

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 14, 1994

SPORTS

C

Harrison rules in Region 3, Jungle

Harrison stayed on track to win a seventh state football championship Saturday by defeating South Lyon in a regional final, 28-26.

BY DAN O'MEARA
STAFF WRITER



Farmington Hills Harrison is the new king of The Jungle and still king of the hill for at least another week.

The Hawks prevailed in a see-saw second half Saturday at South Lyon to post a 28-26 win over the top-seeded Lions on their turf (The Jungle).

The Region III victory gives Harrison its 12th regional championship since the playoffs were expanded to eight teams in each class.

The defending Class A champion Hawks (10-1) continue defense of their state title against Royal Oak Kimball (10-1) in the semifinals at a site that was undetermined Saturday.

"The game went both ways for both teams," said Harrison senior Nick Williams after he rushed for 150 yards and three touchdowns on 26 attempts. "It was one of those I'll always remember. There was hitting, scoring, excitement. I'm sure the fans enjoyed it because I did."

What ended up as the winning touchdown came from junior Jason Granger, who had trouble finding his footing on a soggy surface in the first half.

He changed shoes at halftime and finally broke loose for a 45-yard run that gave Harrison a 28-19 lead after South Lyon blocked the extra point with 3:47 remaining in the game.

"The cleats I had weren't long enough, and I thought the field was going to be dry," said Granger, who carried 18 times for 128 yards. "I didn't have any longer cleats. I had to get some screw-ons; it was too slippery out here."

"I knew I was going to break one in the second half; it was just a matter of time."

The No. 2-ranked Hawks weren't assured of the win at that late stage, however.

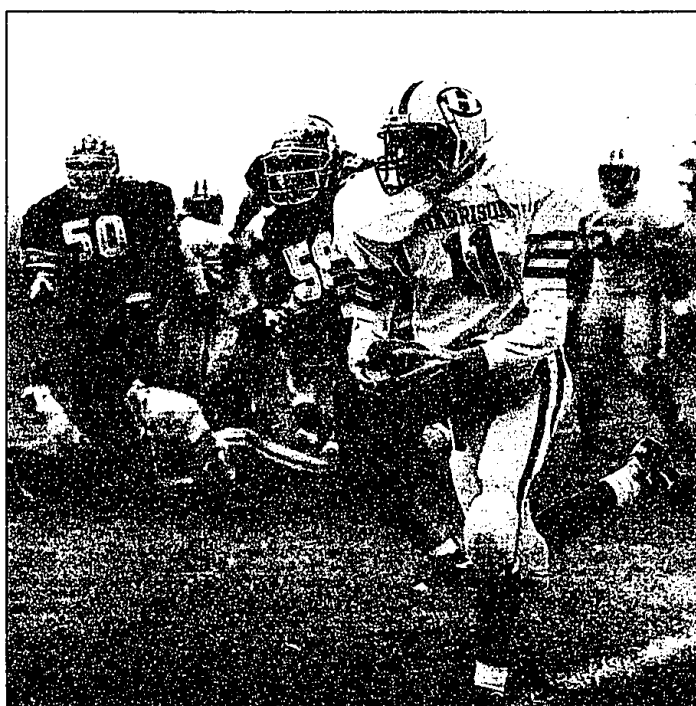
Harrison stopped the Lions (9-2) on downs but gave the ball back when Williams fumbled on first down. South Lyon went 45 yards in four plays to make it 28-26 with 1:50 left.

Williams converted yet another third-down play to give Harrison a first down as time dwindled to 1:05, and the Hawks were able to run out the clock.

"We have good, scrappy, hard-nosed kids, and they came to play football," South Lyon coach Bob Scholtes said. "If they have three (potential Division I players) then I guess we do, too, because we played a heckuva game today."

The No. 4-rated Lions were a good match for Harrison. In a game dominated by the offenses, the Hawks had only a 373-368 edge in total yards.

South Lyon junior Greg McGuire rushed for 229 yards and three TDs



STAFF PHOTOS BY ANN HEALEY

End zone ahead: Harrison sophomore quarterback Kevin Bambenek rolled to pass but ended up running for a two-point conversion that gave the Hawks a 16-12 lead.



on 29 carries as the Lions caused trouble for Harrison with their deceptive wing-T offense.

The Hawks frequently bit on the first fake and overcommitted, losing McGuire in the shuffle and unable to recover on the backside.

"Their backs are faster than we realized," Harrison coach John Harrington said. "I saw No. 30 (McGuire) running and (Kevin) Bryant couldn't catch him — and he catches everybody."

"When a team runs the wing-T or fullhouse, they bunch up in there and it's tough to stop it. It was very difficult to find the ball and they block well."

Harrison scored on the first possession of the game, with Williams capping a 62-yard drive with an 11-yard run.

On second down after Bryan Harmon intercepted Granger's halfback pass, McGuire dashed 77 yards to score, but the extra-point was no

See HAWKS, 2C

FARMINGTON HILLS SPORTS SCENE

It's that time of year again.

Yes, it's the holiday shopping season, which also happens to coincide with the state girls basketball tournament.

The frenzy starts tonight, so get out your charge cards and checkbooks.

Some of these girls were born to shop, while others were born to play basketball.

Some have very expensive tastes, nothing but the top of the line, the latest in designer stuff.

But we all know that if you shop long and hard enough, you'll find some bargains out there at Westfield, Twelve Oaks or Fairlane malls.

It's time to handicap these designing women as they embark on an exciting three weeks of hoop action. (Overall records are through Friday.)

GUCCI

Redford Bishop Bergese (17-2): The Spartans have beaten just about everybody this season, regardless of class. But demanding coach Dave Mann hasn't been a happy camper of late. However, once his team gets rolling in the Class C tournament, it should be two state titles in a row for Bergese, and Mann will be all smiles.

NEUMAN-MARCUS

Farmington Hills Mercy (11-8): Conceivably, the Marinas have a clean route to the state quarterfinals. They have beaten Salem and Canton already this year and should have enough to get past Harrison. You've got to love coach Larry Baker at tournament time.

BAKES FIFTH AVENUE

Plymouth Canton (14-4): The Chiefs have lost two of three to rival Salem, but have some quality wins as well (beating Flint Powers). If front-liners Sarah Wankie, Amicie Crayton and Kristi Florenco can convert inside, it could be trouble for opponents.

Plymouth Salem (14-8): Coach Fred Thorman may be doing it with mirrors while he waits for this young team to mature. Freshman Amanda Abraham is one to watch, and junior center Shelby Silts doesn't back down from anybody.

NORDSTROM'S

Farmington Hills Harrison (16-4): This may be the year the Hawks break through, but then again, history says Harrison is out early. Mercy is the big stumbling block at the Bloomfield Hills Laker district. Can the seniors go out a winner?

Garden City (14-6): The Cougars have everything going for them as they enter tournament play. They've won nine in a row in the Major's Red Division. They also host their own district and could make a run to the regional finals. However, they need a healthy Jamie Faber.

JACOBSON'S

Livonia Stevenson (10-10): The Spartans are prohibitive favorites to win the District 10-10. Scotty, the Public School League runner-up Detroit Murray-Wright won in the regional semifinals. Wonder how Mo Drabick is doing these days?

Livonia Franklin (10-10): By far the area's most disappointing team. With four starters back from last year's regional final squad, they managed to win only two Western Lakes games after starting out with a cream-puff non-league schedule. This is a dangerous team, however, that could win the Garden City district.

BLOOMINGDALE'S

Livonia Ladywood (7-9): The Blazers have some momentum going into tonight's district opener at home against a tough Northville squad. Ladywood won its first four, then dropped nine straight in the Central League's Central Division before winning its last three. The team can win its own district, but the road is tough.

MACY'S

North Farmington (11-9): The Raiders have hit the slides toward the end of the season, but boast a fine trio of players in Alaska Gordon, Carrie May and Liz Webster. North, however, could be a spoiler in the Laker district.

DAYTON HUDSON'S

Wayne Memorial (8-10): Uncertainty over the eligibility of talented sophomore Yolande Holt made the season tougher on coach Chuck Harris and his Zephyrs. Harris has possibilities to win the Garden City district. It happened just two years ago.

JO PERREY

Westland John Olcott (7-13): The Rockets have played two close games this season against Franklin and tonight's third encounter could be a cherr. Olcott has also beaten North Farmington and Walled Lake Western in the Western Lakes.

Farmington (7-13): Andrea Sawyer is a fine player, but the Falcons were not a threat in the Western Lakes this season, missing the playoffs. John Ventura gets Coach of the Year honors if his team wins the Laker district.

KOHL'S

Redford Thurston (18-1): The Eagles' reward for a great season is being thrown in the river at state-ranked Beverly Hills. Redford Country Day, King of the prep schools. Even sanctions by the Michigan High School Athletic Association couldn't prevent Country Day from hosting a district. Just how good is Thurston? It's hard to say because the Eagles mopped up all season on lightspeeders from the Metro Conference's White Division.

Livonia High Westland (18-2): What a season! It's been the Warriors, who just last week stomped everybody by upsetting host Macomb Lutheran North to gain a share of the Metro Conference title. So what is coach Ron Gentz's reward for such a fine year? A date in the district finale against top-ranked Bishop Bergese.

SEARS

Redford United (20-15): It's been a long season for the Panthers, who struggled in the Metro Conference Red Division. They're heading a district, but winning it is a long shot.

SEVIER'S

Livonia Chevrolet (20-15): Coach Dave Bielek gets the Good Sports Award without a doubt. Bielek's team has been outstanding in his scores. But it all came tonight against Redford.

See BIDDING, 2C

St. Mary's rally overcomes DePorres

BY BILL PARKER
STAFF WRITER

With just over five minutes remaining in a Class CC regional championship football game Saturday at Orchard Lake St. Mary's, Eagles senior defensive end Chad Combs asked an open question: "Are we having fun yet?"

Yes! The Eagles were finally having fun.

They had just taken a 21-8 lead over visiting Detroit St. Martin DePorres and were headed to a 27-8 victory and their second straight regional championship.

But it was the first time all afternoon St. Mary's was able to enjoy the moment.

Number 6-ranked DePorres, which St. Mary's had clobbered 35-0 earlier in the season, gave the Eagles all they could handle through three quarters of play before falling under St. Mary's hard-hitting defense and diverse offensive attack.

The Eagles held St. Mary's to a mere 53 yards of total offense in the first half and led 8-0 at the break.

DePorres scored on its opening possession on a 36-yard pass from Kevin Glen to Jon Hamilton. Glen threw a two-point conversion pass to Fredsonne Doctor.

"We've got 23 seniors on this team and this was their last game on this field," St. Mary's coach George Porritt said. "They wanted to go out with a win on their field."

"We made a couple minor adjustments at halftime, but it was mainly emotion and the will to win. We knew we had to go out there and stick them, create some turnovers and get back in the game."

FOOTBALL

"We made a couple minor adjustments at halftime, but it was mainly emotion and the will to win. We knew we had to go out there and stick them, create some turnovers and get back in the game."

George Porritt
St. Mary's coach

Which is exactly what the Eagles did.

Senior defensive back Darri Adams delivered a jarring hit to DePorres senior tailback DeAndre Woods (18 carries for 87 yards) on the opening play from scrimmage in the second half that changed the tempo of the game. Woods fumbled the ball and junior cornerback Phil Martin recovered for St. Mary's at the DePorres 51-yard line.

Senior quarterback Dario Johnson put St. Mary's on the board with a 19-yard TD pass to classmate Aaron Miller.

St. Mary's was penalized five yards for lining up off sides on the two-point conversion attempt, but still picked up the conversion when Johnson hit senior tight end David Bowens with an 8-yard pass to tie the game at 8-8.

"I think when we fumbled the ball that changed the momentum, and we never got back in the game," said DePorres coach Gregory Carter, whose team finished the season at 8-3. "We needed to

possess the ball and instead we gave it to them and they scored."

The game remained tied through the third quarter before Johnson put St. Mary's ahead for good 14-8, with a 2-yard touchdown run on the opening play of the fourth quarter.

The Eagles added two more TDs late in the fourth.

Adams scored with 5:26 left to play on a 24-yard pass from Johnson. He made a sensational catch on the play, leaping over the top of a DePorres defender at the 10 and racing in for the score. He finished with four receptions for 61 yards. Mike Godeoian kicked the extra point.

Everett Morris (eight carries for 49 yards) capped the scoring with 53 seconds remaining in the game on a 31-yard scamper. Morris broke a tackle at the line of scrimmage, then deked a defender at the 10 to score his ninth touchdown of the season.

St. Mary's defense, led by sophomore defensive end Torrance Coddish (three sacks for minus-25 yards), and senior linebacker David Bowens (eight tackles), limited DePorres to just 56 yards in the second half.

The win boosts top-ranked St. Mary's (11-0) into a state semifinal game against second-ranked Montrose (11-0).

The game will be played at 1:30 p.m. Saturday at Saginaw Valley State University. St. Mary's beat Montrose 24-14 last year in a regional final.

"Montrose is a great team," Porritt said. "They're as good as anyone we've played all year in any class."

"As far as I'm concerned, they're one of the top five or 10 teams in the state regardless of class."