

Hoop from C1

Northville stayed in it, Metri hitting a three-point shot after an Ault free throw to keep Harrison within four, 47-43, with less than a minute left. Andrzejewski made three free throws to clinch.

"This is such a competitive group of kids; I always felt anything was possible," Monty said. "Our pregame talk tonight was a lot like the Walled Lake game: We're on the road again against a team we felt we could've beaten if our shots would've went."

"We thought, if we played that hard again, we'd be right there at the end of the game."

"We didn't get down when we got behind. We kept playing when we were struggling on offense. Defensively, we've just been really solid. This team has really come up big defensively at the end of the year."

Harrison was 14-of-40 from the floor, Northville 16-of-46. The Hawks made 16 of 24 free throws, the Mustangs 8 of 12.

"They've played two great games," Wright said of the Hawks. "They've got them penning, and it's a good time of year to do that, coming into the district. They're going to give teams fits in the state tournament."



STAFF PHOTO BY SHAWN LEMLEY

Court action: Ari Ault made two three-point baskets but also scored on moves like this one into the lane.

Rocks top rival Chiefs

By C.J. RISK
STAFF WRITER

BASKETBALL

A different look, a different result.

A month ago, Plymouth's Salem girls basketball team attacked Plymouth Canton with a tenacious man-to-man defense -- and the Chiefs ate it up en route to a 10-point victory.

In Tuesday's Western Lakes Activities Association tournament semifinal at Canton, Salem coach Fred Thomann changed things up, putting his team in a zone defense that challenged the Chiefs to either penetrate or score consistently from the outside.

They could do neither, which is one very good reason the Rocks won this time, 38-22.

The victory puts Salem (now 16-3) into Friday's championship game opposite surprising Farmington Harrison (12-6), which reached the final by upsetting Northville (61-44) Tuesday and Walled Lake Central (36-32) last Thursday.

The WLAAC playoff championship will be at 7:30 p.m. Friday at Walled Lake Central High School. Canton (also 16-3) will play in the consolation game against Northville at 6 p.m. Friday at Walled Lake Central.

"Their defense was awesome," admitted Canton coach Bob Blohm, sizing up Salem's victory.

"Very simply, they played an aggressive zone. They spread it out, and when the ball went inside, they collapsed on it."

"That defense is suited to (Thomann's) team."

The Salem coach wouldn't disagree. In the first quarter, the Rocks limited Canton to two points while opening up a 10-2 advantage.

The Chiefs managed to trim that deficit to four during the second quarter, but could never get closer.

By halftime it was 18-11 in Salem's favor; the third quarter doomed Canton, which again was handcuffed offensively, scoring a meager four points.

The Rocks took a 25-15 lead into the final period.

"Two points in the first quarter," noted Blohm. "It was like the Farmington game all over again."

In beating the Falcons last Thursday 34-20, Canton scored just one first-quarter point.

Defense saved the Chiefs against Farmington. Against Salem, however, they were outplayed on defense.

"We weren't ready to win last time," said Thomann, referring to Salem's first meeting with Canton. Then Thomann listed the reasons the Rocks won this

time: "We changed our defense, we were a little more patient with the ball, we rebounded much better, and we got better games from the people handling the ball."

The final two reasons were evident statistically.

After being outrebounded by the smaller Chiefs in their first meeting, Salem claimed a 21-16 rebounding advantage this time; and Canton committed 19 turnovers to the Rocks' 12.

There was one other factor that played a significant role and magnified Salem's defensive performance.

The Chiefs were a mere 7-of-26 from the floor for 27 percent to Salem's 12-of-31 and 40 percent.

Canton made just one of eight from three-point range (12.5 percent); the Rocks were 3-of-4 for 75 percent.

For Salem, Angela Pruett led offensively with 10 points and six rebounds. Laurel Weinman had eight points.

No one stepped forward offensively for Canton; Kristi Fiorenza's eight points was best, with Melissa Marzolf getting seven.

"We did all the little things better this time around," said Thomann.

If the Rocks continue to do just that, they'll not only win the league's playoff title but a few more things in the upcoming state tournament.

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Raiders whip Chargers, 55-37

A solid fourth quarter gave North Farmington a solid victory in girls basketball.

Katie Vihtelic scored 16 points and Tricia Traczuk added 15 Tuesday and visiting North Farmington made off with a 55-37 win over Livonia Churchill.

The game was tied at halftime, but the Raiders used a 21-6 fourth period, much of it at the foul line, to improve to 7-1 overall. The Chargers dropped to 4-15.

"It was a struggle," North coach Linda Perkins said. "We did a better job taking care of the ball in the second half."

Kellee Fournier added 10

points for North, while Churchill got 16 points and eight rebounds from Stacey Supanich, Jessie Jenkins added seven points.

The Raiders made 14 of 22 fouls shots, including 10 of 15 in the final quarter. The Chargers were 4-of-8.

DEPORRES 57, MERCY 56: Detroit DePorres rallied in the fourth quarter Tuesday to edge visiting Farmington Hills Mercy in a non-league game between Catholic League teams.

The Marlins led 39-35 going into the final period, but the Eagles outscored them 22-16 over the last eight minutes. Mercy fell behind 18-5 after one quarter but climbed within five, 29-24, at halftime and outscored DePorres 15-6 in the third period.

Senior Marylane Valade scored 15 points for the Marlins (6-10), sophomore Jessie Brennan 12 and freshman Corie Brankiewicz, playing in her first varsity game, nine.

Shari Hill had 25 points for the Eagles (14-3) and Denise Caldwell 14.

W.L. WESTERN 52, FARMINGTON 36: Amanda Porter scored 15 points, but it wasn't enough Tuesday night as the Warriors made off with the win.

Jody Miller scored 15 points, Gina Brooker 13 and Kim Schieber 10 as Western upped its record to 8-10. Farmington dropped to 7-12 and will host Livonia Stevenson on tonight.

Farmington was outscored in every quarter, although the Falcons did hold on 8-7 advantage at the free throw line. Farmington made eight of 14, Western seven of eight.

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