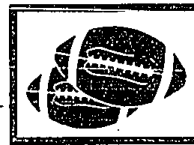


Sports

Dan O'Meara editor/591-2312



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Hawks repeat as division champions

By Dan O'Meara
staff writer

A bruised kidney kept Gary Devine out of Farmington Hills Harrison's previous football game, but he had too big a heart to be held back Friday night.

Devine produced a two-play sequence that secured an eighth consecutive Western Division championship for the Hawks, who outmuscled host Plymouth Canton in the first half and eventually won 28-7.

Harrison, the defending league champion, finishes 5-0 in the division and is 7-0 overall. The Chiefs, who had their seven-game winning streak — the longest in school history — snapped, are 4-1 and 6-1.

After Canton stunned the Hawks with an early-third quarter touchdown and recovered a Harrison fumble, Devine single-handedly caused a decisive switch in momentum.

The Chiefs, trailing 21-7, decided to go for it on fourth-and-1 at their 37-yard line after an offside penalty on the Hawks.

DEVINE, A 5-foot-5, 150-pound noseguard, shot into the Canton backfield and tackled Chris James for no gain. Then, on first down for Harrison, he ran 37 yards up the sideline for the clinching touchdown. "I just put my nose down and went right in there," Devine said. "I beat the center on the play. That pumped me up, and I got the ball and went all out."

Canton coach Bob Khoele didn't regret the decision to try for the first down but said he would have called a play other than sending James into the middle.

"WE SHOULD have gone outside more, because they're too strong; they react too well," he said of the Hawks.

football

"It was a turning point, but I don't know if it would have made a difference. They're just a helluva football team. I don't know who's going to beat them."

The Chiefs got new life when Jason Bielec intercepted a Mill Coleman pass on the second play of the third period and returned it 35 yards for Canton's only score.

Harrison also lost three fumbles in what was a frustrating second half for the state's No. 1-ranked Class B team. The Hawks will play at Westland John Glenn in a rematch of last year's Western Lakes Activities Association final at 7:30 p.m.

"WE MUST improve if we're going to challenge for the championship next week," Harrison coach John Herrington said.

"Other teams are improving, and I'm not too sure we have been. When other teams have scouted you a number of times, they defend you better than earlier in the year."

"Coach Khoele has done a super job with his team. I knew three years ago when he booted three of his best players before our game for missing a practice he was going to get things turned around."

While the Hawks didn't overwhelm Canton with the quick score in the first half, they were methodical and machine-like on offense, punching out three long scoring drives.

"We played the way I would have liked to see us play the whole game," Herrington said. "We moved the

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BILL DRESLER/staff photographer

Jon Schaeffer of Harrison watches as the football eludes his grasp in the end zone Friday night at Canton. Defending is defensive back Dave Cessante for the Chiefs. Mill Coleman

passed for one touchdown and ran for another in the first half. The Hawks won 28-7 to repeat as Western Division champs.

Davidson reigns over WLAA

By Brad Emons
staff writer

The old adage "there's a first time for everything" came true to life for the Plymouth Canton girls tennis team last week.

On Thursday, the Lady Chiefs outscored regular season dual meet champion Northville 21-16, to claim their first Western Lakes Activities Association title ever. The rain-delayed meet began Tuesday, but was not completed until Thursday at Livonia Stevenson.

See tournament results.

Technically, because of Northville's league-leading 11-0 dual meet record, the Mustangs earn a share of the title in the final positioning of the WLAA standings. The dual and league meet finishes are weighed equally — 50 percent each. (Canton's dual meet record was 10-1 with their only loss coming against Northville, 4-3.)

But in the WLAA tourney, Canton was the superior team, winning titles at Nos. 2, 3 and 4 singles.

"Our dual meet with Northville was close, but it was still disappointing to lose," said Canton coach Carol Michaels. "We faced them in the middle of the season and had a tough week because of all the rainouts. It was on a Friday and it was our fourth match of

tennis

this week. I think we were kind of tired, but I think Northville was in a similar situation, too."

CANTON CAME OUT on top in all three singles semifinal meetings against Northville, and then top seeds Sherri Bajer (No. 2), Alissa Huth (No. 3) and Michelle Sparkman (No. 4) all completed undefeated conference seasons by winning their respective flights.

"We were very happy with the draw," Michaels said. "But beating Northville in all three of those matches caused the point turnaround. It would have been much tougher had we not won those matches."

Bajer grabbed her individual crown by defeating Farmington's Harrison's Lisa Temple, 7-5, 6-4; Huth took out Plymouth Salem's Shilakh Kapila, 6-4, 6-1; and Sparkman downed Salem's Tracy Anderson, 1-6, 6-1, 6-1.

The Lady Chiefs also got a lift at No. 1 singles when unseeded Tanya Bowsman upset

No. 2 seed Stephanie Geelhood of Walled Lake Central in the quarterfinals, 6-3, 6-3.

"That was a nice win and it certainly helped," Michaels said.

Canton's No. 1 doubles team of Leanne Gurachak and Denise Gildo also pulled off a surprise, knocking off the No. 1 seeds from Central in the semifinals, Dee Geelhood and Marga Strobel, 6-0, 7-6.

But Livonia Stevenson's Amy Snow and Courtney Richa grabbed the No. 1 doubles crown with a 1-6, 6-3, 6-2 win over the Canton duo.

"OUR NO. 1 doubles team lost to Central before, but they just kept getting better and better as the season went along," said the Canton coach.

Heather Kaye and Resham Batra of Canton reached the semifinals at No. 2 doubles, as did the No. 3 team of Reetika Aulakh and Parikh Viraj.

"Everybody improved," Michaels said. "All four of our singles players are seniors. Both Sherri (Bajer) and Alissa (Huth) won the conference at No. 2 doubles together and as freshmen they were on our only team ever to qualify for the state meet. They've been motivated ever since. They've been the leaders of this team."

The individual leader of the tournament was junior Kori Davidson of Harrison, who lost only four games in three matches en route to the No. 1 singles title.

Davidson, a nationally-ranked U.S. junior player, defeated Livonia Franklin sophomore Tanya Berner in the finals, 6-1, 6-2.

Northville's Tricia Tomminia and Rebecca Bellamy, the top seeds, took the No. 2 doubles crown with a 7-6, 6-3 triumph over Stevenson's Sue Bell and Lori Bailey, 7-6, 6-3. The Mustangs also added their second title at No. 3 doubles when top seeds Julie Howard and Merilyn Millgard outlasted Livonia Churchill's Kathy Wira and Jenny Flanagan.

HARRISON AND STEVENSON tied for third in the league meet with 12 points each, while Salem was a distant fifth with 10.

"We both finished third (Harrison and Stevenson) and we both feel good about it," said Stevenson coach George Croll. "We always do well in doubles because we have depth. But Harrison is going to be really good next year. They have four or five freshmen in their lineup right now to go along with Davidson."

But this season, it's Plymouth Canton's turn to shine.

Michael's summed it up best about the three-day meet: "I was very pleased."



SHARON LAMIEUX/staff photographer

Kori Davidson retained her No. 1 singles title.

Western takes title; Falcons finish 5th

By C.J. Rieck
staff writer

There was very little else Walled Lake Western golf coach Scott Street could have asked of his team.

"I was hoping we would shoot around 400, but it was kind of windy," said Street voicing his only complaint.

Everything else Street sought as a goal was accomplished Wednesday when the Warriors captured the Western Lakes Activities Association championship at Huron Meadows Golf Course in Ypsilanti. They finished with a team-total of 405 strokes, three better than runner-up Livonia Churchill (408).

Next in line was Plymouth Canton with 414, followed by Northville (423), Farmington (428), Livonia Stevenson (432), Walled Lake Central and Plymouth Salem (435 each), North Farmington (450), Westland John Glenn (461), Livonia Franklin (469) and Farmington Harrison (480).

WHAT STREET found nearly as

golf

pleasing as capturing the team title was senior Chris Sobieck's claiming medalist honors. Sobieck, the medalist at last year's Class A regional, shot a two-over par 75 to shade Churchill's Bill Durham by a stroke.

"It was really good to see him go out that way," said Street of Sobieck. "I was real happy he went out with a win."

Of course, Sobieck's performance would have meant little without a team championship to go with it. And that was accomplished because, as Street described it, "The whole team plays as a team, not as individuals."

Two other Warriors placed among the top six. Chris Schneider finished fifth with a 79 and Karl Schneider tied Canton's Rod Jesena and Churchill's Colin Gallagher at 80. Western's other two scorers were

Dave Pozniak, 83, and Troy Fairbanks, 89.

THE CHARGERS also placed three golfers among the low 15 scorers. Joining Durham and Gallagher was Mike Migola, whose 82 tied him for 10th with five others. Churchill's other scorers were Sieve Paraszewicz at 83 and Jason Fournier at 88.

Five golfers shot under 80 and were named to the all-WLAA team: Sobieck, Durham, Schneider and Northville's Jason Sherman (77) and Chris Lemmon (78).

The next 10 finishers were all-division selections: Sinclair, Jesena, Gallagher and Migola, and Franklin's Greg Kerr (81), Canton's Geoff Allen (82), Salem's Dan Alcock (82), Central's Aaron Mason (82) and Stevenson's Brian Ransom and Mark Peterson (both 83).

Other low scorers were Jason Buba for Farmington with an 83; Rob Wendt for North Farmington with an 85; Matt Wilson for John Glenn with an 85; and Tim Story for Harrison with an 87.

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