

Sports

Dan O'Meara editors/591-2312



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(F10)

Hawks walk off with WLAA grid title

By Dan O'Meara
staff writer

Coach John Herrington's most anxious moment occurred at half-time Saturday when he had to give his Farmington Hawks football team a pep talk.

After an astounding first-half performance in which the Hawks virtually decided the Western Lakes Activities Association title, Herrington had to keep his charges off Cloud Nine and eager to protect an incredible 31-0 lead.

Harrison, 8-0 and ranked No. 1 in Class B, had no trouble doing that as it rolled over a powerful Westland John Glenn opponent 45-7 in what will go down as one of the most impressive showings by one team in the WLAA championship series.

"If you stay in coaching long enough, there will be days like this," said Chuck Gordon, coach of the defending champion Rockets, who went into the contest 7-0 and rated No. 5 in Class A.

"The answer is: they're a great football team. If they ever lose a

game, now you've got a scoop."

After watching the Hawks, who took their first victory over Glenn after losing two previous league finals to the Rockets, one had to wonder just how good is this Harrison team?

"Anybody can be beaten, but I got to say we're pretty good this year," said Herrington, adding he doesn't like to compare the many quality ballclubs he has produced in nearly two decades.

"I don't know if we've ever played a better game. This team can score points quicker than most teams we've had."

Harrison wasted no time doing that. Beginning with the opening kickoff, the Hawks were on a roll and never let up.

They scored on their first two possessions, stunning Glenn and surprising the overflow crowd at Harrison with a 14-0 lead.

The Rockets had to pass after being put in a hole, and a bad situation became a nightmare for Glenn. Harrison intercepted five Eric Stover passes, and the Hawks turned

all three first-half thefts into points.

Offensively, the major story was Harrison's successful running attack, especially against a defensive giant like Glenn, which allowed more points in the first half than it had in its first seven games.

Juniors Joe George and Matt Conley split the tailback duties and were largely responsible for Harrison's best rushing game of the season. The Hawks outgained Glenn 122-31 on the ground in the first half and piled up 229 rushing yards on the day.

"What it has done is pumped up both Joe and Matt," said Herrington of his rotation system. "They know they'd better run well or they'll be out. I couldn't say which one ran better, honestly."

George finished with 73 yards on 15 carries, Conley 45 yards on 11 tries. The latter also scored two TDs and George one — all on 1-yard dives.

Quarterback Mill Coleman also made a contribution, keeping the ball seven times for 58 yards, including a 17-yarder for a TD.

"We probably surprised some people," Herrington said. "But I told you last week our running game was coming on, and I thought we'd have to run to keep them honest."

"We were getting a lot of second-down-and-4s, which is a great situation for the coach."

While Coleman's passing — Harrison's bread-and-butter all season — wasn't the overwhelming factor it often is, the Hawks used it effectively. Coleman was 6-of-10 for 99 yards and three TD passes covering 21 and 20 yards to Jason Lichtman and Bryan Wauldron.

But it was the running game that set the tone and generated the momentum Harrison gained from its early lead. Coleman completed three key passes on the first two scoring drives, but it was the running of George and Conley that got most of the yardage. They also scored the TDs.

Then the defense, which held Glenn tailback Bryant Satterlee to 58 yards on 12 carries and the Rockets to 50 net rushing yards, went to work.

Dale Katz, a 6-foot-6 defensive end, deflected a pass that was intercepted by tackle Jeff Skinner, and Wauldron and Chad Burgess added interceptions.

"We made a couple bad decisions in the passing game," Gordon said. "But, when (the opponent) can sit back there and wait, things like that happen."

Following those turnovers, the Hawks took over at the Glenn 36, 17 and 48, and they quickly hallooed their lead to 31-0 with Coleman's pass to Lichtman and his scoring run, plus Steve Hill's 41-yard field goal.

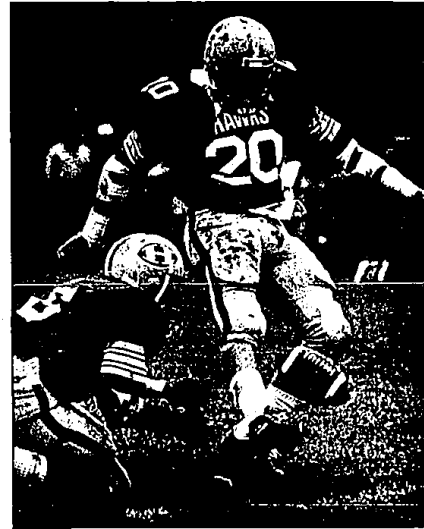
"We played for pride in the second



Mill Coleman hands off to tailback Joe George, who was a major player in Harrison's 45-7 trouncing of John Glenn. He rushed for 73

yards and scored the game's first touchdown as Harrison regained the WLAA title.

RANDY BORST/staff photographer



RANDY BORST/staff photographer

Steve Hill kicked a 41-yard field goal and five extra points for the league champion Hawks, who undoubtedly will remain No. 1 in Class B.

Falcons satisfy hunger for Lakes Division title

By Dan O'Meara
staff writer

To the winner goes the spoils of victory — and that includes the leftover pizza in the case of Farmington's boys cross country team.

Plymouth Salem honored a pre-meet wager by treating its opponent to dinner after Farmington defeated the Rockets 24-33 in Thursday's showdown for the Lakes Division dual-meet title.

Both teams go to preseason camp together each August and have developed a sportsmanlike bond in addition to a competitive rivalry.

Their latest meeting was a rematch of last year's season finale in which Salem edged the Falcons for the division championship, winning a sixth-man tiebreaker.

Farmington, 5-0 in the Lakes and 8-0 overall, made sure there was no such ending to this year's dual meet, capturing three of the top five places and getting the jump on Salem.

"LAST YEAR THEY beat us, and we came back to beat them in the league meet," Farmington coach Jerry Young said. "They reminded us of that right away."

Brad Moore of Farmington won a foot race to the finish line and nipped Salem's Scott Stryker for first place. Moore ran 16:45 on the Oakland Community College course and Stryker 16:48.

Farmington's Ben Goba was right behind, taking third at 16:49, and Greg Endres nabbed the No. 5 spot after Brendon Masterson of Salem

boys cross country

Falcon girls also win, Page 3C

came across in fourth place. Endres was three seconds behind Masterson, who ran 17:32.

"Ben and Brad made the race," Young said. "We knew we needed one or two guys close to Stryker, who's certainly one of the best runners in this area. They did a great job."

"Ben pushed it today. He didn't win it, but he was the one pushing the pace."

Young was especially pleased with the efforts of Goba and Endres, who have been hurt much of the season.

"THE LAST GOOD race Endres ran was at (the) Schoolcraft (Invitational) on Sept. 17," Young said. "That tells you how long it's been."

Endres, who has been running in the 18- to 19-minute range, came through in the biggest meet of the year and ran his best time since the Schoolcraft race.

"Moore ran a great race," Young said. "I think that's the first time he's beaten Stryker."

Goba and Endres, because they were hurt, were the key kids in the

victory. Having them today was nice."

The Falcons had a 9-12 lead after six runners, and they sewed up the win when Mark Mitchell, Paul Brandt and Matt Langdon, following sixth-place Dave Hamway of Salem, captured the Nos. 7-9 positions, respectively.

Hamway was clocked at 17:40, Mitchell 17:42, Brandt 17:48 and Langdon 17:56. John Thomas and Sean Speakman completed the Salem scoring, coming in 10th and 11th at 17:59 and 18:01.

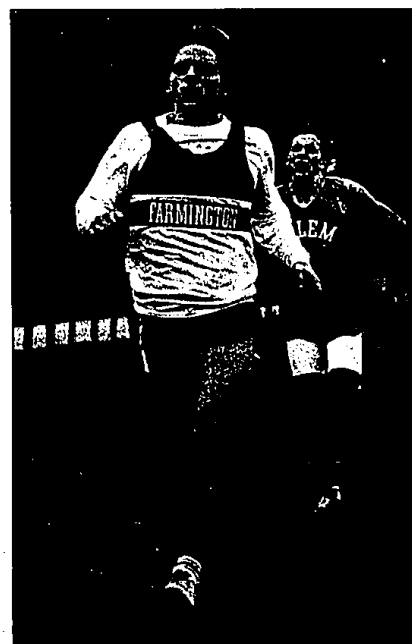
"I TOLD OUR kids we had to be up there, we had to get a good group going," Young said. "Once you get six ahead of four, you've got it."

Salem coach Geoff Baker, whose team finishes 4-1 in the Lakes and 4-2 in dual meets, credited the Falcons for their successful pack running, which he said would be the deciding factor.

"They were bunched in there pretty well," he said. "Where that came from, I don't know. When they ran (Livonia) Stevenson at Cass (Benton Park), they weren't like that, but they don't like Cass."

Cass Benton also is Salem's home course, the site of last year's dual meet when the Rockets beat Farmington. The Falcons run their home meets on a relatively flat course at OCC.

"But that's why they switch it eve-



BILL BRESLER/staff photographer

Brad Moore of Farmington claimed first place with a 16:45 time, beating out Salem's Scott Stryker for individual honors.

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Marlins defeat Blazers

Jenny Clinton's four free throws down the stretch carried Farmington Hills Mercy past rival Livonia Ladywood, 35-32, in a Catholic League Central Division girls basketball game Thursday before 900 fans at Madonna College.

"It was a great lift for us after that great embarrassment Tuesday (a 65-38 loss to Birmingham Marian), with all the turnovers," said Mercy coach Larry Baker, whose team improved to 4-10 overall, 4-4 in the Central.

"The way they came back makes me very proud of this win."

Defense and rebounding keyed the Mercy victory. Mercy limited Ladywood forward Yvonne Barnett to seven points ("Holding her to seven is a great achievement for us," Baker said) and held Jenny Kennedy scoreless in the fourth quarter. Kennedy had 12 in the game.

On the boards, Mercy had a commanding 40-28 advantage. Lee Albrecht topped the Marlins with 10.

Clinton, who Baker said "did a masterful job running the offense," led all scorers with 15 points.

Clinton's four free throws came after Sherri Adams drilled a three-pointer to give the Blazers a short-lived 32-31 lead.

The loss dropped Ladywood to 9-5 overall, 5-3 in the Central.

FARMINGTON 44, STEVENSON

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