

## Miller gets extra work in grid loss

By C.J. Risak  
staff writer

Following Saturday's disappointing 20-3 loss to Notre Dame, there was plenty of one thing to go around for John Miller, the Spartans' senior free safety from Farmington Hills (Harrison), could have wished for something else. Like help.

The Spartans looked sad in just about every phase of the game — offense (just three points), defense (allowing 240 yards rushing in the second half), special teams (having a punt blocked).

The defense may have been the biggest disappointment. MSU led the NCAA in rushing defense in '87, and in the first half the Spartans limited Notre Dame to 50 yards on 21 carries. But the Irish option attack, spearheaded by quarterback Tony Rice and tailback Mark Green (125 yards, 21 carries), decimated MSU in the second half.

As Spartan coach George Perles said, "It's been quite some time since someone's gained that much rushing yards against us. That's the best option attack we've faced in six years."

MILLER COULDN'T agree more. "Tony Rice did a fantastic job running the option," he said, sweat still beading on his face. "He was stringing out the defense, pitching (the ball) when he had to and holding onto it when he had to."

Miller was in just his second game at free safety, although changing positions is hardly something new for him. He started for MSU at cornerback as a sophomore, then played strong safety all last season. The graduation of free safety Todd Krumm (from West Bloomfield), now with the Chicago Bears, and injuries forced Miller to switch again.

He could do without days as busy as Saturday's. It does not bode well for a team when its free safety is the leading tackler, which Miller was, tying linebacker Carlos Jenkins with 14 — a career-high.

"If I have to make the tackles, I will," was all Miller would say about it, although he added later, "We're going to have to work on our tackling this week."

THERE SEEMED no single reason for Notre Dame's option success. "We didn't anticipate them running the option that much," said Miller. "Maybe they saw something (at halftime) that we were doing defensively and took advantage of it."

"We were working so hard on stopping Rice and Green that, against a pursuing defense like we run, the cutbacks were wide open some times."

The Spartans had hoped the Irish would throw the ball. In the season-opening loss to Rutgers, MSU was rattled by a strong passing game. The secondary wanted a chance at redemption.

They never really got it, although Notre Dame didn't hurt them throwing the ball. Rice and Kent Graham completed just two-of-11 passes for 50 yards, with two interceptions (Rice was two-of-nine, with one pick-off).

"We shut down Rice in the first half," said Miller. "He wasn't going to throw against us."

IF THE SPARTANS weren't expecting the option, what were they looking for?

"We figured we'd see a lot of screen passes and a lot of draws," said Miller. "We covered them up underneath (on short passes) pretty well."

So now what? MSU is 0-2 and must face Florida State Saturday, the No. 1 team in preseason polls. Following the Seminoles are Big Ten powers Iowa and Michigan. Florida State and Michigan are road games.

Miller remains confident. "We were in the same kind of situation last year (MSU started 1-2)," he noted. "This ballclub's not going to hang itself. I still feel we have a fantastic football team. We just made too many mistakes today, offensively and defensively."

Many more days like Saturday's, and MSU's hopes for another Rose Bowl berth — or any kind of bowl game, for that matter — will be in jeopardy.

## CC football rally stuns Pioneers

By Brad Emons  
staff writer

In what may have been one of the most stirring football comebacks in the school's history, Redford Catholic Central erased an 18-point halftime deficit Saturday, rallying for a 21-18 victory over Ann Arbor Pioneer before a large crowd at Livonia Clarenceville.

Chris Johnston fired a 71-yard halfback option pass to Mike Mathis with only 3:25 remaining to give CC the victory in a rematch of last year's state Class A championship game.

Coach Tom Mach of the Shamrocks was nearly beside himself after orchestrating the comeback. The win also broke Pioneer's three-game hex against CC dating back to 1985.

"It's got to be one of our greatest victories ever," said Mach, whose team is now 3-0. "I was a great example of believing and never

giving up. To come back like that is utterly fantastic."

Faced with a third-and-1 situation on their own 29, Mach, with the help of his assistants in the press box, called the game-winning play.

"THERE WAS a feeling we had to do something because we were so deep in our own territory," explained the CC coach. "We didn't think we could drive the ball at that stage because they (Pioneer) had been so physical. And we figured we had done 'run sweep' enough."

Johnston laid the ball perfectly into the hands of Mathis, who had cheated nearly 15 yards on the stunned Pioneer cornerback by the time he caught up with the ball. Mathis then took it the rest of the way unmolesed.

"It's a 100-percent pass play and something we work on once in awhile," said Johnston. "We came out to fake the run and I just saw him (Mathis) open."

Pioneer had two more cracks to regain the lead, but one drive was thwarted by a Greg Paller interception with 3:14 left, while the other, with less than a minute remaining, was sealed by a Ryan Bell sack.

But Pioneer was a different team in the first half, outgaining CC in total yardage, 275-64.

Ann Arbor scored on the third play from scrimmage, a 68-yard run by sophomore Damon Jacobs.

In the second quarter, Rob Ferrari hit Aaron Bailey with a 58-yard pass and with 4:55 left in the half, Bailey scored again on a 35-yard run.

PIONEER WAS ALSO knocking on the door at the CC 1 as the halftime clock expired, but came up empty.

"The coaches were befuddled at halftime and didn't know what to say," Mach said. "They (Pioneer) were blowing holes wide open through our line."

"I think we played so poorly because we were over-hyped up. We just told them to just play football, have fun and don't worry about making mistakes."

CC made an about-face in the second half, getting on the board midway through the third quarter on a 38-yard pass from quarterback Scott Haunicher to Sean O'Keefe. (Pete Elezovic kicked the extra point to make it 18-7.)

The Shamrocks struck again early in the fourth quarter, going 54 yards in 11 plays, capped by David Owens' 1-yard sweep on fourth down. A Haunicher keeper on the two-point conversion made it 18-15.

After Elezovic's 41-yard field goal try missed with 7:27 left, CC's awakened defense sufficed to set up Johnston's game-winning pass.

"I've never had such a tremendous feeling as a coach," Mach said. "And I've never felt the lows and highs of a game like this one. It was so dramatic."

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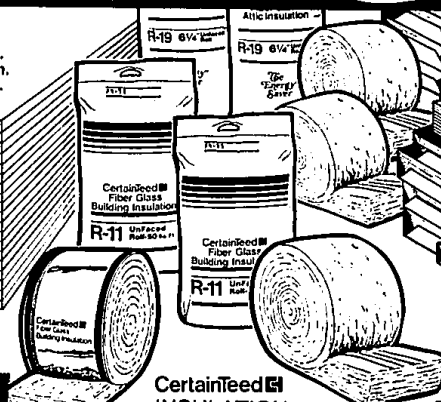
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## Hedges wins golf tourney

Continued from Page 1

fore Sunday's storm. Jim Rosek of Plymouth was the champ with rounds of 87 and 100, a 187 total. Alan Jablin of West Bloomfield finished second (90-90/150). Low net prize went to Rosek's James Taylor (90-90/194 actual, 140 net). A total of 225 golfers entered this year's tournament, the largest field ever.

Due to the rainout of Sunday's afternoon round, final results were not available. They will appear in next Thursday's paper.

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