

## Pirates no pushover for top-rated Hawks

By Bob Stebbins  
staff writer

The road to the Silverdome is going to be a tougher one to travel this year for the Farmington Hills Harrison football team.

The Hawks took the first step Saturday with a hard-fought, 23-7 victory over Riverview in a Class B playoff game at Harrison.

The game was closer than the final score might indicate as the Pirates had the ball and an opportunity to score the tying touchdown with just over three minutes to play.

Trailing 14-7, Riverview got the ball on its own 21-yard line with 3:08 remaining in the fourth quarter.

On first down, the game's most important play took place. Pirate receiver Brett McCartney got open at the Hawks' 40 but dropped a well-thrown pass from quarterback Scott Czapke.

Harrison defensive back Scott Itatos provided tight coverage on the play, and the Riverview coaches felt it might have been too tight.

"(Itatos) had his back to the receiver," Riverview coach Don Lessner said. "The guys in the box thought it was interference. We would have had the ball on their 35 with three minutes left."

Hawks' coach John Herrington saw it differently, stating "I didn't think it was (interference)."

Harrison led the win two plays later when defensive end Matt Sperry intercepted a Czapke pass and returned it 21 yards for a touchdown with 2:39 left. Tackle Blazo Sarevich caused the miscue by hitting Czapke just as he released the ball.

Harrison completed the scoring with 1:26 remaining when Sarevich sacked Czapke for a safety. Sarevich was the star defensively for Harrison, compiling 13 solo tackles and assisting on two others.

The entire Hawk defense dominated all game long, holding the visitors to 122 yards in total offense. The defense was particularly stingy against the run, limiting the ground-oriented Pirates to 13 yards on 28 carries.

"We couldn't run at all," Lessner said.

Harrison, however, used its running game to jump out to an early lead. The Hawks took the opening kickoff and drove 91 yards for a score, with 52 of the yards coming from the ground game.

Quarterback Mill Coleman completed the march by running it in from 38 yards out on a quarterback sweep. Steve Hill's extra point made it 7-0 with 10:21 left in the opening quarter.

Harrison controlled the remainder of the half, outgaining the Pirates 229-24 but was unable to put any more points on the board. A strong, gusting wind and an attacking Riverview defense kept the high-scoring Hawks off the scoreboard.

Riverview often brought eight men to the line of scrimmage and played a great deal of man-to-man coverage in the secondary. The Pirates switched defensive looks throughout the game but did not get away from what they usually run.

"We didn't change anything defensively," Lessner said. "We played some man; we played some zone. It really doesn't phase (Coleman) at all. He is a phenomenal passer."

Herrington thought playing man-to-man coverage was an intelligent idea.

"It is smart playing man in conditions like this," he said. "You don't have to take many chances getting beat deep because the ball floats when you do get deep."

The Hawks increased their lead on their first possession of the second half, driving 63 yards on seven plays to move the score to 14-0 with 6:03 left in the third quarter. Gary Devine culminated the drive by sweeping into the end zone around left end from six yards out.

Down 14 points and unable to run the football, Riverview resorted to the passing game and the change was somewhat effective.

Helped along by a personal foul penalty after the drive appeared stopped, the Pirates moved the ball from their 46 down to the Harrison 4. However, an illegal procedure penalty and a quarterback sack by Crea Cove stymied the Pirates, and Riverview turned the ball over on downs at the 18.

On its next possession, Riverview finally got on the scoreboard on a 6-yard run by Darren Donathan. The touchdown drive took only four plays, the key one being a 41-yard, halfback-option pass from Kevin Jenkins to McCartney.

The resulting extra point made the score 14-7 with 6:43 left in the fourth quarter and set up the exciting finish.

Harrison rushed for 222 yards during the game, including 113 on 14 carries by Coleman. Tailback Matt Conley chipped in 89 yards on 16 attempts. Through the air, Coleman was 10-of-18 for 116 yards and two interceptions.

Joe George (10 tackles), Devine (10) and Steve Hill (9) all had big days defensively for the Hawks.

Lessner was impressed by the team that knocked his club out of the playoffs for the second straight year, but he would not say whether this year's version is better than last season's club.

"John (Herrington) does a great job with this team," he said. "Coleman's better than he was a year ago, but I can't say (about the team) because I've only seen them this one time."

The Hawks will get a chance to continue to prove their mettle next Saturday when they take on Allen Park in a second-round game.



Harrison quarterback Mill Coleman breaks a view. Coleman led the Hawks to victory, rushing for 113 yards on 14 carries.

## Raiders unbeaten; Falcons set records

North Farmington completed an unbeaten dual-meet season in girls swimming Thursday with its 125-57 victory over visiting Westland John Glenn.

The Raiders won the Lakes Division championship with a 5-0 record and finished with a 9-0 overall state.

"We're very happy about that," North coach Pat Duthie said of the perfect season. "The girls at North have never done that, and it comes on the heels of the boys doing that last year."

"The last couple seasons have been very nice. The kids deserve what they've accomplished this sea-

son, because they've worked very hard for it."

The Raiders also will be considered the favorite to win the Western Lakes Activities Association meet later this week. Preliminaries are Wednesday, diving Thursday and finals Friday at Plymouth Salem.

"It puts the pressure on," Duthie said. "But it's time to swim fast, so we'll see what we can do. The competition will be keen; it always is."

Kerry Doran and Christie Duthie were on both winning relay teams Thursday and also won individual events.

Kristen Celko, Doran, Duthie and Karrie Kranz won the medley relay

in 1:59.6, and Carrie Worthen, Doran, Amy Duthie and Christie Duthie completed the freestyle relay in 3:59.22.

Christie Duthie later won the 500 freestyle in 5:19.58, and Doran captured first place in the backstroke at 1:07.67.

Celko and Kranz had individual wins, too. Celko won the individual medley (2:33.88) and Kranz the breaststroke (1:18.43).

In other events, North's Julianne Martey was first in the 50 freestyle (27.10), Michelle Starrs won the diving with 173.75 points and Anna Palmer won the butterfly (1:09.95).

Glenn swimmers won the 200 and 100 freestyles. Dawn Wensko swam 2:12.94 in the former and Laurie Trosen 1:01.61 in the latter.

FARMINGTON SWIMMERS set two school records and qualified both relays for the state meet Thursday despite losing 100-71 to host Plymouth Salem.

Tanya Slicker posted a record 232.45 points to win the diving, and Katie Hohl swam 54.90 to break Kim Pogue's record (set in 1985) in the 100 freestyle. Hohl also was on both relay teams.

Hohl, Missy Kendall, Nicole Geratowski and Jill Hawkins won the

medley relay in 1:59.56, and it was Hohl, Kendall, Hawkins and Laura Hryczuk winning the freestyle relay in 3:59.87.

"We had some outstanding performances," Farmington coach Ross Bandy said. "I'm just thrilled to death. The ones who've been loyal over the last four years are reaping the rewards."

"It was the last shot for the 200 medley relay to qualify. I expected it of the freestyle relay; it was just a matter of time."

Kendall and Hawkins also had individual victories. Kendall won the butterfly with a 1:06.48 time and Hawkins the 50 freestyle in 26.65.

Salem won five individual events, including Cheri Vincent's school-record swim in the 100 backstroke. She broke her own record with a 1:03.27 time.

Julie Hickey and Kristen Stackpoole helped the Rocks early in the meet with victories in the 200 freestyle and individual medley. Hickey went 2:10.49 in the former and Stackpoole 2:26.60 in the latter.

Jane Seidelman and Megan Andrews added two more wins for Salem later in the meet. Seidelman swam the 500 freestyle in 5:59.6 and Andrews the breaststroke in 1:16.67.



JOHN STORME/Staff photographer

Vikki Seamons (left) of North Farmington has averaged 11½ rebounds in recent games and was a factor on the boards in North's 44-38 victory Thursday.

## Dynamic duo paces North

By Dan O'Meara  
staff writer

Trying to prevent Eve Claar and Kim Gurecki from scoring points is trying to do the impossible.

That's why North Farmington is 15-3 this year and in the semifinals of the Western Lakes Activities Association girls basketball tournament.

Claar and Gurecki combined for 37 points Thursday as the Raiders trounced host Walled Lake Western 44-38 in the first round.

"I've seen every top team in the county, and they have the best backcourt in the county," Western coach Bill St. John said. "I don't think anybody touches them in what they do for their team."

"Everybody knows they're going to be 85 percent of their total output, but you can't stop them."

The Raiders, co-champions of the Lakes Division, will play host to Western Division winner Plymouth Canton at 7:30 p.m. Tuesday. The final is scheduled for 8 p.m. Saturday at Plymouth Salem.

CLAAR SCORED a game-high 21 points, which included a pair of triples, and Gurecki, who made five free throws at the end to seal the victory, 16. Center Vikki Seamons added five points.

Laura Call had 10 points to lead the Warriors, 10-7. April Blanton added eight points, Marsha Kosmatka and Holly Miller six apiece.

Every opposing team knows Gurecki, a 6-foot-2 senior, and Claar,



a 5-foot-7 junior, are going to take the majority of shots and North is going to sink or swim on their offense. But defending two players isn't as easy as it might seem, as their combined 35 points-per-game average attests.

"We've seen every defense imaginable this year, but the kids just get the job done," North coach Greg Capling said.

"Kim Gurecki has had one hellacious year for us. She's done everything a coach could ask. She leads the team in steals, assists and is 10th in the county in scoring."

The one thing Gurecki, who averages 15½ points, hadn't done well of late was shoot free throws, making 30 percent in the previous four games, Capling said. But she was 6-of-8 Thursday and 5-of-6 in the final minute, giving the Raiders their biggest lead of the night at 44-34 with 37 seconds remaining.

St. John, anticipating another big night by Gurecki and Claar, figured the Warriors could win if they held those two under 40 points and shot 40 percent themselves. Western met the first criteria but hit less than 35 percent of its field-goal attempts.

"WE MISSED 15 layups, what are you going to do?" St. John said, referring to the poor percentage. "You

just don't do that against North Farmington."

"We did what we wanted to (in holding the North duo under 40) and we didn't let the others beat us, but we missed some shots."

North jumped in front 6-0 when the diminutive Gurecki dodged between the taller Western defenders for a pair of layups. Historically, that was crucial to the Raiders having a good game, according to Capling.

"We needed to get off to a good start," he said. "It's been like that all year. In the three games we lost, we got off to an extremely slow start."

"(The layups) opened things up. She's extremely quick and she knifes through the defense. It's designed for her and if it's open she goes for it."

Claar's outside shooting gave the Raiders an 18-12 lead in the second quarter, but Western rallied behind the scoring of Call, Miller and Blanton.

The Warriors were within four, 30-26, at the end of three quarters, and the action really heated up when Miller sank a layup to make it 35-34 midway in the final period.

NORTH, WHICH never trailed, went up 39-34 on Claar's layup and free throw, and the Raiders spread the floor and forced Western to foul, leading to Gurecki's clinching free throws.

While Gurecki and Claar do most of the scoring, the Raiders have not really played well in other phases

of the game, also.

"All the other kids have played extremely well for me and have accepted their roles on the team," Capling said. "They know who's going to do the scoring, who's going to play the defense, who's going to get the rebounds."

"A big key to our success has been defense," he added. "We've only given up 36 points a game, and not being a big team that's exceptional."

The smaller Raiders rebounded surprisingly well against their bigger opponent. Seamons, a 5-foot-10 senior who has averaged 11½ rebounds in the last four games, and Amy Post were leaders in that regard, and Claar and Gurecki grabbed their share of rebounds, too.

"They were cheating on our No. 2 guard and dared us to shoot," St. John said. "They were positioning to rebound before the shot was even taken."

"They totally bored my kids out. It's not athletic ability as much as it is positioning. Short people can rebound as long as they're smart."

With the WLA title no longer a possibility, the Warriors are looking ahead to the district tournament, according to St. John.

"Our goal at the beginning of the season was the district and regional," he said. "We've won two districts in a row, and our goal this year is to go to the regional final. It's how you finish, not how you start."