

Sports

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(F10)

Hawks hope for repeat of grid history

Harrison meets Avondale

By Dan O'Meara
staff writer

John Herrington's teaching specialty is the American Civil War. But he knows his football history, too.

Herrington, who doubles as the Harrison High School varsity football coach, was conducting class for members of the media last Saturday afternoon.

The Hawks had just polished off Riverview 35-0 in the state playoffs and began looking ahead to their game against Auburn Hills Avondale. Kickoff for the Class B semifinal is slated for 1:30 p.m. Saturday in Flint Atwood Stadium.

Herrington said the schools have met twice before on the gridiron, and each time Harrison won and subsequently went on to capture state championship.

"If we beat Avondale, maybe that's a good sign," he said.

IN THE FINAL game of the regular season, Harrison defeated the Rhinos 31-0 in 1981 and 9-0 in 1982. The Hawks kept on rolling in the post-season, taking Class B honors the first year and Class A the next.

Those are the only years Harrison has won it all, but the Hawks can earn a shot at No. 3 and a fifth appearance in the finals with a victory Saturday. The Harrison-Avondale winner plays either St. Joseph or Frankfort at 5 p.m. Saturday, Nov. 26, in the Pontiac Silverdome.

"This is the hardest game to win in the whole tournament," Herrington said. "The most pressure is in the semifinals, because you want to get to the Dome."

"We've lost it twice, and it's the worst feeling in the world when you know you're that close to getting to the Dome."

The 10th-ranked Rhinos, also 11-0, entered post-season play as an underdog to Marysville, but Avondale upset the Vikings 6-0. They became the Chocoma team of the tournament by beating Mount Morris 27-13 last Friday night in Atwood.

Throughout the regular season, it

football

FARMINGTON HARRISON

25	Southfield	12
41	Farmington	14
35	Northville	14
38	Livonia Franklin	0
38	Walled Lake Western	0
82	Plymouth Canton	14
45	Livonia Churchill	0
45	Westland John Glenn	7
55	West Bloomfield	0

PLAYOFFS

32	Clawson	0
35	Riverview	0
451	11-0-0	47

AUBURN HILLS AVONDALE

35	Madison	14
41	Harper Woods	14
19	Lutheran West	18
20	Cranbrook	14
28	Lutheran East	14
47	Hamtramck	0
52	Lutheran North	0
47	Clarenceville	7
34	Orionville-Brandon	6

PLAYOFFS

6	Marysville	0
27	Mount Morris	13
356	11-0-0	106

appeared the Hawks and Marysville, by now perennial playoff rivals, would meet for a third straight year.

The Vikings beat Harrison 22-6 two years ago, and the Hawks won the rematch 35-20 last year.

"WE THOUGHT Marysville might be in there, but we knew Avondale had done well against them last year," Herrington said. "So it was not as big a surprise to me as it might have been to some people."

"Now we're playing a team that's

better than Marysville, so that makes it even harder."

Of particular concern was Avondale's success at shutting down a potent Mount Morris passing attack, which happens to be Harrison's main offensive weapon, too.

The Rhinos gave up a 41-yard touchdown pass on the first play of the game, but they stopped the Panthers after that and rallied for a 21-7 halftime lead.

"Mount Morris only threw the ball, and Avondale was able to sit back and defend the pass," Herrington said. "Against Avondale, we'll have to be balanced. So we're going to run (quarterback) Mill (Coleman) left or right."

Herrington wasn't understating Coleman's importance as a runner, either. He broke up a tough Riverview defense when he scrambled and rushed for 158 yards and two TDs.

BECAUSE OF THAT, the Hawks were able to keep the Panthers honest and mix in the pass. Coleman also threw for 124 yards and two TDs, bringing his respective season totals to 1,595 and 24. He has completed 59 percent of his passes (83 of 141).

Coleman's big day as a ball carrier also made him Harrison's leading rusher. He has 432 yards and seven TDs on 48 attempts.

Tailback Joe George, who is second with 321 yards and seven TDs, left the Riverview game with a mild concussion but is expected to play Saturday and split time with Matt Conley again.

In contrast to Avondale's success at defending Mount Morris, Coleman had one of his finest games in Atwood Stadium a year ago when the Hawks rallied from a 20-7 deficit to beat Marysville.

He is 15-of-42 passing that afternoon for 238 yards and two TDs, and he did the same as he did against Riverview, leading the Hawks with 94 yards and one TD rushing.

"We'd like to establish the run, so they can't just sit back there against

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RANDY BORST/staff photographer

Matt Conley looks for running room in Harrison's 35-0 regional playoff victory over Riverview last week. The state semifinals and a Saturday meeting with Auburn Hills Avondale are next for the Hawks.

QB duel key to CC-Eisenhower game

By Brad Emmons
staff writer

It's high school football's version of "Dueling Banjos."

Which quarterback will pick apart the opposing defense with more regularity and play a victory tune en route to the Class A finals at the Pontiac Silverdome?

Saturday's state semifinal battle of the unbeaten at Westland John Glenn (kickoff 1:30 p.m.) pits a pair of outstanding signal callers in Redford Catholic Central's Scott Hauncher and Ulica Eisenhower's Joel Youngblood.

Hauncher, a 6-foot-4, 190-pound senior; is

described by Eisenhower coach Bob Lantry as "a guy who gets the job done."

"When he passes, he's very accurate," said the Eisenhower coach. "He fits the power-type game perfectly. He doesn't have to do it all because they have others they can go to. They don't have a weak spot at all on offense."

Hauncher hasn't put big numbers on the board, but he is by far the most successful throwing quarterback Tom Mach has had in his 12 years as coach.

"WE'VE NEVER thrown for over 1,000 yards since I've been here," chuckles Mach, who is noted for his conservative offensive approach. "But with Scott he puts us in the



position to run and throw. He gives us an advantage."

Through 11 games, Hauncher has completed 53 percent of his passes (78-of-147 for 1,076 yards). Last week, during the first half against Westland John Glenn in the Region III championship, Hauncher completed 8 of 10 for 104 yards and two touchdowns en route to a 21-6 victory.

Mach said that last year's playoff experience helped Hauncher immensely.

"He started 13 games last year when most kids got in only nine," said the CC coach.

"And once the playoffs started, he started coming into his own. It helped his confidence and he's gotten better each game."

"This year we have good receivers and everything seems to be falling. We seem to have the key elements. We've got more than one person that can catch and run."

Hauncher, a Plymouth native, leads by example. He carries a 4.2 grade-point average. His conduct on and off the field is exemplary.

"HE'S SMART and intelligent," Mach said. "He does a great job of leading. He has

great buddle control. He's a great help when things get tough and tense. He just takes control. The team respects him. When he speaks, the team listens."

On the other side is Youngblood, a Terry Bradshaw-type who can strike fear in the opposition.

"Our scouts say he's the best quarterback they've seen all year," said Mach of the 6-1, 175-pound senior. "He's a rollout type. He runs the bootleg and has a strong arm. He can hit the out-pass from hashmark to hashmark."

"He can hurt you in a lot of ways. He's got quick feet and he's heady."

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Scribe beefs up for task of assessing area teams

By Brad Emmons
staff writer

THE HECK WITH those vegetarians.

If Cybill Shepherd thinks it's OK to eat beef, who should argue?

It may sound a little raw, but tonight the girls basketball season gets into the meat of things.

State district play begins in earnest this weekend for over 700 teams across Michigan trying to win coveted spots to the tournament finals, Dec. 9-10 at Grand Valley State.

Who is a cut above the rest? It's going to be a lean year for area teams.

Let's throw a little salt and tenderizer on the grill to see how things will taste the next three weeks.

PRIME RIB

Plymouth Canton (19-1): The Chiefs have a major hurdle to clear Saturday against neighbor Plymouth Salem at the Northville district. But it should be clear sailing all the way to the Class A quarterfinals if the Chiefs get past the Rhinos. Junior center Brian Fekko must provide strong inside play and a thin bench must answer the challenge. Put a little A-1 sauce on the club.



Brad Emmons

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FILET MIGNON

Livonia Ladywood (13-8): The Blazers have been up and down all season, but a tough schedule and a weak district (Southfield-Lathrup) should be enough to earn a spot in the Southfield regional, which is up for grabs. Senior guard Yvonne Barnes is the key.

Farmington Hills Mercy (8-12): The record is very deceiving as the Marlies have played one of the toughest schedules around. The Westland Central district is winnable, but the regional at Berkey is a different story. Waiting in the wings is Catholic League champion Birmingham Marian.

Wayne Memorial (17-3): One of the area's most improved teams, the Zebrae will host their own district, which should help them immensely. A lopsided loss to Trenton last week can't help Wayne's confidence. The Zebrae will have to hit on all cylinders to get into the Southfield regional where they will most likely meet Taylor Center, a team they beat early in the season.

TOP SIRLOIN

Plymouth Salem (15-5): This could be the Rocks' shortest run ever. Coach Fred Thomann's team is capable of pulling off the upset over Canton, but they've been struggling to play. On a neutral floor (Northville) will help. Did Salem reach its peak too early?

RIBEYE

North Farmington (12-8): If the Raiders hit their shots, they could pull off an upset in the Westland Central district. North opens tonight against North Central, which turned back the Raiders 60-54 only four days earlier in the third place game in the Western Lakes Activities Association playoffs. North is capable.

Livonia Franklin (13-7): The Patriots have played the better teams tough down the stretch, but open Friday against host Wayne. Coach Dan Freeman's team, however, lacks tournament experience. But a victory over Wayne could land Franklin a district crown.

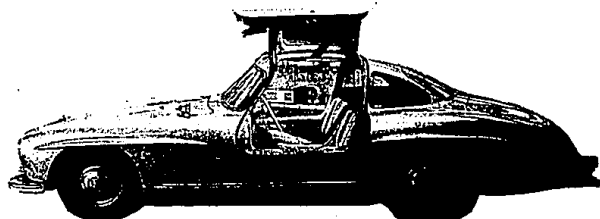
Garden City (11-9): The team plays well at home, but how about on the road? Kim Falkowski is a fierce rebounder and guard Kim Reith is capable of getting hot.

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