

Intrusive hunters spoil the fun on opening day

OUTDOOR INSIGHTS



BILL PARKER

With great anticipation, I sat silently in a light pre-dawn shower awaiting the first rays of daylight signaling the start of the 1993 Michigan Firearms deer season.

After several close encounters with mature whitetail bucks (none of which, unfortunately, produced a high-percentage shot) during the final days of the first archery season, the imminent arrival of the firearms opener left me eager with anticipation.

Over the last several years, the first few days of the firearms deer season have been spent combing farmland and wooded lots in Michigan's Thumb area with my brother and a couple select friends. But that all changed this year.

Daily buck sightings, numerous fresh scrapes, and the opportunity to hunt 80 acres all by myself (everyone else had gone north) forced me to change my strategy. I opted to stay home on opening day for the first time in my life and hunt some private land in northern Oakland County.

I couldn't contain my excitement the night before opening day as I explained to my wife Donna, over and over like a scratched record, about how this year would provide me with the best opportunity I'd ever had at bagging a trophy on opening day. I awoke (several times) before the alarm went off and seated quietly in my blind overlooking the south end of a thick swamp well before the first rays of daylight burrowed through the darkness.

I didn't have to wait long for

the excitement to begin.

About a half-hour after sunrise I heard something crashing through the swamp like a wayward bull headed in my direction. I readied myself and scanned the edge of the swamp intently before my eyes fell upon the object of my attention.

An orange hat suddenly appeared 30 yards deep in the swamp.

"What the #&@!," I thought. "This is prime time and there isn't supposed to be anyone out here."

The hat and its owner crept slowly to the edge of the swamp then popped out into one of my shooting lanes with the swiftness of a groundhog searching for food.

By now I was out of my blind and headed in his direction.

"I . . . ah . . . ah . . . got turned around in the swamp," he stammered.

"Right," I thought. "It takes a real gomer to get turned around in a 30-acre swamp, especially since you can hear traffic on the nearby road to the east."

"This is private property," I announced, sternly. "The entire swamp is on private property to begin with, and you just messed up my hunt."

Knowing he was caught red-handed, the intruder scurried back into the swamp like a muskrat out of water. *How surprising it was that the jerk suddenly regained his sense of direction and knew exactly how to get back to where he came from.*

Two hours later, my rage stormed to another level as a second trespasser crashed toward the edge of the swamp.

"This time, I couldn't contain my ill feelings and immediately denounced the perpetrator with a roar."

He disappeared back into the heavy cover as quickly as he could, but the damage had already been done. I didn't see a brown hair all day.

By late afternoon I was back on my bucket overlooking the swamp. I finally blew a fuse at 4:30 p.m. when a third bone-headed trespasser interrupted my hunt. This time I said nothing and charged straight down the hill ready to give him an ear full, but he saw me coming and dashed away like the coward he was.

I returned to my stand, but it was no use. I never saw a deer.

Hunters are urged to report their success. Questions and comments are also encouraged. Send information to: *Outdoors*, 805 E. Maple, Birmingham, MI, 48009. Fax information to 644-1314 or call Bill Parker Monday evenings at 901-2573.



BILL BRUSH/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Big win: Mercy teammates Mitzi Ruddock (left) and Jemesea Emerson exchange high fives after the Marlins upset Canton.

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took away the easy layups in the second half.

"It seemed we got pushed out farther and farther on the court," Blohm said. "The spacing was OK, but we had a hard time completing passes and getting out — and that's a tribute to their defense."

The Marlins supported Baker's claim they were playing much better defense at the end of the regular season.

"When I praise defense, it's a genuine thing," he said. "We're playing it with the best of them now. If we can make Canton work as hard as we did tonight to get scores, we're doing a good job."

Anderson scored six straight points to trim Mercy's 46-39 lead to one point with 2:03 remaining.

The Marlins appeared to have the win locked up (48-45) when Glenda Lee sank two free throws with five seconds left, but Anderson nailed a desperation three-point shot as time expired to force overtime.

The Canton players ran onto the floor and mobbed Anderson, apparently thinking they had won the game with her basket, however, The second round even flashed 49 points momentarily.

"I think they thought they were down two, not three," Blohm said. "If they had known they needed it to tie the game, it might have gone a little differently."

"I think they were celebrating a victory instead of a tie, and that's a big difference because now you have to regroup and get going again."

Amicie Crayton gave Canton a

50-48 lead in overtime, but Mercy scored the next five. Taylor tied it, Liz Weber broke it with a triple and Lee tied it with two more free throws.

"That would have put the stake through anybody's heart," said Baker of Anderson's shot. "I told them 'Look, did anybody in this gym think you'd be going to OT? I always say it takes 32 minutes of good basketball to win, but tonight it's going to take 35.'"

Angell scored 15 points to lead Mercy. Amanda Northcross came off the bench to score 12, and Felicia Brooks was next with 10. Alyson Nourse added 12 points and Sarah Warnke eight for Canton.

Angell had 11 points and Northcross eight in the first half to keep the Marlins close. Brooks scored eight in the third quarter to fuel the Mercy surge.

"Amanda's scoring was a nice bonus," Baker said. "We've used her a lot in the last week, and she has become a real defensive specialist. But it's a team game and everyone contributed."

Marian mauls Mumford; will play Mercy in final

BY MARTY BUDNER
STAFF WRITER

Marian gets to prove itself one more time against Farmington Mercy.

The Catholic League rivals will play for the third time this year 7 p.m. today in the Class A regional championship game at Southfield-Lathrup High School. The state-ranked Mustangs (19-4) defeated the unranked Marlins (12-12) twice this season by nine and 12 points.

However, Mercy advanced to the regional final Monday evening with an overtime upset of highly regarded Plymouth Canton. And Marian coach Mary Lillie-Cicerone was impressed with how they did it.

"I didn't want to play either of those teams after watching that game," said Cicerone, whose team qualified for the championship game with a 70-43 victory over Detroit Mumford. "That was one of the most intense games I have ever seen. Mercy really crashed the boards."

Mercy, which has won seven straight games, and Marian have met in the last three regional championship games at Lathrup. The Marlins won two years ago, while the Mustangs avenged that loss last year en route to the Class A state championship.

"It seems like we meet Mercy here every year and we've had some good games going with them out of this gym," said Cicerone. "Mercy really has it going right now and their leaders are really doing a good job."

"They're really playing with a lot of confidence right now," she said. "I think one of the keys will be keeping them off the boards."

Marian was outrebounded 30-29 against Mumford and didn't have a great board game. However, that was one of the few things that went wrong as Marian controlled most every other aspect of the game.

■ 'That was one of the most intense games I have ever seen. Mercy really crashed the boards.'

Mary Lillie-Cicerone
Marian coach

Marian, which has won its three state-tournament games by an average of 30 points, enjoyed a 13-10 lead after the first quarter and hiked the margin to 35-19 by halftime.

"I don't think we played great defense in the first half. I wasn't happy with our man-to-man and we went to zone in the second half," said Cicerone. "I really get disappointed when you have a team you should beat and you have to change defenses."

Marian did change its defense, but it was Mumford (12-10) which made the initial charge in the second half. Mumford closed to within 11 points, 46-35, one minute into the fourth quarter. But that was as close as it would get.

Marian, which worked inside the paint for easy baskets throughout the game, went on a 13-3 tear and took a commanding 58-38 lead with four minutes remaining.

"I don't think we executed as well as we should have," said Cicerone. "They had trouble getting through the picks. It was a very physical game but we should be used to it."

Marian was led by senior forward Judy Stuart who scored 21 points, had seven rebounds and four steals. Aiyah Bussey, a junior forward, added 10 points and five steals. Sabrina Kassad scored 10 points.

Hunters should report success

Once again the Observer & Eclectic will feature a Community Buck Pole for the 1993 deer hunting season. Names and a brief explanation of the respective hunts will be published in upcoming editions of the paper.

If you manage to take an elusive whitetail at anytime during the 1993 archery, firearm or muzzleloading hunting seasons give us a call.

Contact outdoor writer Bill Parker Monday evenings between 6-10 p.m. at 901-2573. You can also fax the information to 644-1314 or send a brief note to: *Outdoors*, 805 E. Maple, Birmingham, Mich., 48009.

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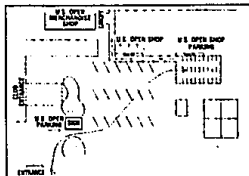
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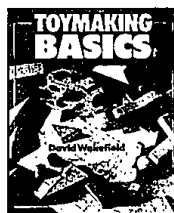
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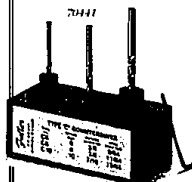
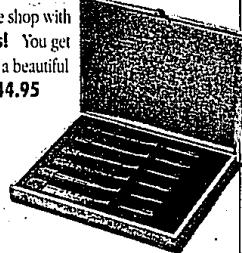
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