

# Sports

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Thursday, November 28, 1991 O&E

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## Hawk grid motto: Win 2 in the Dome

### Harrison seeks 5th state crown

By Dan O'Meara  
staff writer

A season that began in the Silverdome will end there Saturday for the Farmington Hills Harrison football team.

But that in itself won't be enough for the Hawks. Their objective is to make sure it ends the same way it began — with a Harrison victory.

The No. 1-rated Hawks will battle Cheboygan for the Class BB championship at 8 p.m. and attempt to complete their third 13-0 season in four years. The unranked Chiefs are 10-2.

A win would give Harrison, which opened in the Silverdome with a 32-0 victory over Class A finalist Birmingham Brother Rice, its fifth state title.

"It's something we've looked forward to since about two minutes after the Oxford game last year," senior quarterback Andy Fitzpatrick said.

"THIS GAME has been on our minds ever since we were freshmen," senior linebacker Mike Pesci said. "It's been our goal to win two in the Dome this year."

The Hawks will make their fourth finals appearance in the last five years and their seventh overall. Cheboygan has been in the playoffs six straight years but makes its first visit to the Silverdome. The Chiefs have been semifinalists three times, losing to eventual winner Dowagiac last year and Grand Rapids South Christian in 1984.

"We felt our program had won so many league titles, made the playoffs and performed so well that we had to start challenging for a state title," Cheboygan coach Jack Coon said. "You've got to think it for

it to happen."

Cheboygan finally got over the hump last week when it toppled unbeaten Three Rivers 35-26 in a semifinal game at Alma.

"We've been to the semis before and not crossed the street," Coon said. "Playing well in the semis was very important. We had 500 yards in total offense. To do that against a team like Three Rivers with good talent is when it's very gratifying."

WHILE THE Chiefs have not been as successful in the playoffs as Harrison, they have a winning tradition to rival that of the Hawks.

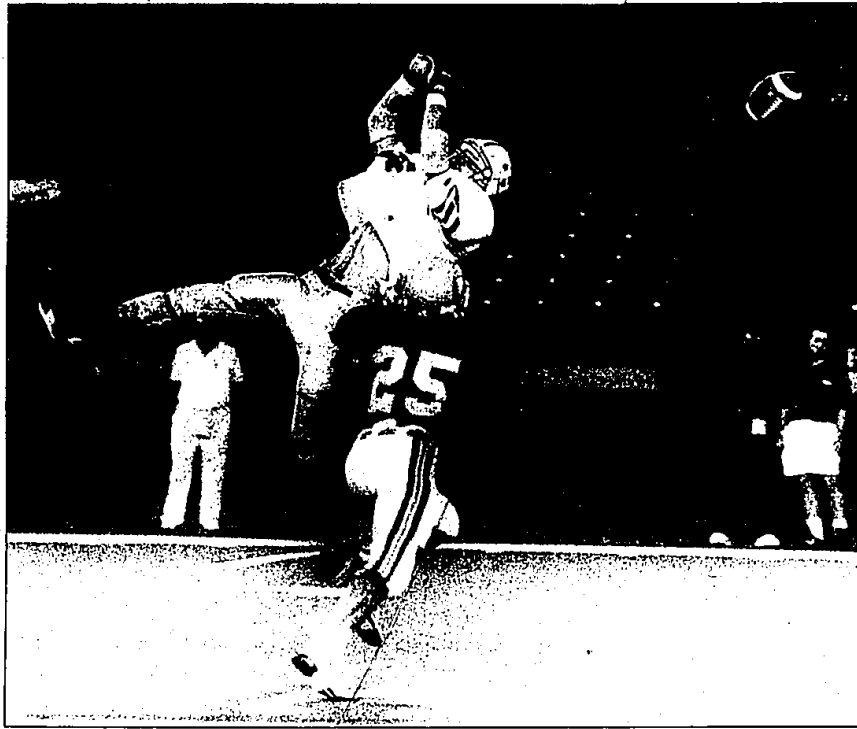
Under former coach Irv Sigler, Cheboygan was 52-2 and won 43 consecutive games from 1979 to 1982. The Chiefs have been a state-ranked team many times, compiling a 121-17 record since the late '70s, including a 37-8 mark the last four years under Coon.

"Everybody will build it up as David and Goliath — the big suburban power versus the little northern community — but we know differently," Harrison coach John Herrington said. His teams are 188-42-1 in 27 years at Harrison.

The Chiefs, champions of the Michigan Huron Shores Conference for the 12th time in 17 years, faced tough competition when they played Alpena and Upper Peninsula powers Escanaba, St. Ignace and Gladstone. They lost two games by just eight points.

The last time Harrison got to the Dome it was heavily favored against DeWitt but found itself in a difficult game, needing a long touchdown drive with Mill Coleman at quarterback in the last 1½ minutes to win 28-27.

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Greg Placopink, reaching for a pass in the season opener against Rice, is one of 22 Harrison seniors who will play his final game Saturday night in the Silverdome.

LEE A. EKSTROM/staff photographer

## Mercy rises to occasion to capture regional title

By Dan O'Meara  
staff writer

Coach Larry Baker issued a personal challenge to senior Kathleen Berrigan and another collectively to his Farmington Hills Mercy basketball team Tuesday night.

The Marlins responded positively with Berrigan leading her teammates to a convincing, 57-45 victory over rival Birmingham Marian in the Class A regional final at Southfield-Lathrup.

Mercy claimed its first regional championship in five years and its 11th overall.

The Marlins (16-8) will play either Detroit Murray-Wright or Dearborn Fordson in a quarterfinal game at

7:30 p.m. next Wednesday at Southfield High School.

Mercy fell just short of winning a regional title last year, losing 54-49 to Marian, and challenge No. 1 was to produce a different outcome. The teams split two games during the regular season with Marian winning the second 59-39.

"EVERY PLAYER in a Mercy uniform was thinking of last year and how it ended in this same gym," Baker said, "and we used that as a focal point for this game."

Baker exhorted his players to be aggressive and make things happen on the court, and the Marlins got key contributions from a number of individuals.

"All the kids showed character and confidence stepping up and taking the shot," he said. "At halftime I told them it was a players' game. You can't program what will happen. You have to respond to situations out on the floor."

Berrigan's impact on the game was evident as she scored a game-high 20 points and controlled the pace at point guard while playing opposite Marian's Stephanie Storen.

"I told Kathleen 'You've controlled every game in this tournament. I'm giving you a challenge. Are you going to control the game or is Stephanie?' " Baker said. "I'm not saying she beat Stephanie, but Kathleen did."

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JOHN STORMAZAND/staff photographer

Laure DeMattia struggles against Berkley's Kristian Famiano to get off a shot Monday. Mercy won the regional game 41-35. See story on Page 2B.

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