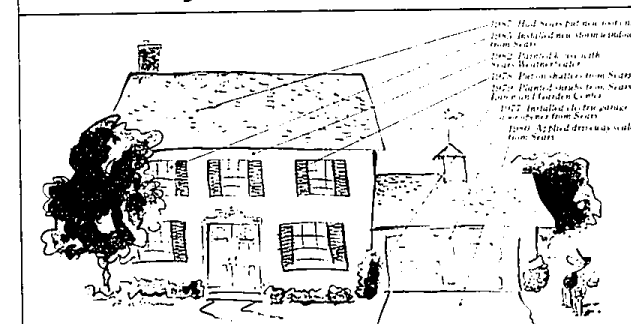
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St. Mary's has up-and-down week

Glen Donahue has had his share of thrills in more than 20 years of coaching basketball, but if his first year at St. Mary's College in Orchard Lake continues along the same path followed last week, Donahue may start looking for an occupation with more sanity — like maybe as a stockbroker.

The Eagles had more ups and downs than a submarine last week. They started on a high note, storming back from a five-point deficit to

beat Wayne State 83-82 Wednesday (Nov. 25) at Dombrowski Fieldhouse. St. Mary's then traveled to the Frank Tindall Tournament at Queen's University in Kingston, Ontario, and lost two straight games in the final minute, first to Western Ontario 102-97 Friday and then to

Queen's 93-87 Saturday. The Eagles rebounded Sunday with a 122-102 pasting of Windsor to finish the week with a 2-2 mark. They are 5-5 overall.

THE UPSET of WSU, the defending Great Lakes Conference co-champ and an NCAA Division II tournament team, was a big victory for St. Mary's. The Eagles led 41-36 at the half and 69-51 midway through the second half before the Tartars staged a comeback.

With 1:07 left, WSU led 80-75. Jerome Washburn's three-point play narrowed the gap to 80-78, and moments later Washburn hit one of two free throws to make it a one-point game.

Hank Woodmore (from Auburn Hills Avondale) canned two foul

basketball

shots to increase WSU's lead to three with 23 seconds left, but another Washburn basket made it a one-point game again. Both teams had a chance to put points on the board in the final 10 seconds, but first Denny Butcher and then Woodmore missed one-and-one free throws.

St. Mary's got the ball after Woodmore's miss and, after a timeout, Washburn inbounded to Mike Belczak, who passed to James Curtis. Curtis' 12-foot bank shot at the buzzer dropped through to give the Eagles the win.

Washburn finished with 26 points and 11 rebounds. James Lakes added 10. Woodmore paced WSU with 20 points and four assists.

ST. MARY'S had a chance to pull out a victory with the same type of heroics Friday against Western Ontario after trailing 51-42 at the half, but failed. Down 98-97 with seven seconds left, Safaa Qasawa's shot bounced out. Western Ontario led the win with four free throws in the closing seconds.

Qasawa finished with 12 points and 11 rebounds. Jim Butcher led the Eagles with 21 points, with Belczak adding 11 and Washburn and Curtis 10 apiece. John Stiefelmeyer topped Western with 22.

On Saturday, St. Mary's built a 36-18 lead with just under six minutes

left in the first half, then blew it. With six minutes left to play, the Eagles trailed Queen's 84-72. They got back to within striking distance, but could not overtake Queen's.

Jim Butcher led St. Mary's with 18 points, with Qasawa scoring 15. Washburn 13 and Denny Butcher 10. Washburn also nabbed 11 rebounds. Mike Scotten's 29 points and 13 rebounds was best for Queen's.

On Sunday, the Eagles finally collected an easy victory. They led 63-54 at the half and coasted after the intermission, their lead never less than 10. Seven players reached double-figures in scoring: Washburn (22), Lakes (17), Greg Spraggins (16), Jim Butcher and Belczak (14 each), and Denny Butcher and Qasawa (10 apiece). Washburn had nine boards.



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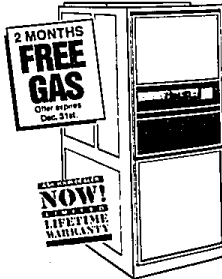
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