

HAWKS

FROM PAGE D1

identity in that first meeting with Brother Rice. It had lost a lot from its fifth straight state championship squad and was trying to determine just how those losses would be filled.

That first meeting was played on artificial turf and in the heat of August, too.

"This time it will be a different surface and a different time of year," Herrington said.

"They have a legendary coach (Al Fracassa) and we know they'll come in tough. All's teams don't get worse."

The Hawks (8-2) were largely methodical in their dismantling of the Huskies. It might be likened to driving the tractor

to the convenience store—not pretty but gets the job done.

"It wasn't a good offensive performance," Herrington said. "We didn't have a lot of big plays, but that might have a lot to do with their defense."

"It's a win, but I didn't like the way the game unfolded."

Marcus Woods ran the ball 31 times and gained 131 yards, 94 in the first half. He scored on a 3-yard run with 2:57 left in the first quarter to give Harrison a 6-0 lead.

The Hawks had problems converting extra points (0-for-2) but junior Chris Kollins easily kicked a 29-yard field goal to give Harrison a 15-0 lead at halftime.

Kollins also added a 32-yard field goal with 1:40 left in the

third quarter and barely missed a 43-yard try on the first play of the fourth.

Quarterback Jake Ghannam had a decent game throwing the ball against a stiff crosswind. He completed half his 14 passes for 89 yards, including a 25-yard touchdown toss to Mike Bartley.

"Our passing game was not really clicking," Herrington said. "But their (defensive) ends were good."

Fullback Kevin Zerbo scored the Hawks' last touchdown, on an 8-yard run early in the fourth quarter.

Herrington ran the ball 53 times but only totaled 191 yards rushing. The Hawks held the Huskies to just 12 yards rushing in the game (minus-17 in the first half) and harassed sophomore quarterback Dontayo Gage into throwing two interceptions. Gage was 8-for-25 for just 77 yards.

Another thing that distressed Herrington and was surely stressed in practice this week was guys running their mouths more than their legs.

"There was a lot of trash-talking," he said. "There's no place for that in high school football. Or any sport, for that matter."

Herrington lost starting safety Charles Stewart for the Brother Rice game after he got into a fight with Northern's Reggie Williams. Both were kicked out of the game.

Stewart riled Williams on an incomplete pass play near the end of the first quarter. Words apparently were exchanged and the two started trading punches as the ball was



Senior wide receiver Mike Bartley gets a pat on the back from junior tight end Kyle Taylor after catching a Harrison touchdown pass Saturday.

still bouncing on the ground. "Dan Williams, who must weigh all of 145 pounds, came in at safety for us and did a nice job," Herrington said. "He made all the (defensive) calls

for us."

Pontiac Northern, which plays a step below Harrison in the Oakland Athletic Association's Division II, clearly didn't believe it could run on the Hawks, because it started in shotgun formation for its first possession.

The Huskies, occasionally, reverted to setting Gage up directly under center, but they operated out of the shotgun for most of the contest.

"We hadn't seen that from them," Herrington said. "And they surprised us with no backs (in the backfield), too."

"Of course, we played against a lot of shotgun during the season, and we've faced it in passing leagues, too. So we were comfortable defending against it."

"Truthfully, they were having trouble moving the ball. But until late in the game we couldn't get to their quarterback."

Harrison got a nice break after the second Kollins field goal when Northern fumbled the kickoff and the Hawks recovered.

"They couldn't make a first down, but Kollins was roughed on his 43-yard try and five plays later Zerbo was in the end zone to put the game away."

"I felt like we could never get in sync offensively," Herrington said. "But when you're in the playoffs, every team is going to be tough."

That's one thing Herrington and his players know for sure about Saturday's game. Brother Rice will be tough.

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REMATCH

FROM PAGE D1

Harrison's 24-0 win over Pontiac Northern but is

expected to play this week.

Woods rushed 21 times for 122 yards against the Warriors in August. He scored two touchdowns on a 72-yard kick-off return and a 65-yard pass from Jake Ghannam.

Rice quarterback Doug Pickens returned after a one-

week absence to throw two TD passes against North. He had four TD tosses in the first Harrison game and was 10-of-16 for 194 yards that day.

"I think they're running the ball really well, and Anthony Jackson looked extremely fast against North," Herrington

said. "But Pickens is the key."

"We have to make him move a little bit and not stand back there and throw good passes, and we have to get closer to the receivers. We had some very weak coverage in the first game."

Rice linebacker Ryan Brittain (6-3, 227) missed the playoff opener due to a thigh injury. Fracassa said a decision on whether or not he plays would be made late this week.

The other question is are the Warriors and Hawks better teams now?

"Sometimes I think we are and sometimes I think we're not," Fracassa said. "Sometimes we play a good game, and then we go down and don't play too well."

"As far as knowing what to do and executing plays, they know that. It's just a matter of them going out and doing what they've been taught. I hope they'll be ready to play on Saturday."

Ten weeks after the first Rice game Herrington believes the Hawks are much improved.

"But I think every team is better than when it started," he said. "We've changed some personnel, and Jake has improved at quarterback. I don't imagine Rice is getting any worse, either."

GOD STATE: For the season, Pickens is 86-of-164 passing for 1209 yards and 17 touchdowns. Ghannam has completed 67 of 130 passes for 1105 yards and 12 touchdowns. Pickens has thrown seven interceptions. Channan four.

Jeff Stachowiak (24 receptions, 484 yards, four TDs) and Brian Walter (26-407-6) are the top receivers for the Warriors. Anthony Jackson has caught four TD passes and Jason Horton three.

Jackson and Horton are Rice's leading rushers. Jackson has 124 carries for 587 yards and eight TDs. Horton has rushed 76 times for 422 yards and two TDs.

Britain is Rice's leading tackler with 74, and fellow linebacker Al Cioulous is next with 41. Stachowiak has four interceptions and Jackson three.

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