

Last Play Touchdown Wins For Thurston

It had been predicted that it would be a ding-dong battle with Thurston finally dominating at the finish over John Glenn.

So went the script as Thurston made it 7-0 for the season and wrapped up its first outright Northwest Suburban League crown by winning from Glenn, 20-14.

Twice Thurston had to come from behind to get even. And it wasn't until the final few moments, after Thurston had choked off a Glenn threat, that the Townshippers turned loose with an 85-yard march that won the game as the clock had almost run its final course.

"I'm proud of my boys," said Glenn Coach Bob Lusk. "They played their hearts out. With a small break or two, we could just as well win it."

ACROSS THE FIELD, Coach Bill McDonald was smiling and rejoicing.

"We had the battle of our lives in this one," said McDonald. "Glenn was sky high, and we knew they would be. They have a fine football team. They gave us all we wanted and it took a great team, like the one we have, to come from behind and win it in the closing seconds."

Thurston now has only boiling-hot Redford Union left Saturday in its bid for a perfect 8-0 record and the No. 1 slot in the final Observer-area ratings. That also will provide star Thurston back Craig Mutch with his final chance to hit the 1,000-yard mark in rushing for the second straight year and add to his touchdown total which soared to 16 when he counted twice against Glenn.

Mutch now has chalked up 845 yards for the season, compared to 1034 a year ago.

BUT WHETHER he can break loose against Redford Union which has won its last four straight to

give the Panthers a share of the Suburban Six League title is questionable.

One couldn't ask for a closer series than the RU-Thurston confrontation. Thurston won 7-0 last year. The previous season it was 12-7 for RU and the year before that the teams tied, 6-6.

In the end against Glenn with the score tied at 14-14, it was Mutch and his great running and defensive partner, Gordon Eszes that got the job done. Eszes intercepted a Glenn pass on the Thurston 15 with about five minutes to go. Then it was Eszes and Mutch carrying the ball downfield.

ON A KEY fourth and four from the Glenn 8, Eszes zoomed to the two and Mutch went over for the winning touchdown on the final play of the game.

Glenn started the scoring when George Osterhaut raced in from the four after a Greg Hubbard to Gary Schleicher pass for 40 yards set it up.

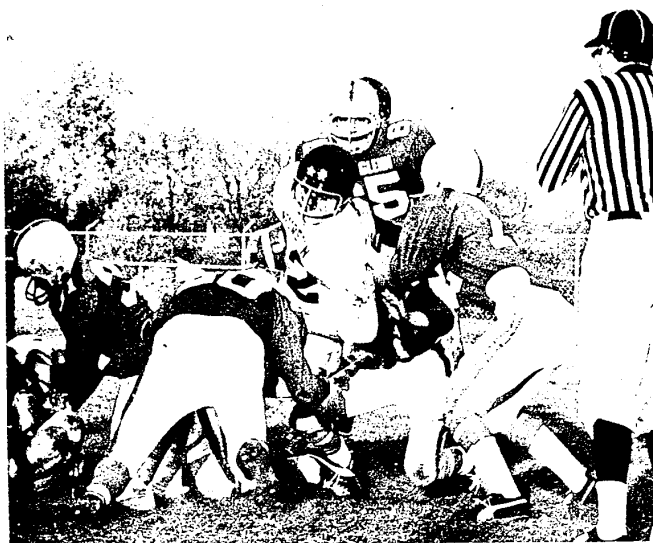
Mutch countered with a six-yard scoring run to tie it up and then Glenn electrified the crowd with a 53-yard pass from Daryl Demeray to Hubbard to go ahead. Osterhaut ran the conversion to put Glenn's lead at 14-8.

But just before the first half ended, Ron Barringer flipped a pass to Bill Poppenger on a play covering 45 yards. As Poppenger hit the goal line, the half ended and with the conversion the score was tied at 14-14.

And the deadlock stood that way until the final play.

Mutch finished with an even 100 yards, Eszes had 91, Jerry Fajal at tackle for Thurston personally figured in 15 tackles.

The defeat was the fourth in seven starts for Glenn, but seldom has a team lost when it deserved to win so much.



SMASHING THROUGH the tough John Glenn High line for the game-winning touchdown on the final play is Thurston's Craig Mutch. The Eagles' star back just did get

into the end zone with the score that enabled his team to continue its unbeaten string. (Observer photo by Harry Mouthe)

Only One Hurdle Left For 'Cinderella' RU

Redford Union's 'cinderella' team needs only one more victory to complete the most amazing comeback in modern Observer-led high school annals. That chance comes Saturday when RU tangles with unbeaten Thurston in the battle for the mythical Redford Township championship.

The neighborhood rivals clash on the Thurston campus at 2 p.m., and as usual in this contest—forget what has happened before during the season, forget past games for anything can and does happen.

THE RU PANTHERS, who dropped their first three games of the current campaign, climaxed a spectacular comeback Friday when they crushed unbeaten Trenton, 22-6, and clinched a tie for the Suburban Six League crown at the same time.

Trenton entered the game as a heavy favorite off its record of six straight wins and a ranking among the Top Ten in the state.

But RU, which whipped Belleville, Plymouth and Bentley on successive weeks, wasn't a bit impressed by the record of the

undefeated Trojans—not any more than by the previous performances of Plymouth and Bentley—and proceeded to make life miserable for the visitors from the opening kickoff.

They continued on that track all through the night and eventually wound up with a statistical edge as well as the upset victory.

The final figures gave RU a 11-8 edge in first downs, 188-177 in yards gained and six completions in 15 passes contrasted to 0 for 5 by Trenton, Bill Booker was the leading ground gainer with 98 yards in 20 thrusts.

THE VICTORY GAVE RU a share of the league title for the first time since 1963 and the string of four victories was as many as the school had won in league play in five years.

RU started its drive for the opening touchdown midway through the first period when End Kirk Taylor intercepted a Pat Whaley aerial on the Trenton 45.

Quarterback Gary Bevington raced around end for six and then Booker broke loose and went all the way to the Trenton 11. Booker marveled to the four in two plays and then Bevington swept right end for the

touchdown with 3:44 remaining in the period. Bob Seghr's placement for the extra point was wide and low but RU held a 6-0 margin.

THE TROJANS CAME storming back and evaded the count in the opening minute of the second quarter.

Don Vokes started the long march when he returned the kicked 20 yards to the Trenton 32. Fullback John Foote sped around left end into the open and was finally hauled down by Trenton 11. Booker marveled to the four in two plays and then Bevington swept right end for the

Continued on Page 28

Raiders Clipped By Franklin

It was almost like watching the championship... 21 most... Livonia Franklin High's 14-8 victory over North Farmington in football.

The victory more than gave Franklin second place in the final Northwest Suburban

League standings behind champion Thurston... Franklin had been rated a distinct underdog against powerful North Farmington and none had expected that the season would be entering its final week with only one loss -- to

Thurston -- marring an otherwise perfect record for Franklin.

North Farmington, on the other hand, had been rated the state's best a good portion of the times, Franklin hadn't been anywhere among the elite.

IN THE SHOWDOWN, Franklin clicked on two passes by Frank Kasparek and a couple of stellar defensive stands to hold off North Farmington and end the league season with a 4-1 record and up its overall mark to 6-1 going into Friday's

inter-city classic at Bentley.

This was a game in which the statistics really meant nothing. Franklin settled for 77 yards passing--45 of them went for touchdowns--and made just 124 yards rushing, 72 by Danny Thorpe in 14 carries.

In contrast, North Farmington clicked off 120 yards passing and added 192 yards rushing with Bob Hughes personally getting 117.

But when it counted Franklin arose with some brilliant defensive stands.

THERE WAS the situation in Farmington twice couldn't get in from a foot out... and with 2:16 left in the game when North Farmington had third and one on the Franklin 10, but again the Patriots protected their territory and got the ball back without yielding a point.

Franklin scored once in each of the first two periods.

The first score came when the Livonians took over on the North Farmington 43.

A running play produced three yards before Kasparek delivered a perfect strike to Terry Maas' conversion made it 7-0.

IN THE SECOND period, Franklin started from the North Farmington 37. A Kasparek to Thorpe pass ate up 32 yards in a hurry, then Kasparek struck Mark Lento from the five for the TD.

Again Maas converted.

North Farmington moved 50 yards for its score. A run by Hughes and a pass from Steve White to John MCCoy helped set up the TD which came on a 22-yard loss from White to Keith Heaveridge. Rick Fueling made the conversion.

North Farmington with two games left now stands 5-2 and third in the league.

Farmington Scares Stevenson; But Spartans Clinch 2nd Title

The Inter-Lakes High School League football pennant flies over Stevenson High School in Livonia again.

For the second year, the Spartans have marched unbeaten-untied through a five-game conference schedule.

In fact, one must go back to the 1967 and 13 league contests ago to find when Stevenson last bowed to an Inter-Lakes League team.

Few had expected the Livonians to make it two straight in the title parade. Major graduation losses had left few from last year's powerful team.

When Stevenson fell in its second start of the season to persis could see the handwriting on the wall. At least, they thought they could.

BUT WITH Coach Jack Reardon shuffling his talent and getting the best possible results, Stevenson knocked off one league rival after another and capped it all with a 10-12 win over Farmington in the title clincher Saturday.

The story of the game actually was told in a pair of two-point conversions from Rusty Gregg to John Jetchick. Each team made two touchdowns, but Farmington wasn't able to hit on either conversion try.

Reardon praised the play of the Farmington team which was won only once all season. "They were inspired," said the Stevenson coach. "They gave us more than many of our kids expected."

STEVENSON STUCK strictly to the ground -- except for its conversions -- in beating Farmington. Not one of Stevenson's 200 yards came through the air.

Rusty Gregg, Gene Walker and Ron Smith shared the ball-

carrying duties. Gregg logged 61 yards in six tries... Walker 59 in 22... Smith 45 in five.

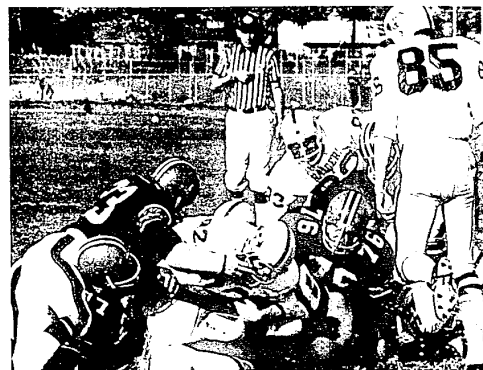
The trio chewed up the ground in the Spartans' 30-yard drive for its first TD with Walker going the final yard.

It was Gregg on a 20-yarder

for the second and winning touchdown.

FARMINGTON called through the air for both scores -- each on a loss from Dan Stelke to Randy Cleveland.

Defensively, the Swift Wind, Mike and Pat again sparkled for the winners.



NO CHANCE -- N. Farmington's Drew Mahalic gets nowhere as he tries to score from the one yard line on fourth down. Franklin's inspired forward wall dropped him for a yard loss in a defensive effort that saved a victory. Stopping the drive are Dennis Lang (76), Jim Craig (77) and Charlie Brooks (73). (Photo by Warren Bopp)

Borgess Loses Finale To Aquinas

The regular season has ended for Bishop Borgess High's football team and it wasn't on a happy note.

Aquinas turned back Borgess by a 20-6 score Saturday to

hand Borgess its fourth loss against two victories and a tie.

Jamie Izzo ran for two touchdowns for Aquinas from the 10 and one-yard lines while

Dave Butson streaked over from the two to finish the point production for the winners.

Carl Bernhardt, a fine back all season, went 15 for the only Borgess TD.

Sports Briefs

Carvot and Slamanth are the best in Hazel Park Race Track bids for total victories in a single season. Each won seven races. Slamanth did it in 1951 and Carvot duplicated the feat exactly 10 years later.

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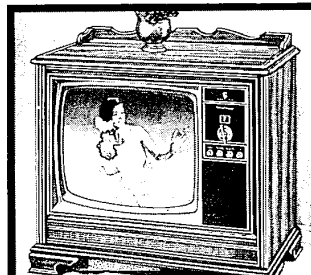
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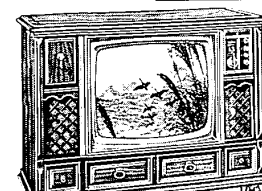
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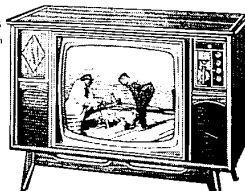
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