

# SPORTS

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STEVE KOWALSKI

## Kickers caused game to change

**W**alt Bazylewicz, a long-time football coach in the Detroit Catholic League, has never been too fond of placekickers.

He didn't even need one when his coaching career began about 40 years ago at Detroit St. Thomas High School.

"When I first started coaching at Lodge Park on the east side, we didn't even have goal posts," he said.

To hear 'Baz' tell it, he could still do without goal posts.

As football modernized, Bazylewicz hesitated to accept field goals — especially from a converted soccer player who didn't play offense or defense.

Bazylewicz had no problem with a 200-pound lineman trying a point-after-touchdown kick but watching a guy half the size of his teammates

come in on fourth down to attempt a long field goal wasn't his idea of football.

"It's a foreign part of the game," said Bazylewicz, currently an assistant at the University of Detroit-Jesuit High School after spending the previous three seasons as Redford Bishop Borgess coach.

Now, you must understand 'Baz' is a great guy — as friendly as they come — he just comes from the old school and thinks it's a crime to see a defensive team do a good job, stop the offense on the 40, then have "some guy who is not even an athlete kick a 50-yard field goal."

(Baz probably doesn't watch too many soccer games because those guys are pretty good athletes.)

Bazylewicz began really turning on placekickers after hearing former Miami Dolphins kicker Garo Yepremian describe a winning kick on television.

"He said, 'I kick a de touchdown,'" Bazylewicz recalled. "He didn't even know it was called a field goal."

Redford Catholic Central's Adam Borchert speaks fluent English and is a good athlete, but like Yepremian, only handles the placekicking and kickoffs. His other after-school duty includes playing soccer for CC coach Phil LaJoy.

CC coach Tom Mach used to be against the idea of having a placekicker on loan from the school's soccer team.

But after watching Borchert make field goals to beat Troy and Utica Eisenhower in the playoffs, he's glad he changed his mind.

"I always felt if you weren't on the team, doing things you're supposed to every day, it would be hard to step in and kick it," Mach said. "But with time and age, you get a little smarter in some ways."

Kerry Zavagnin was the first soccer/football player Mach used, beginning in 1990. Mach was leery at first about having a part-time kicker.

"Not after I saw him kick," said Mach.

**Scouting Report update**

Bill Leitch, who owns a franchise for Scouting Report, a recruiting service that markets high school athletes to colleges, is trying to make up for the mess a colleague made.

Two months ago, I wrote a story about how Scouting Report's Jeff Silverman allegedly left Michigan after taking \$650 from several families in the area. Silverman, who according to sources is working for a weight-loss company in San Diego, Calif., left without coming close to fulfilling any of his obligations to clients.

"Every industry is going to have a 'bad apple,'" said Leitch, a 1974 Birmingham Brother Rice graduate who makes his home in Birmingham. "My objective and our industry's objective is to weed out these people. We don't need any unscrupulous, unethical operators."

Leitch bought a Scouting Report franchise in April, 1992. He has spent the last couple months trying to make up for Silverman's unannounced departure last spring by contacting some of Silverman's clients and following through with the original promises.

"I feel it's my responsibility to come to their rescue," Leitch said. "We're dealing with athletes who have devoted their lives to academics and athletics. Silverman has destroyed dreams and it's very disheartening to them. I felt it was terribly unethical and promptly contacted the media and all the families."

Leitch played on Rice's '74 Class A basketball championship team and he was a letterwinner for the University of Michigan in 1977 with Rickey Green and Phil Hubbard. He earned business and speech degrees at U-M and a master's degree in business administration at the University of Detroit.

"I can empathize with the thousands of non-blue chip athletes who are interested in playing college sports," Leitch said.

If interested in Scouting Report's service, call Leitch at 643-7466.



BY BRAD EMONS  
STAFF WRITER

Redford Catholic Central's football team carried out its season-long credo that "the magic is in the believing."

The Shamrocks willed their way to the school's third state championship, capping a 13-0 season Saturday with a spellbinding 21-20 victory over Saginaw Arthur Hill before 15,404 at the Pontiac Silverdome.

The game pitted two unbeaten teams that were ranked No. 1 and 2 all season long.

It was a virtual replay of last year's Class AA final, with a slightly different twist. It was only a year ago that Arthur Hill upset the Shamrocks, 13-12, but this time it was CC's turn for redemption.

"I've been in a lot of big games, but this is one of the greatest because it went back and forth," Catholic Central coach Tom Mach said. "We didn't want to go through the whole season like we did last year and not win the 13th game."

"Our team showed tremendous determination. They were down three times and wouldn't be beat."

Mach, noted over the years for his smash-mouth, ball-control style of offense, orchestrated a game plan that kept Arthur Hill's defense off balance.

The eventual game-winning touchdown came with 1:09 left in the third quarter and the Shamrocks staring at 20-14 deficit.

Junior Freddie Taylor, who had 90 yards in 19 carries on the day, surprised Arthur Hill when he completed a 37-yard halfback pass to Brady Pankow for a touchdown.

Adam Borchert drilled through the extra point, his third of the day, to give CC a one-point lead.

CC then dug in defensively, stopping the Lumberjacks' last-ditch drive in the final quarter.

With only five seconds remaining and Arthur Hill on the CC 47-yard line, senior quarterback Marvin Wright, who was brilliant in defeat with 286 yards total offense, zipped a pass over the middle to a wide-open Kedrick Redeemer just inside the 20.

The ball, partially deflected by CC's Ken Bys, bounced into the hands of Redeemer, who could not hang on for the grab despite a clear path to the end zone.

"I'm sure this is as difficult for me to be in this position as it was for Catholic Central last year," Arthur Hill coach Jim Zurick told the press gathering afterward. "We played it hard and we played it fair, but we got beat by one point and we have to accept it."

"They (CC) just hit the heck out of you. I was impressed with their offensive line. They left tread marks on our backs and at the end of the game our kids were dog-tired."

It would seem, however, that the Lumberjacks would never get tired running or throwing out of their option attack.

They racked up 393 total net yards to CC's 256.

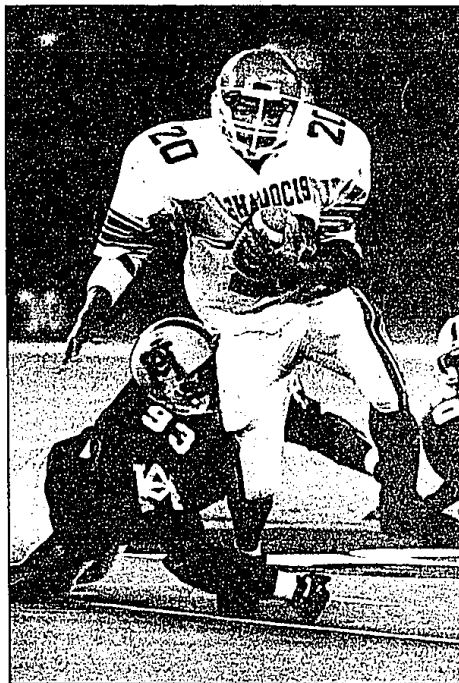
Speedy tailback Howard Foster, who led all rushers with 108 yards in 12 carries, scored on a perfect pitch from Wright from 5 yards out with 4:03 left in the opening quarter, capping an 80-yard, 11-play drive.

But Wright, a 6-foot-2, 197-pound senior, missed the extra point, a play that would loom large the rest of the way.

CC took a 7-6 lead early in the second quarter when Taylor broke the plane of the goal line from the 2 yards out. The drive covered 72 yards in 10 plays.

Wright, dangerous at both running (89 yards) and passing (170), then burst through the heart of the CC defense.

See CHAMPS, 3C



STAFF PHOTOS BY GUY WATKINS

**Fast Freddie:** CC tailback Fred Taylor rushed for 90 yards and a touchdown and also threw a touchdown pass in the state final.

## Forward pass key to CC victory



BY DAN O'MEARA  
STAFF WRITER

Brady Pankow contributes in many ways to the Redford Catholic Central football team, but rarely on offense.

His forte is defense, where he plays in the secondary, and he also returns punts and kickoffs.

Pankow added another role Saturday when he became a star wide receiver in the Class AA championship game at the Silverdome.

The Livonia senior caught three passes for 99 yards, including the game-tying touchdown, as the Shamrocks opened their offense and defeated Saginaw Arthur Hill 21-20.

"If you follow us, you know we don't throw too many passes," said Pankow, who understated the usually conservative CC offense.

"We were working on the pass all week and it hit me: Oh, my gosh, I have to be a receiver, too. I have to make something happen on offense."

CC coach Tom Mach told Pankow on Friday that he would catch two passes, but Pankow didn't anticipate the plays that kept CC in contention with the explosive Lumberjacks and eventually propelled it to victory.

Fred Taylor threw a 37-yard, half-back-option pass to Pankow, who got

**■ 'If you follow us, you know we don't throw too many passes.'**

*Brady Pankow  
CC all-purpose player*

behind the defense and ran the final 15 yards to the end zone. The TD tied the score at 20 late in the third quarter, and Adam Borchert kicked the decisive extra point.

"It was mostly adrenaline that helped me put in there," Pankow said. "I was so tired because I usually don't play offense so much."

The play was all the more amazing since Taylor threw the ball with a sore right shoulder, which he hurt when he landed on it diving for a pass in the Catholic League title game.

"(Mach) said he was going to try it," Taylor said, adding the Shamrocks had only practiced the play but never completed it. "I was concerned because of my shoulder. (Mach) said 'Don't worry about it. You won't feel any pain in the game.'"

Taylor had trouble getting the ball ready to launch at first, which might have helped ease the deep defender to take the run fake.

"There was a rush and I thought

someone was going to get me," he said. "Brady was supposed to hesitate, and I didn't know if he was going to get open. I was kinda scared, but he got open."

Pankow, who had three receptions for 18 yards in the first 12 games, also caught a 60-yard pass from quarterback Chris Barbara, putting CC on the Arthur Hill 4 in the second quarter. That helped the Shamrocks take a 14-12 lead.

"I knew Chris could get it out to me; he has the arm to get it there," Pankow said. "I told Chris to 'do something with it. If you got it to me, I want the big play.' I was thinking touchdown all the way."

That pass made possible what might be one of the fastest scoring drives in CC history. How often do the Shamrocks go 80 yards in five plays? The last TD also was a relative quick strike for CC — eight plays and 91 yards.

Barbara completed three of six passes for 75 yards. The Shamrocks rushed for 182 — swingback John Raasch was an effective runner with 75 yards on nine carries — but complemented that with 112 passing yards.

See SHAMROCKS, 3C

**No. 1: Brady Pankow is greeted by Marcus McCauley (85) and Aaron Babicz after scoring the tying touchdown.**

## Blazers coast into 'A' hoop quarterfinal

BY BRAD EMONS  
STAFF WRITER

Life is good these days for the Livonia Ladywood girls basketball team, especially when they're away from the Catholic League's tough Central Division.

Following Wednesday's 87-37 waxing of Wyandotte Roosevelt in the Class A regional final at Ypsilanti, the Blazers now sport an 18-0 record minus their divisional rivals, Birmingham Marian and Harper Woods Regina.

The 60-point regional win puts the Blazers (18-5 overall) into the state quarterfinals, 7:30 p.m. Wednesday (Dec. 2) at Lansing Eastern against Charlotte (24-1).

"When we're playing a rival team it's usually a lower scoring game where it seems every possession is important," Ladywood coach Ed Kavanaugh said. "Because of the competitiveness, you can't relax for one game in our league."

The Blazers were loose as a goose against Wyandotte, fast-breaking and pressing their way to a 16-0 advantage to start the game.

Wyandotte (20-6) had trouble getting the ball past mid-court, let alone getting a shot off in the opening quarter as Ladywood jumped out to a commanding 23-5 lead.

The Blazers also did a number on the Bailey sisters, 6-foot-3 senior Kim, a recent signee with Oakland Junior, and 5-11 junior Sara.

Kim, despite a team-high 16 points, got into early foul trouble and found herself in a standoff against Ladywood's two centers, 6-2 senior Katie Wright (eight points) and 6-3 sophomore Anne Foglits (six).

"We said we wanted to keep her (Kim Bailey) outside," Kavanaugh said. "We'll let a 6-3 kid shoot from outside."

"We also wanted to go at them quickly. Katie made a nice hook shot early and we were able to pick up a couple of quick fouls."

Wyandotte, which committed 21 first-half turnovers, could not match up either in the backcourt.

"The key was to take their guards out of the game," Kavanaugh said. "We wanted to double-

team and trap them into the sidelines. We knew the Baileys would get there points, but if you can't get the ball to them, they can't score."

Ladywood, which led 43-23 at intermission, outscored the Bears 20-7 in the third quarter before going on a 24-7 run in the final period.

It turned out to be a night of fun and frivolity night as 12 of Ladywood's 14 players who saw action scored, led by sophomore forward Tara Overatta, who pumped in a game-high 17 points.

Tracey Mocon, a 5-11 senior, came off the bench to score 12, while 5-6 junior guard Sara Cavanaugh contributed nine, including a pair of three-pointers in the final period.

"There are a lot of personalities on this team," Kavanaugh said. "It's a fun group. It's a big part of playing in this program. If they're not having a good time, then something is wrong."

Chances are the good times will continue into Wednesday's quarterfinal matchup. But guess who's just around the corner lurking in a potential semifinal matchup?