

Sports

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Marlins point short in Hoops Classic

By Dan O'Meara
Staff writer

Tracey Bloodworth had Farmington Hills Mercy's collective blood pressure going upward Saturday night in the first half of the Hoops Classic championship game.

But, in the second half, Mercy's pressure put the clamps on St. Joseph's Bloodworth and nearly stole the victory.

After a first-half shooting exhibition by the 5-foot-9 Bloodworth, the Marlins staged a furious fourth-quarter rally that fell just short of catching the Lady Bears, 42-41.

"Being the only Class B school here, this is a great win," St. Joseph coach Rick Bloodworth said. "We hope to come here and represent the west side of the state well. But we play all A schools, so it's nothing new."

Tracey Bloodworth, who was named the tournament's most valuable player, scored 22 of her 24 points, including four triples, in the first and second quarters as St. Joe built a 30-14 halftime lead.

"I KNEW SHE was an exceptional shooter," Mercy coach Larry Baker said, "but I must admit she put on a phenomenal three-point performance. I certainly didn't expect that in our gym with the kinds of defense we play."

Senior Jenny Clinton and Junior Carrie Walton, both of whom were instrumental in the second-half defense played by Mercy, were named to the all-tournament team as were Plymouth Canton center Susan Fero and St. Joe's Allison Remble.

After being virtually shot out of the game in the first half, the Marlins (2-3) held Bloodworth to two free throws in the last two quarters and made things happen with full-court pressure. Mercy used a zone defense with Walton shadowing Bloodworth.

"I only shot 4-5 times in the second half," Tracey said. "If we were going to score, I think we would have set more screens to open me up. We had a lead and decided we were going to hang on — and we barely did."

Leading 36-24 entering the fourth



RANDY BORST/staff photographer

Jenny Clinton played an outstanding floor game against Trenton.

"We have proven to ourselves we'll never be out of a contest this season. The tournament should prove to be valuable preparation for the league season."

— Larry Baker
Mercy basketball coach

period, St. Joe (3-0) was willing to work the clock and be patient at the offensive end, but Mercy's pressure in the backcourt felled that plan.

"I wasn't as concerned about the half-court part (and Tracey's lack of points) as I was the pressure," Rick said. "I knew (Mercy) had guts and wouldn't give up."

JOANNE STEPHENS, who came

basketball

off the bench to score seven key points, and Walton brought the Marlins within 38-33 with little more than three minutes to play when Mercy really began to apply the pressure.

The Marlins forced St. Joe into five turnovers for a one-minute span, and Clinton, who led Mercy with 10 points, made it 38-36 with a triple. The Marlins missed two shots before Liz Vernasco sank two free throws with 26 seconds left.

Mercy's Kathleen Gerick kept it a two-point difference, but Bloodworth got beyond the backcourt pressure on the inbounds play and fired ahead to Remble for an easy layup with :06 remaining, 42-38. Clinton hit another triple at the end to account for the final score.

"The kids on the bench helped to get some semblance of offense going," said Baker, who shuttled players in and out, "and they all helped in the second half. Jenny and Joanne were inspirational leaders out there."

Baker indicated the Marlins are beginning to realize their potential after two losses a week ago.

"I told the team it really exhibited its true character this week, both in the win (Thursday over Trenton) and today," he said. "We played with confidence when we needed it most."

"WE HAVE PROVEN to ourselves we'll never be out of a contest this season. The tournament should prove to be valuable preparation for the league season."

Rick Bloodworth added high-scoring halves are nothing new to Tracey, his daughter, but there was something special to her execution of textbook-perfect shots this night.

"She's done it before but maybe not at such a high level and against such a good team," he said.

Remble added 10 points for St. Joe, and Maureen Paulin and Walton chipped in six apiece for the Marlins.



RANDY BORST/staff photographer

Lee Albrecht of Mercy is crowded by Trenton's Brigitte Anderson in the first round of the Mercy Hoops Classic on Thursday night. The Mar-

lines whipped Trenton 35-22. See Page 2C for the game story.

Farmington ties No. 1 Spartans

Three of Farmington's five soccer games through Wednesday had ended in stalemates, but the latest was one the Falcons (1-1-3) could accept. Tim Shelton's goal with 25 minutes left in the game lifted Farmington to a 1-1 tie with defending Class A champion Livonia Stevenson, the No. 1-rated team in the state.

"In the first half, they had the wind and kinda shellshocked us," Falcons coach Cathy Cole said. "We controlled the game after that."

"It's nice to tie a No. 1-ranked team . . . It was a matter of getting some breaks and finally playing together."

— Cathy Cole
Farmington soccer coach

"I'm sure Stevenson doesn't think it played well. But we hadn't been playing to our potential, and this was definitely one of our better games."

"It's nice to tie a No. 1-ranked team," she added. "I knew we could do it, and I think the guys knew it. It was a matter of getting some breaks and finally playing together."

Following a scoreless first half and Stevenson's only goal, Shelton finished off a shot by teammate Mike Gammerrath.

"The ball came in from the side, and Tim just finished it," Cole said. "The keeper tried to get a hand on it, and Tim knocked it in."

Farmington goalkeeper Mike Sheehy made several key saves, including one on a penalty kick, and controlled the backfield, Cole said.

Rockets drive past North, 9-0

By Dan O'Meara
staff writer

On an afternoon marked by defense, Westland John Glenn's offense came alive late in the game Saturday to seal a 9-0 victory at North Farmington.

The outcome of this annual rivalry between Lakes Division foes puts the Rockets at 3-0, while the Raiders suffered their first loss after two wins.

Having taken a 3-0 lead on West Taylor's 32-yard field goal midway in the third quarter, Glenn punched out the only sustained drive of the game on its last possession.

The Rockets, overcoming a driving rain and sloppy field, went 62 yards in 12 plays as Shannon Layne scored the game's lone touchdown on a 1-yard dive with 1:45 remaining.

"The pass play got us out of a big hole," said Glenn coach Chuck Gordon of Eric Stover's 20-yard pass to David Ryan. "I don't know if it ignited us, but we seemed to play better from then on."

THE ROCKETS also converted key fourth-down plays on that drive and the one leading to Taylor's field goal.

On fourth and 2 at the North 16, fullback Alonso Jackson mired ahead for 3 yards. Glenn took advantage of a fumble recovery early in the third quarter to take a 3-0 lead, but the Raider defense was resilient as usual.

It took the Rockets seven plays to go from the North 20 to the 14, Layne converting a fourth-and-

1 situation along the way, but the Raiders minimized the damage.

As usual in such hard-fought affairs, the game turned on missed chances, of which both sides had their share.

After linebacker Rob Zeno, who led the North defense with 16 tackles and three quarterback sacks, recovered a fumble, the Raiders were at the Glenn 25 when Mark Johnston intercepted a Jon Kraus pass.

"We had made an audible call," North coach Jim O'Leary said. "They were going to double our outside people, and we made a tight call and the receiver didn't hear it."

"HE WAS SUPPOSED to run a streak (across the middle) and ran an out. If he'd heard it, it was there for the TD."

Gordon pointed to the interception as one of the big plays, because North has a "heckuva field goal kicker" in Mike Cowen. "Looking back, that was a big stop," he said.

After intercepting a Chris White pass late in the half, the Rockets had a scoring opportunity foiled. A personal-foul penalty put Glenn at the Raider 14, but White intercepted in the end zone with :53 to play.

"We should have capitalized," Gordon said. "You don't get down there too many times on North, and we were lucky that screw-up didn't come back to haunt us."

Beside the interceptions, the passing game — or rather the inability to pass — was a factor in the outcome, O'Leary said. Stover was 4-of-7 for

63 yards, Kraus 4-of-13 for 23.

"I hate the rain when you've got a little quarterback and you can't throw the ball," he said. "(Kraus) has small hands and can't throw when the ball is wet."

"I DON'T THINK they would have been able to win the ball game if they hadn't been able to throw, and I think we might have won the game if we had been able to throw."

The Raiders moved the ball well in the first quarter. White dashed 31 yards on a counter on North's first play, and the Raiders had four first downs in the opening period.

But the Rockets also got tough on defense, holding North to 108 yards in total offense. Glenn had 153 overall and outstruck the Raiders 95-63. Layne had 84 yards on 24 carries.

"They did some things we were not really prepared for, but we were able to make some adjustments," Gordon said. "They ran the one-back, and they put Chris White, in a lot of different positions."

O'Leary called it a typical North-Glenn game, featuring plenty of hard knocks.

"White took some tremendous shots; he might not walk for three days," he said, alluding to one pass play when the 6-foot-3 junior leaped and went head over heels after being hit. "But I'll bet Stover got hit more than he ever did."

The Rockets play at Walled Lake Central at 7:30 p.m. Friday, and North visits Farmington at 1 p.m. Saturday.

Granger one more cog in Hawk machine

By Steve Kowalski
staff writer

The first time Farmington Hills Harrison football coach John Herrington met Roy Granger, he had a hard time believing him.

"I had him in study hall last winter, and Roy told me he'd like to come out for the varsity," Herrington said.

"He was a freshman at the time, and I said 'Well, you can come out for my JV.' He said, 'But coach, I played varsity for (Detroit St. Martin) DePorres.'"

Herrington is glad he reconsidered, because Granger is making believers out of everyone.

THE 5-FOOT-8, 145-pound swingback scored two touchdowns as Harrison rolled to another rout, 48-7, on homecoming Saturday of Livonia Churchill.

The win keeps Harrison, the No. 1-rated Class B team, undefeated at 3-0, 1-0 in the Western Division of the Western Lakes Activities Association.

Granger caught a 26-yard touchdown pass

from Bill Coleman on Harrison's second series. Later in the first half he scored on a 23-yard reverse.

Granger caught three passes for 42 yards, and he also was instrumental defensively, lining up at cornerback.

The addition of Granger means Herrington doesn't have to play Coleman, his all-state quarterback, on defense.

"ROY'S GOT good quickness, and I was able to move (Scott) Ratson from cornerback to safety and get Mill out of there," Herrington said.

"His family lives in Farmington Hills, and I guess his father didn't feel like driving him every day to DePorres anymore, and I was glad."

The Hawks scored on five of their first seven possessions and led 35-7 at halftime. A light rain turned into a steady downpour after halftime, but by then the day was about over for Coleman, who completed 12 of 19 passes for 237 yards and three touchdowns.

It was a typical performance by Coleman, who afterward had a complaint to make.

football

And that's not typical.

"I thought it was supposed to be nice," said Coleman as he tried to separate himself from the wet uniform afterward. "I looked forward to a sunny homecoming."

"I'VE NEVER had one here. It hasn't always rained during the game on homecoming, but it's always at least rained later that night."

"But it's nice to win. Opposing teams can't buy on one guy. If they key on Ray, I can go to Mike (Saputo) or Scott (Ratson), or whoever."

The loss dropped Churchill to 0-3 overall, and it meant the end of the Chargers' murderers-row schedule. Churchill opened the season with a loss to Sterling Heights, an

East Side power, and last week lost to North Farmington. Friday won't be a breather either for Churchill because it travels to Plymouth Canton, another undefeated team.

"I TOLD the kids at halftime today that no one wants to play three in row like we did," Churchill coach Herb Osterland said. "But we had to do it."

"We just have to keep going. With the experience we gained, maybe this will make us a better football team."

Harrison outgained Churchill 304-94 in the first half and for the game, the Hawks held a 413-193 advantage.

Reserve back Gary Devine, who scored two Harrison TDs, led all rushers with 70 yards on 12 carries. Starter Matt Conley contributed 65 yards in 12 attempts.

Joe George caught three of Coleman's passes for 72 yards to tie Granger in the receiving department.

Harrison took a 31-0 lead before the game was nine minutes old on a 1-yard run by Conley. Granger's 26-yard TD reception and a 3-yard TD pass from Coleman to Ratson.

Churchill surprised Harrison late in the first quarter, scoring on a 23-yard halfback option pass from Mike Brooks to Trent Naumehoff. The extra point by Kurt Roth made the score 21-7.

GRANGER'S REVERSE put Harrison ahead 28-7, and Devine closed out the scoring in the first half with a 6-yard run.

Coleman's 53-yard TD pass in a steady rain to Ratson gave the Hawks a 42-7 lead in the third quarter. Devine finished the rout with a 4-yard TD run with 8:20 left in the game.

The Chargers juggled Tom Diaz and Mike Spaccorotella at quarterback, but the most effective passer was Brooks.

The junior halfback gained 64 yards on 20 carries, and he completed four of 10 passes for 92 yards — all coming on halfback options.

"We expected the halfback option, unfortunately, our secondary didn't," Herrington said. "There's no excuse to get beat on it deep like we did."

"Brooks is their best thrower, and I told them to be alert on it."