

CC wins district shootout with Royal Oak, 7-5

A Berger and pizza — a winning combination for Detroit Catholic Central's hockey team.

Senior winger Greg Berger scored his first hat trick of the season Monday in the CC's 7-5 Class A district semifinal victory over Royal Oak Unified at Compuware Sports Arena.

Berger finished with three goals and one assist, and linemate Jason Tardif had one goal and three assists, earning them some pizza as promised from another team member.

The win also earned the Shamrocks a berth in the district final, played Wednesday against Redford Union, a 10-0 winner over Southfield on Monday in the other semifinal.

"We've been together (as linemates) two years," Berger said. "They don't separate us. We click when we need it."

"He usually sets me up for

HOCKEY

goals," said Tardif, not complaining about the change in roles. Royal Oak, a combination of Kimball and Dondoro high school players, gave the Shamrocks a scare, leading 4-3 after two unanswered goals late in the second period.

The Shamrocks took the lead for good, however, scoring a pair of goals 1:06 into the third period with both teams playing only four players.

The Shamrocks tied the score, 4-4, when Tardif intercepted a pass deep in the Royal Oak zone, leading to Berger's second goal only 16 seconds into the third period.

Tardif's initial shot was stopped by goalie Brandon Casanta, but the rebound came back to Tardif, who found Berger all

alone in the slot in front of an open net.

"I just read the defenseman's eyes," Tardif said. "He telegraphed the pass, threw it right on my stick. I took the shot, hoping something would happen and was lucky enough to get the rebound. Greg was in the right spot."

The Shamrocks gained the lead for good on the same shift when winger Matt Van Heest skated past a Royal Oak defenseman and backhanded a shot past Casanta with 13:54 remaining.

The lead grew to 6-4 when Berger finished his hat trick, getting assists from Van Heest and Tardif, with 7:01 remaining.

Royal Oak cut the deficit to 6-5 with a goal by Kevin Ayers and only 1:44 remaining before an empty-net goal by Tardif in the last minute ended the scoring.

CC winger Keith Rowe slicked the puck up the ice at a perfect pace, allowing Tardif to reach it before an icing call could be made.

Royal Oak (22-2-1) saw its chances suffer in the third period when its top player, senior forward Nick Luxon, was ejected for a five-minute major penalty late in the second period.

Luxon had one goal and two assists. His linemates Scott Fueling and Kevin Ayers combined for two goals and three assists. Damien Lewis and Jeff Cluff had the other Royal Oak goals.

"A couple giveaways on one shift did us in," Royal Oak coach Jon Fox said. "When you play CC, you don't worry about any one individual. They have four equal lines, and you're playing their style and coaching."

CC's depth showed early when

senior forward Dan Morrell scored a goal assisted by Dave Turner and Berger at 10:26 of the first period to tie the score at 1-1. Rowe scored the other CC goal, assisted by Brad Holland.

Todd Bentley and Eric Hawkins also picked up assists for the Shamrocks. CC goal-

tender Rickey Marnon, coming off consecutive shutout victories over Birmingham Brother Rice, stopped 13 shots.

"They were as prepared as any team could be," CC coach Gordie St. John said. "We were darn fortunate to get out of the building with a win."

Shamrocks take trophy

Detroit Catholic Central won a Class A district hockey title Wednesday with an 8-0 victory over Redford Union in the championship game at Compuware Sports Arena.

The Shamrocks scored two goals in both the first and second periods and added four more in the third.

The win sends CC into regional play where it meets Grosse Pointe South at 2 p.m. Saturday, also at Compuware.

The Shamrocks beat the Blue Devils, their Michigan Metro Hockey League rivals in a regular-season game, 3-0.

"They're one of the best teams in the state, certainly one of the quickest I've seen — and we've played Compuware,"

CC coach Gordie St. John said. "We beat them 3-0, but it could have gone either way."

CC sophomore David Moss had two goals and one assist Wednesday. Dan Morrell, Dave Turner, Todd Bentley, Brandon Kalenicki, Joe Beaudoin and Pat O'Den scored one goal each in the third.

Rick Marnon started in net before being relieved by senior Tom Monnier.

Keith Rowe, John Hunt, John Bowers, Bentley, Kalenicki, Brad Holland, Greg Berger, Jim Melton, Matt Van Heest, Jason Tardif and Ian Devlin had assists.

The Panthers finished the season with a 5-18-2 overall record.

Whalers lose ground in division standings

The road is always a treacherous place in the Ontario Hockey League. But the Plymouth Whalers found a way to multiply that danger.

ONTARIO HOCKEY LEAGUE STANDINGS (Through March 3)

East Division	W	L	T	Pts.
Ottawa 67's	37	15	9	83
Bellefonte Bulls	36	22	3	79
Niagara Frontenacs	33	24	4	70
Oshawa Generals	24	30	7	55
Peterborough Petes	17	33	10	44
Toronto St. M. Majors	14	38	9	37
Central Division	W	L	T	Pts.
Guelph Storm	39	18	5	83
Barrie Colts	38	19	5	77
Kitchener Rangers	26	26	8	60
Sudbury Wolves	24	33	6	54
Owen Sound Platers	22	33	6	50
North Bay Centennials	14	41	6	34
West Division	W	L	T	Pts.
London Knights	37	20	4	78
Plymouth Whalers	34	20	8	74
Sarnia Sting	30	19	11	71
Erie Otters	32	26	4	68
Windsor Spitfires	19	38	5	43
SSM Greyhounds	16	37	7	39

First, play three road games in three days. Next, play the last two against the hottest team in the OHL.

The result: One win, two losses, and a bigger gap between your own team's second-place standing and the team occupying first place in your division.

Going into last weekend's action, the Whalers had been on a bit of a streak of their own, with a 5-1-1 record in their previous seven games.

But the Erie Otters had been even hotter, collecting 12 wins and two ties in their previous 14 games. With two victories over the Whalers, the Otters have closed to within three points of Plymouth (74 for the Whalers, 71 for Erie), although Plymouth has played two fewer games. London continues to lead the OHL's West Division with a 37-20-4 record (78 points).

The weekend road trip started out well enough for Plymouth. At Oshawa Friday, three third-period goals allowed the Whalers to upend the host Generals 4-2. Andrew Taylor accounted for two of Plymouth's goals, the first

tying the game at 1-1 in the second period and the second pushing the Whalers' lead to 3-1 midway through the final period.

The Generals managed to narrow the margin to 3-2 with nearly five minutes remaining, but an empty-net goal by David Legwand — he also had two assists in the game — in the game's final minute clinched the victory for Plymouth.

For Legwand, the goal was his 60th of the season. He is tied for second in the OHL in goals scored.

Harold Druken scored the eventual game-winner for Plymouth early in the final period. Druken also had an assist.

Robert Esche made 26 saves in the net for the Whalers. At Erie on Saturday, Plymouth battled back from a 4-0 deficit after two periods, narrowing the gap to 4-2 on goals by Jesse Boulerice and Legwand in the first two minutes of the final period.

But the Whalers could draw no closer. The Otters answered with four consecutive scores to complete an 8-2 rout. Robert

Holsinger made 27 saves in goal for Plymouth.

On Sunday, the Whalers led 3-1 early in the last period at Erie, thanks to two goals by Druken and another by Pat Parthenais. But the Otters again had an answer, pushing across four goals in the third period to escape with a 5-3 victory.

Legwand had two assists; Esche made 28 stops in goal.

PLYMOUTH 3, SARNIA 1: The Whalers offense woke up in the third period Tuesday as they scored three straight goals to send the Sarnia Sting home with the loss.

After a scoreless first period, the Sting took a 1-0 lead on a goal by Jeff Heerema.

The Whalers got on the board at 8:34 of the third period when Andrew Taylor scored a power-play goal. The goal was assisted by David Legwand and Harold Druken.

With just under six minutes remaining, Plymouth took the lead for good when Eric Goody scored off a play setup by Steve Wasylko. Goody was named the game's first star.

The Whalers got an insurance goal at the 16:19 mark by Jesse Boulerice. Wasylko and Esche recorded assists. The Whalers outshot Sarnia 38-21.



C.J. Risak



Brad Emmons



Steve Kowalski



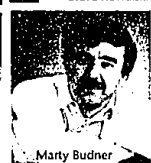
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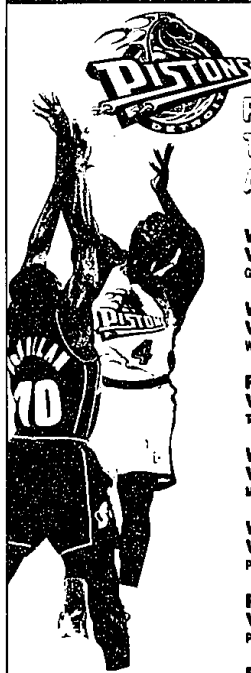
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