

SPORTS OBSERVER

By George Maskin

It's disgusting, sickening and tragic to sit each Friday evening get reports, as follows:

"I'm calling from . . . Some of the fans are getting beat up. The police are taking charge."

Or . . . "They need help around here . . . Where are the cops? The kids are going berserk. Somebody is going to get killed."

Fortunately, these reports and these incidents don't involve any of the ten high schools which we write about in the Observer newspapers.

But they are happening all around us and unless we all continue to keep our guards up, we could have the same situations right in our own territory.

Playing at night doesn't account for all the troubles. Many of the uprisings have followed afternoon contests.

Needless to say, school authorities are concerned. So are the police and other law-enforcing agencies.

We talked to one athletic director in a suburban community. He declared:

"Some in-town want us to cut out night football. Some say we should drop football entirely and may forget about basketball."

"We're making every effort to keep the sports alive. So what do we do at our games?"

"Well, we call out the whole police force. We also bring in a lot of plain-clothesmen. All the uniformed officers carry night sticks and they have swung 'em on occasions. The other week, one kid who wouldn't obey was rapped pretty good . . . for 37 stitches."

"Do we like this?"

"Of course not. But we found out that the trouble-makers are not students at our school or attend the school of our opponents."

"These troublemakers are hoods from other areas. Most don't even go to school. They're looking to start something. So we are prepared for them."

Two of our officiating friends . . . and officials do have a few friends . . . were talking about the cutups.

"Over at . . . they sent a police wagon over before every game. When they spot a hanger-on, they ask him: 'Are you going in to the game?'"

"If the guy says he isn't . . . and hangs around the field, bingo, the police lead him up . . . and haul him down to the station house. They don't book them the first time. They just tell them to walk home. This has cured some of the situation."

However, the gravity of the situation gets no better. Last weekend in the Greater Detroit area there were half a dozen incidents. It took the sheriff's patrol to keep matters cool at not too distant Romulus high, which was involved in a football game with River Rouge.

The pot isn't boiling just around Detroit. Up in Grand Rapids they are having fights and brawls and

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N. Farm., Franklin in Showdown!

Thurston Falls to Champions

Coaches and others close to sports will tell you all games are "big 2."

But as far as North Farmington high school's football team is concerned, the biggest game of the season comes off Saturday afternoon against Franklin High.

This is THE one which decided the Northwest Suburban League championship, a distinction North Farmington under Coach Ron Holland carried off last year.

There weren't many who figured that North Farmington would be a major contender this season.

Not after most of last year's squad of regulars was graduated.

But to the credit of Holland and his assistants, he has come up with another powerhouse—a team which has swept through six straight victories without a setback.

What's happened the last six weeks merely has set up next Saturday's crucial battle with Franklin.

Everything, at least as far as the league is concerned, rides on this one game.

It's like the seventh contest in a world series or hockey Stanley Cup playoff. If you fall, that's it. You don't get a chance to come back.

North Farmington showed it was ready for the Franklin showdown by turning back Thurston, 22-12, last Saturday afternoon.

With a win, North Farmington had to fight an uphill battle.

The game wasn't three minutes old when Thurston cashed a touchdown. Bill Oldenhouse fumbled for North Farmington and Rick Stefani grabbed the ball and sailed in 30 yards for the counter.

Such a tough break might unsettle most teams.

Not North Farmington. It wasn't too long after that North Farmington showed Thurston deep in its own territory.

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What could be more of a natural? When Franklin High of Livonia invades North Farmington High next Saturday afternoon for a 2 o'clock kickoff, here's what will be at stake:

1—Both teams will be putting perfect 6-0 records on the line.

2—The Northwest Suburban League title will be at stake. Both stand 4-0 in the conference.

3—North Farmington will be trying to salt away its second straight league crown.



CONVERSION GOOD—Sam Antonazzo of Franklin (42) boots an extra point as his team swamps Oak Park, 40-7, to post its sixth straight victory in as many starts. This Saturday, Franklin meets North Farmington in a showdown.

4—Each team needs to win to keep alive hopes to end the season with a spotless record. There's little to choose between the two teams.

Both have high-powered offenses. Both are strong on defense.

Each team has good reserves.

A sellout is assured for the game at North Farmington.

All the two schools are asking for is a nice day. It would be a shame to have a game of such importance ruined by the elements.

Oak Park Whipped By 40-7

"Our finest effort."

So said Coach Bob Bentley after his Franklin High football team had routed Oak Park, 40-7, last Saturday.

Sixth straight win in as many starts this season.

"These kids of ours came to play football," Bentley continued.

"We had three of our regulars out with injuries. Fred Sievert, Bob Mitchell and Larry Nafiah all had to just watch."

"On top of that, Neal Thomas, our co-captain had to take off at halftime to attend the wedding of his sister."

"But our fellows realized what's ahead for them—North Farmington and they Bentley. And they wanted to get ready by doing a great job against Oak Park. That they did."

Oak Park hardly falls under the category of a weak starter this season. The team had won its first four games without yielding a point.

Franklin's explosive running literally murdered Oak Park.

All of which is more reason why Franklin has a powerhouse on the gridiron—a team which must rank with the best in the suburban area.

Larry Yonish's explosive running literally murdered Oak Park.

In the first quarter, after the kickoff, Oak Park could make no headway.

So the Parkers kicked to Franklin. Three plays later Yonish smacked off center.

He had 48 yards to go for a touchdown—and 48 yards he went.

Sam Antonazzo came in and kicked the point and Franklin had a 7-0 lead.

Franklin again kicked to Oak Park. Once more the Parkers made no progress.

Another kick and in three more plays there was Yonish again. This time he drove up the middle for 32 yards and Franklin had a 13-0 lead at the close of the first quarter.

Came the second quarter and Franklin was moving slowly in its own end.

Yonish's signal was called. He tried the old slot up the middle. A hole big enough for a tank opened . . . and Yonish never was touched as he scooped 65 yards to lift the score to 20-0 when Antonazzo hit Bill Opland on a pass for the conversion.

The dynamics of the Franklin team still weren't over.

Time was fading out . . . maybe 15 seconds left . . . the first half when Doug Wagner dropped back . . . saw Antonazzo streaking into the clear.

Wagner hit his man with a perfect foot and the play not only covered 50 yards but made it 27-0 at halftime when Antonazzo, still puffing, kicked the extra point.

When the third period began, Wagner and Antonazzo again teamed up on a spectacular play. This time they clicked for 48 yards to make the score 33-0.

With subs on the field, Franklin finally yielded a touchdown in the fourth period when Oak Park was helped along by a 40-yard pass.

But Franklin's reserves came bounding back for another touchdown.

Dave Kostera struck on a 18-yard pass to Steve Karnish for the TD. Antonazzo, now well rested came out to make the point.

Coach Bentley hopes that Sievert will be ready for next Saturday's game with North Farmington.

Nafiah, with torn ligaments, is out for the season. Mitchell is a question mark.

"The game with North Farmington has to be the biggest a Franklin team ever has played," added Bentley. "Never have we had so much ride on a single game."

"I'm glad of one thing. Our kids won't be looking past North Farmington at Bentley (whom Franklin plays the following Saturday) as sometimes might be the case."

St. Agatha Gains Tie

A tie for the Northwest Division championship in the Catholic League!

That'll be the goal of St. Agatha's football team next Thursday at Olympia.

Gordie Howe's tough break might unsettle most teams.

Not North Farmington. It wasn't too long after that North Farmington showed Thurston deep in its own territory.

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Lake St. Mary's to a 19-19 standoff in a battle of unbalanced.

As a result, St. Mary's holds a 4-0-1 record with its league.

St. Agatha's main win Sunday to figure in the title picture.

The Townshippers had great chances last Sunday win it all. Twice in the final quarter they got down to the St. Mary's three. Once they lost the ball on downs. The second time the

clock ran out on them.

St. Agatha jumped off to a quick start after recovering a fumble on the St. Mary's 35.

Greg Peck and Jim Roose took turns running to the 13 from where Rick Collins fired a touchdown pass to Roose.

The St. Agatha lead jumped to 13-0 before the first quarter was over. The Townshippers took over after stopping their rivals on the Aggie's eight. Peck carried up to the 24 from where Roose broke around end, eluded

four would-be tacklers and went all the way.

Greg Bauer made the conversion.

St. Mary's tied matters in the second half. Edward Krolecki scampered 22 yards for one touchdown and then Bernard Sice bounced around from the four.

In the third period, St. Agatha regained the lead.

Taking the kickoff on its own 26, St. Agatha moved in a hurry.

Peck slammed to the 38, then to St. Mary's 43. Next it was Roose who broke loose for five.

Now it was Peck again . . . and this time he went the distance to put St. Agatha on top, 19-13.

St. Mary's wasted little time getting even. Phil Meggie hit from the two and carried across the goal line to even the score at 19-19.

That's the way it stood until the end, despite the fact a Collins to Bauer pass put St. Agatha on the Lakers' 20 and then Peck scooted to the three. But there the Aggies were stalled.

On the game's very last play, Mike Roemer raced to the Lakers three where he was tackled.

The statistics weren't close. St. Agatha piled up 493 yards before beating Chicago Sunday, 3-2. The Rangers have won and lost once each and tied twice.

With Ted Lindsay's return last week from a four-year retirement, Abel now has a full squad of 20 players, two goalies, five defensemen and 13 forwards.

Lindsay, wearing No. 16, is skating on a line with Eddie Joyal and Bruce MacGregor.

Howe Sets Sights On Richard Records

By the time the Detroit Red Wings play their next home game Thursday at Olympia.

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total of 625 (568 season goals plus 57 in the playoffs).

Thus, Howe who last November broke Richard's regular season mark of most goals in a lifetime needs only two goals to capture another spot in the NHL record book.

Gordie also is in range of an unprecedented goal figure this season: 600 regular season goals.

The Wings will go into Wednesday's game seeking to even their season record at two wins and two losses.

Detroit dropped its first pair of games before beating Chicago Sunday, 3-2. The Rangers have won and lost once each and tied twice.

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Football Books In Library

Heightened interest in professional football, with the number of fans now estimated at more than 36 million, has brought numerous requests to the Livonia Public Library for books on the sport, according to Librarian Skip Rosenthal.

One of the many volumes on professional football, called America's fastest growing spectator sport, is "Pro Football," by Robert Smith. This is a history of the game and the great players.

The story of two of professional football's best known teams is covered in Barry Gotelberg's "The Giants of New York" and Chuck Johnson's "The Green Bay Packers."

Other recent books on football include "Confessions of a Gypsy Quarterback," by George Ratterman; "Favorite Football Stories," by Bill Stern; "Book of Football," by Alvin Sherman; and "Football Techniques Illustrated," by Jim Moore.

The South Branch is located at 33720 Plymouth Road, GA 7-1990 and the Sandburg Branch is at 8000 W. Seven Mile Road, 476-0700. The Livonia Libraries are now open as follows: Monday through Thursday, 12-9; Friday and Saturday, 9-6.

Prep Schedule

Friday's Games
Allen Park at Bentley, 8 p.m.
Plymouth at Belleville, 8 p.m.
Clareville at Holly, 8 p.m.
Rosedale at Farmington, 3:30 p.m.
Redford Union at Trenton, 8 p.m.

Saturday's Games
Franklin at North Farmington, 2 p.m.

Sunday's Games
Royal Oak St. Mary's at Our Lady of Sorrows, 2:30 p.m.
Pontiac St. Michael at St. Agatha. (Thurston isn't scheduled this week.)

Sorrows in Thriller

Sports provide strange happenings.

As the old saying goes: "You never can tell what's going to happen . . . or when."

A good example was last Sunday's non-league between Our Lady of Sorrows and St. Gertrude.

The teams were tied at 6-6 with just two minutes to go.

As the final 120 seconds had passed, Sorrows had emerged as an 18-6 victor.

It's been a long time since I've seen lightning flash so fast for a Sorrows team," said Coach Bud Webster when the proceedings were all over.

The first dramatics in the final two minutes came when

Cliff LaFond of Sorrows cut loose and scored from the St. Gertrude 25.

LaFond skipped in and out the hands of a half-dozen St. Gertrude players who seemingly had him nailed for no gain . . . or certainly just for short yardage.

Immediately after Our Lady of Sorrows kicked off, St. Gertrude went to the air.

It was a moment of desperation.

But not for long.

The entire front wall of the Sorrows team converged on the St. Gertrude quarterback. He was high and low and from both sides.

The ball squirted away. Mike Bars of Sorrows fell on

the loose ball and guess where he was?

He was in the end zone. The referee's hands went up and Sorrows had another touchdown.

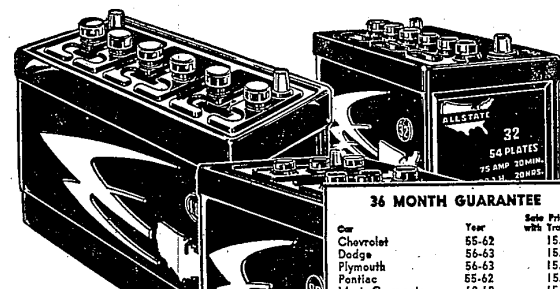
To win this one, Sorrows had to come from behind.

St. Gertrude went ahead in the first quarter when Bob Scarlette passed to Bill Knott from 11 yards out.

... Sorrows got even on a one-yard plunge by Miles Kearney in the second quarter. The league schedule ends next Sunday for Our Lady of Sorrows against Royal Oak St. Mary's at Farmington High gridiron at 3:30 p.m.

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