

Sports

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(F10)

Hawks face DCD in final

By Neal Zipser
Staff writer

In last year's opening round of the Class B boys basketball district playoffs, Redford Thurston embarrassed Farmington Hills Harrison, 67-46. The Hawks vowed not to let history repeat itself.

With 143 remaining in the third quarter of Tuesday's district game at Birmingham Country Day, Harrison held a comfortable 21-point lead over Detroit Renaissance and it looked like the Hawks' newest fate was sealed.

But the Phoenix fought back to tie the game at 65 with 2:37 to play before the Hawks put it away by closing with a 12-5 run and securing a 77-70 victory.

"I was definitely worried," Harrison coach Mike Teachman said. "They caught up to tie it, and you could see panic in our eyes. The question was 'Where did it come from?' We stopped playing and it was like we were just standing around."

Barring a monumental upset in Wednesday night's Country Day-Thurston game, the Hawks will face the Yellow Jackets in Friday's district final. Tipoff is at 7:30 p.m.

COUNTRY DAY, ranked No. 1 in Class B by 18-2 overall and has arguably the nation's top player in Chris Webber.

"(Webber) is the best in the nation, but they also have a good inside player and a Division I guard (Iyapo Montgomery, who has signed with the University of Detroit)," Teachman said.

The Hawks had to first beat the 1-18 Phoenix, who consist of all underclassmen and finished last in the rugged Public School League.

"I knew coming in they were better (than their record)," Teachman said. "They are in the PSL and there is no tougher league than that one."

Harrison (15-6) led most of the game and a 9-0 run, followed later by a 10-0 run, gave the Hawks a commanding 57-36 lead late in the third quarter. Renaissance scored the final 11 points of the quarter and scored 13 of the fourth quarter's first 17 points to get back into the game.

Junior Mosli Blackwell's three pointer tied the game at 61-61 with



Andy Smith tries to go over Renaissance's Chris Fields. Smith scored a game-high 30 points for the Hawks.

4:21 remaining. Senior Andrew Smith found Andy Fitzpatrick open underneath the basket for a layup, and the senior gave Harrison a two-point lead. The Phoenix countered with a layup, but the Hawks regained the lead on layup by senior Blazo Sarcevic.

WITH 2:37 remaining, junior Chris Fields tied the score when he tipped down an offensive rebound and laid

it back in for the 66-65 tie. Smith found an open Jeremy Teachman, and the sophomore banked in a shot to give Harrison the lead it never relinquished. Junior Paul Gilyevs added a free throw, but Blackwell's shot the lead to one with a driving layup. Smith extended the lead to three with a finger roll and the Hawks then nailed seven of eight free throws to increase the lead to 77-67. Blackwell nailed a triple for the

Game's final points

Harrison converted 29 of 38 (76 percent) from the free-throw line. Renaissance made only seven of 19 (37 percent).

"We work on our free-throw shooting and tonight we got the right people to the line," Teachman said. "When you miss free throws, it always hurts." Phoenix coach James Furcron said "I have trouble getting them to concentrate on them in practice and it obviously hurt tonight."

SMITH WAS 19-of-12 at the stripe and led all scorers with 30 points, 20 coming in the first half.

"I came out more aggressive, because this is my senior year and any game could be my last," Smith said. "There's a lot of pressure knowing that if you lose, you go home. For a year we had to do that after we lost in the district to Thurston."

Renaissance led 15-14 at the end of the first quarter. The Phoenix full-court press mixed with stop-and-go offense, making it difficult for Harrison to get into a groove.

Smith scored 10 points in the second half, including a triple, and Harrison's victory was a 20-point margin. The Hawks scored the first half on a 20-point run and led 36-26 at halftime.

Teachman believed the defense rebounding of Fitzpatrick was a key to the victory. Fitzpatrick collected a game-high 14 rebounds and added nine points. Smith tore down 10 boards and Gilyevs added 16 points and 10 rebounds. Jeremy Teachman contributed 12 points off the bench, including four of Harrison's final seven free throws.

Blackwell scored a team-high 26 points and nailed four three-pointers. Fields added 17 points and 13 rebounds for Renaissance.

FURCRON ADMITTED he knew little about Harrison and questioned some of his strategy.

"I knew nothing about them," Furcron said. "My assistant coach did see them once. We played hard but thought the coaching was worse than the playing."

Furcron said he made a mistake by playing his two young guards for most of the game. The tandem was just called up from the junior varsity squad.



Dan Hight of Harrison has a rough landing after being tripped by Mosli Blackwell in Tuesday's district basketball game.

Shamrocks reign in Catholic League

Redford Catholic Central's swimming team prepped itself for Friday's Class A meet with a Catholic League championship Sunday at Oakland University.

The Shamrocks, who were 10-1 in dual meets during the regular season, used their superior depth, used their three relay championships and 427 1/2 points.

Birmingham Brother Rice had five winners but took second place with 364 1/2 points, followed by the University of Detroit Jesuit, 206; Warren De La Salle, 105; and Harper Woods Notre Dame, 100.

CC is No. 2-ranked behind Bloomfield

Hills Andover and first-year coach Pete Leonhardt believes the Shamrocks are capable of holding that spot at Friday and Saturday's Class A meet at the University of Michigan.

The Don Canham Natatorium is the site of the Class A meet, which begins at 2 p.m. Friday. The finals will begin at 2 p.m. Saturday. Tickets to Friday's semifinal round action cost \$3 and Saturday's final round cost \$4.

"I'M VERY EXCITED about it," Leonhardt said. "Andover has all the studs and we've got the depth. We'll take it from

swimming

there and see what happens. I'll be very happy if we hold on and get second in the state."

As for winning, the Catholic League Leonhardt called "depth and relay strength the key."

"Brother Rice is a well-coached, fine team, but we've got a few more guys than they do," Leonhardt said. "It was an event

we never had lots of state qualifying times were made."

Troy Shurtz was the leader for CC, winning the 200-yard individual medley in 2:02.20 and the 500-yard freestyle in 4:56.56. Mike Hoelien was the Shamrocks' other individual champion, taking the 100-yard backstroke in 1:15.45.

CC won all three relays.

Hoelien, Devin Fekky, Phumle and Randy Fekky won the 200 medley relay in 2:42.29. Alan Abate, Brian Lynch, John Brocato and Shurtz won the 500 freestyle relay in 4:56.56, and the 400 free relay was won by Brian Dwyer, Alan and Ben

Shurtz.

CC FRESHMAN Steve Binkley failed to win an event, but he took consolation in the 100 butterfly in 1:14.17, just behind Brother Rice's Carlos Bustos, time 1:14.10.

The freshman swimmer said "the relay was stuck in it and got a headwind on time." Leonhardt said "Senior pride was what prevailed."

Other winners for Rice included Josh Gross, 200 freestyle in 4:49.00 and 100 freestyle in 48.16; Ken Eiler, 100 breaststroke in 1:02.81; and Dave Lee, 100 yard in 1:00.75 points.

Substitute coach leads Mercy to district crown

By Bill Parker
Staff writer

Peggy Spengler said she felt like (H)M basketball coach Steve Fisher. And she was certainly enjoying that feeling.

In her debut as head coach Saturday in the Wall-to-Lake Central volleyball district tournament, Spengler guided Farmington Hills Mercy to the championship.

Mercy head coach Tim DeBeliso was out of town during the district tournament, but returns to the top spot when the sixth-ranked Class A Marjins open regional play at 10 a.m. Saturday against LaPorte East at Birmingham Seaholm.

"I feel like Steve Fisher," said an elated Spengler, after the Marjins defeated Wall-to-Lake Central, 16-7, 15-6, in the finals to win their second straight district crown and third in the last four years. "Tim bailed out on me and went to his brother's wedding in Sacramento. But if I had to get dumped with a team, I'd like to be on this team. This is a great group of girls and I've coached them all on JV."

"We explained to the girls that no one was deserting them and that if they worked together as a team, everything would work out," added Spengler. "They really pulled together to do that. All year long we've

volleyball

been talking about senior leadership and they really understood. Today, the seniors did a job. Captain Maureen Paulin is a captain in every sense of the word."

PAULIN SPARKED the Marjins in the opening game against Central. The Vikings took an early 6-2 lead on a pair of ace serves by Cindy Muhl and back-to-back kills by Shannon Capstick and Stacie Barrett.

Mercy's Laurie DeMatia responded by serving three straight points to close the gap to 6-3. Moments later, Paulin added two ace serves to put Mercy ahead to stay, 7-6. The senior captain chipped in with two kills down the stretch, including the game-winner, as Mercy took a 1-0 lead in the best-of-three series.

Serving carried the Vikings early in the second game as Central took a 6-4 lead on two aces by Capstick and ace by Jacie Friend. But the Marjins answered when DeMatia and Karen Pinkerton scored three kills each as Mercy scored the final 11 points to win the match and the district championship.

ponship. Mercy enters regional play with a 47-5-2 overall record.

After the awards were handed out, but before any of the Mercy parents could snap a team picture, the team made a quick exit from the gymnasium.

"Coach (DeBeliso) is on the (pay) phone (in the lobby) and they all went out to talk to him," said Spengler, who added that DeBeliso had sent his team a telegram earlier in the day. "The telegram said that the girls should play with all their intensity. It said they should play with their hearts as well as their minds and that would lead to winning."

CENTRAL COACH Mike Lindstrom was disappointed with the loss, but credited Mercy's toughness. "I can't take anything away from Mercy," said Lindstrom, whose team finished the season at 26-9. "They hit everything. We had them rattled a little but they are a tough team. They were mentally tougher than we were. They didn't let anything bother them."

Central, which finished the tournament with three sophomores and three juniors on the court, started strong in both games of the finals, but faded down the stretch.

"We played hard in the first part, but we didn't keep it together,"

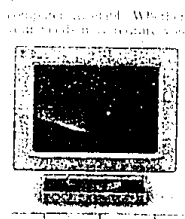
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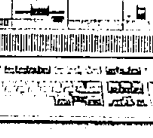
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