

OUTDOORS

Michigan hare hunt offers challenge, fun



BILL PARKER

Maybe it was the irresistible smell of fresh, hot pasties that overwhelmed my senses and redirected my internal compass. Yup! That's my story and I'm sticking to it.

There had to be a good reason I was headed

the wrong way, especially considering the fact that I was in the midst of a thick cedar swamp in the Upper Peninsula's Marquette County — a bad place to lose your direction.

While enjoying a snowshoe hunt with a group of fellow scribes during a recent meeting of the Michigan Outdoor Writer's Association, I decided to head south and try to intercept the rest of the group.

Now I'm a stickler about carrying a compass when venturing into the outdoors, especially places I've never before visited. In fact, I usually carry two — one for direction, the other for confirmation. I had two companions with me on this outing, but I was so sure of my direction despite the sunless gray sky I hadn't bothered to check either one.

Hare and the dogs

Under the direction of guide Ray Woodring and his competent beagles Lucky, Daisy, Muttsey and Ernie six of us booted up snowshoes and broke tracks into a thick cedar swamp on the outskirts of the town of Charlevoix.

At the onset of our adventure movement was slow. The bows of cedar and fir were so thick they seemed woven together. Although it was excellent winter habitat for bunnies it was work for a green snowshoe like me.

As I wiped the sweat from my

dropped something.

"Backtracking," I questioned. "You mean you're headed north?"

He was completely turned around.

Getting back on track

Upon checking my compass(es) I realized my error. I was just 100 yards from the truck. It must have been those warm, aromatic pasties.

We got back on track and minutes later Daisy set out on another hot trail. After a short chase she brought the bunny back around, but I was too far off the track this time and never raised my shotgun.

Woodring and the rest of the party picked up Daisy on her next swing around as they too were headed for the truck and the simmering lunch that awaited.

"Like a lot of animals, rabbits and hares are cyclic and they are at the top of the cycle up here right now," Woodring said. "We're having a great season this year. There are a lot of snowshoes right now."

Just remember to check your compass.

A perfect ending

When we arrived at the truck a cooler full of hot pasties awaited. It may have been the anticipation of lunch, but I have to admit the pasties we enjoyed — from Jean Kay Pasties of Marquette — were some of the best I've ever eaten. I stopped on a way out of town and picked up a box of them.

There are thousands of acres of prime hunting land in the Upper Peninsula. Rabbit and hare numbers are up across the region and the season runs through March 31.

If you're interested in an exciting time afield, give Woodring a call at (906) 942-7818.

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BASKETBALL

MSAA DISTRICT TOURNAMENT
BOYS BASKETBALL

at PLYMOUTH CANTON

Monday, March 8: (A) Plymouth Canton vs. (D) Livonia Churchill, 7 p.m.

Wednesday, March 10: Northville vs. Novi, 5:30 p.m.; Plymouth Salem vs. A-B winner, 7 p.m.

Friday, March 12: Championship final, 7 p.m. (Winner advances to the Birmingham Grove regional semifinal vs. Detroit Mumfords district champion).

at REDFORD CATHOLIC CENTRAL

Monday, March 8: (A) Livonia Stevenson vs. (B) Southfield, 6 p.m.; (C) Detroit Henry Ford vs. (D) Redford Catholic Central, 7 p.m.

Tuesday, March 9: Detroit Redford vs. Redford Union, 7 p.m.

Wednesday, March 10: A-B winner vs. C-D winner, 7:30 p.m.

Friday, March 12: Championship final, 7 p.m. (Winner advances to the Oshkosh regional semifinal vs. Detroit Cady district champion).

at BELLEVILLE

Monday, March 8: (A) Belleville vs. (B) Livonia Franklin, 6:30 p.m.

Wednesday, March 10: (C) Westland John Glenn vs. (D) Wayne Memorial, 6 p.m.; Garden City vs. A-B winner, 6 p.m.

Friday, March 12: Championship final, 7 p.m. (Winner advances to the Tipton regional semifinal vs. Monroe district champion).

at ESCANABA vs. CAESAR

Monday, March 8: (A) Bloomfield Hills Leasur vs. (B) West Bloomfield, 7 p.m.

Wednesday, March 10: Farmington vs. Farmington Hills, 6:30 p.m.; North Farmington vs. A-B winner, 7 p.m.

Friday, March 12: Championship final, 7 p.m. (Winner advances to the Birmingham Grove regional semifinal vs. Southfield-Lathrup district champion).

at BLOOMFIELD HILLS ANDOVER

Monday, March 8: (A) Bloomfield Hills Cranbrook vs. (B) Orchard Lake St. Mary's, 5 p.m.; (C) Bloomfield Hills Andover vs. (D) Detroit Riverfront, 7 p.m.

Wednesday, March 10: Redford Thurston vs. C-D winner, 5 p.m.; Beverly Hills-Detroit Country Day vs. A-B winner, 7 p.m.

Friday, March 12: Championship final, 7 p.m. (Winner advances to the Warren Woods-Tower regional semifinal vs. Warren Woods-Tower district champion).

at REDFORD BISHOP BORGES

Monday, March 8: (A) Livonia Clarenceville vs. (B) Southfield Christian, 7 p.m.

Tuesday, March 9: (C) Lutheran High Westland vs. (D) Dearborn St. Alphonsus, 5 p.m.; (E) Redford Bishop, 6:30 p.m.; (F) Detroit School of Industrial Arts, 7:30 p.m.

Wednesday, March 10: Detroit Benedictine vs. A-B winner, 6 p.m.; C-D winner vs. E-F winner, 7:30 p.m.

Friday, March 12: Championship final, 7 p.m. (Winner advances to the Petersburg-Summertown regional semifinal vs. Whitmore Lake district champion).

at JACKSON BAPTIST

Monday, March 8: (A) Westland Huron Valley vs. (B) Jackson Christian Academy, 6 p.m.; (C) Jackson Baptist vs. (D) Grass Lake, 7:30 p.m.

Wednesday, March 10: Canton Agape Christian vs. A-B winner, 6 p.m.; Jackson The De Vinci Institute vs. C-D winner, 7:30 p.m.

Friday, March 12: Championship final, 7 p.m.

Raiders from page D1

ter and 20-16 at halftime as Dawood and Dewar scored seven points apiece in the first half, Mitchell six.

North held Western to two points in the first 5:15 of the third period and took its only lead of the game when Medunjanin, who shot 3-of-4 in that quarter, made a three for a 24-22 score.

"That was typical North Farmington defense," Stanczak said. "They did that to everyone all year long. You don't think a team that plays zone would be that good offensively, but they are."

Mitchell scored on a fast break after a North turnover and Dewar on a putback to put Western back on top at the end of the third quarter, 26-24.

Dawood made a three to start the fourth, and Hargan scored his baskets for a seven-point lead.

Bridges put the Raiders within four, 39-35, with 1 1/2 minutes

remaining. The Warriors committed a turnover, but North missed a pair of free throws.

Mitchell made a three-point play with 31 seconds to play and added an insurance free throw before Medunjanin scored the final points.

Western's championship is not only its first in the WIAA but the first in school history.

"It's been an unbelievable year," Stanczak said. "We knew we'd be a pretty good team. We had no idea this would happen to us."

"For a school to be open 30 years and this be the first league championship is a great feeling. The kids have worked so hard for me."

Western shot 17-of-41 (.415) from the floor and North 16-of-39 (.411). The Warriors made four of 13 free throws and five of seven free throws; the Raiders made three of 12 free throws and two of six free throws.

line up and shake hands and show respect for each other."

Harrison led 16-11 after one quarter on Canton's floor. The Chiefs trimmed the margin to 27-25 by halftime, and the Hawks pushed their lead back to 42-33 entering the final quarter of regulation.

"We had a chance to win," Young said. "And, hopefully, we'll have an opportunity to win in the district."

"That's a very, very good team Harrison has. We played hard; we played to win. We just came up short."

FARMINGTON 60, STEVENSON 34: The Falcons held the Spartans to just 17 points through the first three periods to win their eighth game of the season Thursday. It was the wrisp game to the WIAA tournament.

C.J. Whitfield led three Falcons in double figures with a 23-point night. Chad Seaborn had 11, Matt Mikel 10 and Charlie Avery eight to help host Farmington rally to record to 8-12.

Stevenson (5-15) got 10 points from Martin Kennedy and nine from Keshay McChrister. The Spartans made 10 of their 13 free throws.

Farmington, which sank seven of 15 free throws, led 28-14 at halftime and

48-17 after three quarters.

LIGGETT 68, CLARENCEVILLE 52: Joel Parrott busted loose for 40 points Thursday, powering Grossa Pointe Liggett (6-13, 4-12) to the Metro Conference win over visiting Livonia Clarenceville (5-12, 5-9). Rick Bursack led the Trojans with 14 points.

DET. CENTRAL 75, REDFORD CC 71: Michael Barnett tossed in 21 points Thursday, propelling Detroit Central to a non-league triumph over host Redford Catholic Central.

Nick Moore led CC and all scores with 22 points. Both teams are 1-6 on the season.

SALEM 65, GLENN 49: Plymouth Salem played the kind of basketball coach Bob Brodie likes to see his team play — hard-nosed and aggressive, with a balanced scoring attack.

Also winning:

The Rocks (18-4) averaged an earlier three-point loss to Westland John Glenn by taking it to the Rockets in the WIAA consolation final Friday, pulling away to a 65-49 triumph at Livonia Franklin.

The Rocks trailed 15-14 after one quarter but took a five-point advantage into halftime, 29-24. They led 44-38 after three quarters and outscored the Rockets 21-13 in the period.

Aaron Rypkowski topped Salem with 20 points; Ty Haygood's 23 was best for Glenn (11-8), but the Rocks had better balance. Eleven of their players scored, with Adam Wilson getting eight.

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