

Stevenson girls top Country Day in OT

By CHRIS MCCOSKY
STAFF WRITER

You have won 16 straight games, you are ranked No. 1 in your area and No. 9 in the state, your league tournament starts in two days and on this Tuesday you have no game on your schedule. Light practice, get home early, rest up for the tournament, right?

Wrong. If you are the Livonia Stevenson girls basketball team, you drive to Birmingham and take on one of the top Class C teams in the state, No. 5 Detroit Country Day.

"I told the girls before the game that I wanted them to fall behind by 10 points so we could practice coming back," joked Stevenson coach Wayne Henry, whose Spartans fell behind by 11 points in the third quarter before rallying to tie the game with 30 seconds left.

The Spartans, behind a 16-point performance by junior Mo Drabicki, eventually claimed their 17th straight victory in overtime, 40-43.

"Seriously, we played this game to prepare for the tournament and I think the girls learned something from this," Henry said. "I told them that from here on out, every game will be emotional. We have to be ready to play every night. We weren't ready to play tonight."

Stevenson shot a frigid 22 percent (5-for-23) in the first half, turned the ball over 10 times and fell behind, 25-16. Country Day led 31-20 with 4:41 left in the third quarter.

"Still, we hung in there, we fought back and we made the plays we had to make," Henry said. "We learned that we can come back and beat a quality team."

The Spartans, though, probably taught more lessons than

they learned Tuesday.

"We have a bunch of young kids and they made some mistakes," said Country Day coach Frank Orlando whose team is an impressive 14-2 despite starting two freshmen and a sophomore.

Two free throws by freshman guard Pam Bierzynski (nine points) gave Country Day a 41-39 lead with three minutes left. The Yellowjackets then stopped Stevenson in three straight possessions. But instead of protecting the ball and milking time off the clock, the young Yellowjackets continued to fire shots at the basket.

They had the ball and the one-point lead with 40 seconds left when Drabicki stripped the ball loose, drove the court, and drained a lunging right-handed jumper from three feet.

Country Day failed to get off a good shot in the final 24 seconds. Its top guns, seniors Shereese Mayo (11 points) and Cathy Hayes (10 points), never touched the ball.

In the overtime period, a free throw by Julie Martin and a basket by Lori Shingledecker (10 points) offset a pair of free throws by freshman Katie Kerr to give Stevenson a 44-33 lead with 1:14 left.

Stevenson showed the Yellowjackets how to protect a lead. They killed off the final 1:14. Country Day waited until there were just 10 seconds left before trying to foul the Spartans. Drabicki, who scored 11 of her game-high 16 points in the second half and overtime, put the game away.

"I think we gained some respect tonight," Orlando said. "We played a highly-ranked Class A team and we gave them everything they wanted."

Mumford faces CC in playoffs

By STEVE KOWALSKI
STAFF WRITER

The Detroit Mumford football team has a 350-pound tackle on one side of its offensive line and a 340-pound tackle on the other side.

"It's hard to get by them (seniors Lance Franklin and Brian Ferguson)," Mumford interim coach Brian Newton said. "That's one reason we pass a lot."

Of course it also helps to have a pair of big-play receivers, including senior Derrick Mason, who has 37 catches for 765 yards and seven touchdowns.

Mason will lead Mumford, 8-1 overall, against undefeated Redford Catholic Central in a Class AA Region III first-round playoff game at 1:30 p.m. Saturday at Pontiac's Wayne Stadium.

Mason, who ran a 4.39 40-yard dash time at Michigan's Camp

over the summer, has returned a punt 80 yards and a kickoff 85 yards for scores. Another threat is 5-7, 151-pound receiver Dion Patterson, who has 14 catches for 300 yards and four TDs.

CC, which has some of the strongest line play in the state, has outscored opponents 249-69 and allowed only 51.4 passing yards per game. The Shamrocks have 11 interceptions, including three by Brady Pankow, and seven fumble recoveries.

"Mason is the guy they should be looking for, but they've got nothing to be afraid of — I'm not afraid of them," Newton said. "They're a good team and you want to play the best."

CC defeated Mumford 20-6 in the second game of the regular season last year. The Shamrocks' running game figures to be stronger than the last two weeks

with tailback Freddie Taylor and fullback Jason Krueger both in the starting lineup.

Taylor leads the Shamrocks with 666 yards on 106 carries (6.3 average) and Krueger, who has fanned the last two weeks on offense with an ankle injury, has 490 yards (5.4 average).

"We're going to try to shut down their running game and try to make them pass," Newton said. "When they pass, they fake the power handoff and pass to the fullback in the flat. At least that's what they were doing the times I watched them."

CC quarterback Chris Barbara has completed 27-of-60 passes for 443 yards and five TDs but three of his passes were dropped in last week's 17-6 win over Detroit St. Martin DePorres in the Catholic League championship. Steve Borke leads CC with only six

catches for a 15.8 yard average.

"It was just one of those games where you have drops," Mach said. "We've been making some big plays on offense. The kids have done a good job in key situations."

Mumford's quarterback is Darrell Whealey, who joined the line-up two weeks ago against Pontiac Northern when starter Jimmy Hill went down with a season-ending collarbone injury. Whealey threw two touchdown passes to rally CC past Northern 22-18 and two more TD passes in last week's 20-14 win over Detroit Murray Wright.

Mumford's tailbacks, Raru Griffin and Derrick Wallace, have combined for 1,245 yards. The Mustangs are led on defense by middle linebacker Michael Jenkins (5-7, 212), who has three interceptions.

Linemen lead way for Calhoun, Wayne

By BRAD EMONS
STAFF WRITER

Wayne Memorial High has a good offensive line, just ask Bruce Calhoun.

The 6-foot-1, 190-pound senior tailback, who has amassed 1,225 yards this season, and rushed for 167 yards in 30 carries in the Zebras' season-ending 35-7 victory Friday over city rival Westland John Glenn, told reporters after wards: "I'm not anything without them."

Wayne coach Chuck Howton can't remember the last time his team rolled up over 300 yards on the ground, but it's something Howell (8-1) will have to contend with Friday as the Zebras (7-2) make their first-ever state football playoff appearance in Class A-Region II. (Game time is 7:30 p.m. at Howell.)

"We started to jell about the third game," said Howton, whose team opened the season with losses to Adrian and Monroe before

beating Trenton, 35-27. "They started to get some confidence, and success breeds success."

Things looked bleak, however, when the team's top offensive lineman, 5-10, 220-pound senior guard Derek Reeves went down with a serious knee injury in an 18-6 loss to Monroe.

"He was a guy who knocked people on their back, but all the sudden he's out for the season," recalls Howton.

But the others picked up the slack, led by left guard Anthony McGill, 6-1, 190-pound junior, and right tackle Ramzy Saleh, a 5-10, 260-pound senior.

Also emerging up front has been center Jacob Rathburn, a 6-foot, 220-pound junior, along with left tackle Mike Ramsey, a 6-foot, 230-pound senior.

"McGill has been one of our finer blockers," Howton said. "We've been blocking extremely well with that trio to the left side."

Right guard Kier Cook, a 5-6, 215-pound senior, has also reclaimed a starting job from a year ago. He joins tight end Jason Overton, a 6-4, 200-pound junior with pass catching ability, and wideout Jeremy Treppa, a 5-10, 160-pound senior, as blockers.

In the win over Glenn, quarterback Tim Mate added 59 yards, while fullbacks Reginald McCarthy and Mardian Forrest added 48 and 41, respectively. The week before in a 32-18 win over Southgate, Johnny Ballard

rushed for 117 yards.

"It's says something about your offensive line when two or three people run the ball well," Howton said.

Howton credits offensive line coach Doug Mac, a former Wayne High and Saginaw Valley State player, with the team's development up front.

"Doug was our defensive coordinator, but he stepped aside when we brought in Denny Healy," Howton said. "He's done a terrific job with those guys. He has fine rapport with those kids."

Shamrocks from page 1B

"The difference is amazing between last year and this year, to go into the playoffs on a winning note," Mach said. "I thought our defense, overall, was excellent. It put us in good position, stopped long drives and gave us the ball back. Our offense was adequate but we won two out of three areas — the defense and kicking game and that usually wins games."

CC went ahead 7-0 after taking the opening kickoff and driving 60 yards in eight plays for a TD. Tailback Freddie Taylor, who finished with 89 yards, gained 26 yards to bring the ball to the De-

Porres' 2 and quarterback Chris Barbara scored on the next play.

DePorres gave up the ball to CC after being stopped at its own 29 on fourth down and one in the second quarter. The Shamrocks failed to reach the end zone but with 9 minutes left in the half Borcher's field goal gave the Shamrocks a 10-0 lead.

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