

Hillsdale buries Eagles

By C.J. Riazak
staff writer

From the opening minute, it was apparent that fortune was not going to favor St. Mary's College of Orchard Lake Monday night.

Leading scorer and rebounder Jerome Washburn (14.9 points, 10.6 rebounds), who had been nursing a bad knee for more than two weeks, returned to action for the Eagles' first NAIA District 23 playoff game against Hillsdale College at Oakland Community College's Highland Lakes campus.

He lasted about two minutes before returning to the bench, not to return. Not this night. And from there, matters went from bad to worse for St. Mary's. By halftime the Eagles trailed 58-35; they kept battling in the second half, but never really threatened in losing 117-99.

"We just didn't play well," admitted St. Mary's coach Glen Donahue, whose team finished at 21-15. ("Losing Washburn) doesn't help, but it's no excuse. We still should have beat them."

THE PROBLEMS were numerous. The Eagles shot poorly, particularly inside; they were badly out-rebounded (41-28); and their defense was — as Donahue described it — "terrible."

"We were in a panic on offense and were low key on defense. It's got to be reversed."

basketball

Although Hillsdale freshman guard Jerry Tharp topped all scorers with 29 points, including six three-pointers, this game was decided in the paint. By halftime, three Chargers had reached double-figures in scoring: center Jim Bauer (15), forward Greg Martin (14) and Tharp (13).

In simple terms, Hillsdale moved the ball well, found the open man, and buried everything. When the inside was clogged, the ball went out to Tharp for a three-point.

"They've got a good team, and when you let them shoot they'll beat you," said Donahue.

IT'S DIFFICULT to find a valid reason for St. Mary's collapse. Because Washburn was out? Hillsdale was without its leading scorer, too. Eric Allaire (20.85 points per game) is out for the season with a leg stress fracture.

Maybe experience was the key factor. Then again, maybe not; after all, Tharp and Martin are freshmen, Bauer is a sophomore.

Rebounding should have favored St. Mary's, listed among the top 12 in the NAIA (Hillsdale was outpounded), but it didn't. And remember, the Eagles entered the game 21-14 to the Chargers' 11-17.

"I thought we could shoot that well," said Hillsdale coach Rod Halstead. "The first half went just the way I thought it would. I thought we could score on them, and I thought we could score inside on them."

The Charger lead stayed in the 20s through the first 10 minutes of the second half, reaching a peak of 29 on Martin's three-pointer with 11:01 to play. St. Mary's finally narrowed the gap to 19 (93-74) on Jim Butcher's triple, but just four minutes remained.

THOSE FINAL four minutes were foul-filled, as the Eagles tried to climb back into the game by sending Hillsdale to the free throw line. It didn't work. Five Eagles fouled out, forcing them to play the final second of the game with just four men.

And the Chargers hit enough of their free throws (35-of-48) to keep St. Mary's at bay — the closest the Eagles got was 109-97 on Safaa Qasawa's basket with 56 seconds remaining.

Joining Tharp in double-figures in scoring for Hillsdale were Bauer (22), Martin and Steve Dunning (19 each), and Terry Sines (16). Sines topped all rebounders with 14; Bauer added eight.

For St. Mary's, Greg Spraggins scored 22, with Butcher getting 20, Qasawa 13 and Mike Belczak 12.

OCC tourney run halted

Oakland Community College's hunt for a second-straight NJCAA Division II mens basketball championship lasted three days and three games.

After knocking off Alpena CC 80-74 last Wednesday (March 2) and Grand Rapids JC 88-78 Thursday, the Raiders went up against Sinclair CC of Dayton, Ohio, on Friday, the Region XII host and No. 2-ranked team in the NJCAA. The game turned in the final 40 seconds on an OCC turnover and free-throw shooting, as Sinclair prevailed, 94-85.

It was a disappointing end to a season that never reached expectations after last year's Division II championship. OCC finished 24-8, although five of its top six players returned.

Against Sinclair, no Raider could stop Chris Hollan, a 6-foot-4 guard-forward. Hollan shredded OCC's defense for 41 points, including seven three-pointers. Two of those came in the final two minutes in clutch situations.

HOLLAN'S SHOOTING put Sinclair in front by a point with 40 seconds left. An OCC turnover, followed by a foul and two free throws, forced the Raiders to foul. Sinclair made its free throws (21-of-21) for the game, compared to OCC's five-of-10 to ice the victory.

"We could not stop him," said Raider coach Lynn Reed of Hollan. "Basically, we tried a variety of people guarding him but nobody could." OCC, playing without starting center Greg Davis (out with a collapsed lung), was hurt by its lack of depth.

basketball

'We were up 22-10 and failed to put them away. We missed five easy shots in a row, layups and put-backs, that kind of stuff.'

— Lynn Reed
OCC basketball coach

Sam Smith drew the initial defensive assignment on Hollan and was doing well until getting his second foul early in the first half. Marc Hogan, Davis' replacement, also battled foul trouble throughout the game.

"We were up 22-10 and failed to put them away," said Reed. "We missed five easy shots in a row, layups and put-backs, that kind of stuff."

Hollan wasn't a one-man show. Teammates Dave Gurckel (24 points) and Kelly Howard (15) also hurt OCC.

The Raiders were paced by Carson Butler, who totalled 23 points and eight assists. Smith finished with 22 points and eight rebounds, Derrick Williams had 20 points and nine rebounds and Eric Butler collected 18 points and eight boards.

Sinclair CC didn't get any further, losing to No. 1-ranked Lansing CC in

Saturday's regional final 79-76. Sinclair finished at 27-6.

AGAINST GRAND RAPIDS JC, OCC trailed 40-37 at the half, but a switch in defenses in the second half sparked the triumph.

"We went to a different type of defense that totally astounded them," said Reed. "We went to a 1-3-1 zone and they didn't react well to it. They started shooting from the perimeter and didn't make them. And we rebounded them decisively in the second half."

For the game, the Raiders had a 47-35 rebounding edge. With 1:30 left in the game they were up by 20 points and coasted to the win.

Carson Butler netted 19 points and 10 assists and Williams had 19 points and 10 rebounds for OCC. Smith scored 15, Eric Butler had 12 and Hogan got 11 points and 12 boards. John Boyce topped Grand Rapids JC (26-6 final record) with 27 points.

The win over Alpena CC was more decisive than the final score indicated. OCC had beaten Alpena twice during the Eastern Conference season, and slow-down tactics didn't prevent the Raiders from making it three-peat.

Smith got 22 points to pace OCC, with Williams adding 14 (and 10 rebounds), Carson Butler 13, and Hogan and Eric Hawkins notching 10 apiece. Hogan led all rebounders with 15. Alpena got 22 points from Terry Green and 20 from Andre Reams.

CC swimmers win league

Jon Teal and Andy Jacobs led Redford Catholic Central to the Catholic League boys swim championship Sunday at Oakland University.

CC scored a team-high 346 points with rival Birmingham Brother Rice second with 308. The two teams tied for the title last year.

Rounding out the seven-team field was Warren DeLaSalle, 226½; Harper Woods Notre Dame, 100½; University of Detroit-Jesuit, 82; Dearborn St. Alphonsus, 49; and Marine City Holy Cross, 9.

A senior, Teal captured the 50-yard freestyle in 22.97 and broke an eight-year-old record in the 100 with a time of 48.15. He also teamed up with Troy Shumate, Jim Niekiewicz and Mike Hoefflein to win the 400 freestyle relay in 3:19.45.

Jacobs added firsts in the 200 individual medley (2:02.8) and 100 butterfly (55.35). He also teamed up with Jim Kovach, Bill Mathews and Matt Hepburn to gain third in the 200 medley relay (1:43.31).

SECOND PLACE finishers for CC included Hepburn in the 100 backstroke (58.52) and 100 freestyle (49.97); Shumate, 500 freestyle (4:51.58); and Mathews, 100 breaststroke (1:04.75).

Recording third place finishes for the Shamrocks: Jim Kovach in the 100 backstroke (58.63) and 100 butterfly (55.95), and Hoefflein in the 200 freestyle (1:48.68).

Regional volleyball pairings

STATE TOURNAMENT
REGIONAL VOLLEYBALL PAIRINGS
(all Saturday, March 12)

CLASS A
at LANSING WAVERLY

Seminole: Livonia Ladywood vs. Lansing Eastern, 4 p.m.; East Kentwood vs. Portage Northern, 5:30 p.m.
Championship final: 7 p.m. (winner advances to the state Class A semifinal vs. Eastern on Saturday, March 13 at Flint Carman-Ainsworth regional champion, 2:30 p.m. Sat.)

Friday, March 19 at Flint Carman-Ainsworth High School

at WAYNE MEMORIAL

Seminole: Temperance-Bedford vs. Dearborn Edsel Ford, 2 p.m.; Farmington Hills Mercy vs. Ann Arbor Pioneer, 2 p.m.
Championship final: 5:30 p.m. (winner advances to the state Class A semifinal vs. Warren Woods-Tower regional champion, 1 p.m. Saturday, March 13 at Flint Carman-Ainsworth High School).

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